



Historicizing the Embodied Imagination in Early Modern English Literature

Mark Kaethler · Grant Williams

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ISBN 978-3-031-55063-8 ISBN 978-3-031-55064-5 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5>

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This volume began during conversations and sessions at the Renaissance Society of America's 2019 meeting in Toronto. While the editors unfortunately could not continue these at the RSA's 2020 meeting due to the global pandemic, they are thankful for those contributors who carried on with the work as well as to those who joined the project later to bring this volume to fruition.

Kaethler would like to thank their fellow faculty at Medicine Hat College, especially Nicole Burnett and Diane Gall, for sharing cross-disciplinary insights about the embodied imagination as well as Williams for all the great conversations that led to this book, for his wisdom, and for initially suggesting this collaboration after reconnecting at the 2017 RSA in Chicago—it has been a pleasure and a privilege. They would also like to thank their family for general support, especially their companion sensitive souls (Arlo, Dido, and Virtute) and their fellow intellectual soul in this life (Katie).

For inspiring conversations on the imagination, Williams would like to thank Donald Beecher, Amy Cooper, Travis DeCook, William Engel, Rebeca Helfer, and Daniel Lochman. Most of all, he wants to express gratitude to his co-editor, whose professionalism, Zoom-forgiveness, intellectual energy, and sharp scholarly insights made this collaborative project a pleasurable and edifying one.

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Introduction: The Imagination and Image in Premodern Faculty Psychology

Mark Kaethler and Grant Williams

This collection of essays reconnects the literary imagination to the study of faculty psychology¹ in light of recent scholarship on the early modern cognitive environment.² The imagination as a psycho-physiological faculty has until recently been neglected, obscured in traditional scholarship for several reasons, not the least of which is the cloud of significations and values accompanying it. “Imagination” has been used less as a term or concept than a synecdochal mantra, an abbreviated incantation for representing and defending literary activity.³ This popular usage channels aesthetic values established by eighteenth-century German idealism, which associated the genius of individual subjectivity with originality and creativity.⁴ During that period, philosophers and poets held Shakespeare up as having the quintessential “romantic imagination,” and thus there has been a long

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M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_1

history of romantic aesthetic values being projected backward onto the bard and other early modern writers, eclipsing culturally specific questions about the imagination's influence on literature.⁵ Nowadays, "imagination" has been used in another notable way that continues to muddy the waters. The word may go beyond the jurisdiction of literature and aesthetics altogether to designate a large set of discursive or cultural concerns completely detached from psychology. For instance, there is a political imagination, a historical imagination, and a cartographic imagination as well as an English imagination and a cultural imagination in general.⁶ While important in their own right, these different post-romantic and contemporary inflections of the word have diverted scholars from understanding how writers experienced the culturally specific faculty when devising their literary works for readers. The premodern imagination was neither a genius's free-standing, transcendent disposition for creativity, nor a free-floating collective memory/unconscious hovering above cultural activity, but a faculty functioning within a humoral brain attuned to its inner and outer ecosystems and involved closely in image production.

In this Introduction, we will first explain our historicist approach to the embodied imagination. Our basic argument is that the imagination, far from being isolated or autonomous, conducted its tasks alongside other psycho-physiological processes that it influenced and was, in turn, influenced by, and thus neither it nor the literature it informed can be fully understood without considering its close relations with the senses, the affections, the memory, the intellect, and other faculties. We will then argue for the importance of historicizing the embodied imagination by situating it between medieval scholasticism and the emergence of modern science, noting how it can be distinguished from Cartesianism. We will turn next to the question of why the volume's topic, indebted to several general and specific trends in contemporary criticism, is significant for the study of early modern literature. Our second argument is that, given the currency of faculty psychology, poets and playwrights regarded the literary image not as an objective picture but as an extension of thought itself that enabled writers to make visible and explore inner thinking and to intervene in the interiority of their readers. Attention to the embodied imagination thus gives us new perspectives on image production and reception in the period's literature. Finally, we will describe each of the volume's four sections along with how the essays fit into them and then conclude with thoughts on potential future directions of this newfound approach, which lie outside the scope of the volume's chapters.

By “embodied imagination,”⁷ we refer to a premodern view of imaginative thinking not only believed to be located within corporeality, but also considered to function within what has come to be called faculty psychology, a complex cognitive environment that spans both the physical and the metaphysical. Taking George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s philosophically inspired study of embodied cognition into account, we too challenge Cartesian dualism and perceive that cognition “is inherently embodied,”⁸ while turning instead to literary representations of thought processes in fiction, theater, and poetics as well as their interpretative and phenomenological implications. Though inspired by Aristotle’s *On the Soul*, faculty psychology really first emerges from the classical and Arabic commentaries on his works,⁹ and, later on, from the scholastic debates of medieval theologians building upon this earlier textual tradition. It presupposes a tripartite anthropology in which a body is, by means of spirits,¹⁰ conjoined to the soul. According to this scheme, most famously elaborated by Thomas Aquinas, the soul was thought to be composed “of a set of powers (*potentiae*), forces (*virtutes*), or faculties (*facultates*), each directed to a specific category of objects and responsible for certain kinds of operations.”¹¹ The soul possessed three primary kinds of faculties or powers: the vegetative faculty, which dealt with the fundamental functions of life (growth and reproduction); the sensitive faculty, which covered the powers of movement, emotion, and outer and inner sensation (lower cognition); and the rational or intellectual faculty, which consisted of the will, intellectual memory, and the intellect (higher cognition).¹² Individual physicians and theologians would divide and sub-divide each of these three main faculties further, devising their own complicated psychophysiological systems.¹³ Under the faculty system, the imagination belonged to what was sometimes called the “organic soul,”¹⁴ which comprised the vegetative and sensitive powers proper to the human and animal body but external to the immortal soul, which possessed the intellectual powers.¹⁵ Since cognition circumscribed all the relevant powers in the sensitive and rational faculties, the imagination’s activities could influence not only embodied but also ensouled operations.

The approach taken by this volume may be characterized as historicist in that its chapters attempt to recuperate the early modern cognitive characteristics of the embodied imagination exhibited in the period’s literature. To achieve its historicist ends, the volume minimizes as much as possible anachronistic theorizing.¹⁶ Traditionally overwritten with Cartesian, post-romantic, and modernist assumptions about psychology

and literature, the early modern literary imagination and the imagery it supposedly conceived deserve to be grafted back into their proper cognitive environment. That said, it is our belief that such historicist work on how literature implemented and challenged the preconceptions of faculty psychology can also ground, facilitate, and enhance future theoretical interventions—not displace them.

Each of the volume's chapters falls somewhere along a spectrum stretching between one pole we can call "historical cognitive studies" and an opposite pole commonly known as "historical phenomenology." Historical cognitive studies seize upon linguistic, textual, and discursive depictions of psycho-physiological processes, at times accounting for these representations by means of the social institutions or larger discourses in which they are embedded. Primary examples include Stuart Clark's contextualization of the imagination within the framework of a cultural history of vision and Todd Butler's examination of the substantial debts that seventeenth-century political discourse and culture owed to mobilizing the imagination for political action.¹⁷ Historical phenomenology, exemplified by the work of Bruce R. Smith on the senses and Gail Kern Paster, Katherine Rowe, and Mary Floyd-Wilson on the passions and the humors, adjusts the balance more toward materiality, human experience, and cultural scripts than toward the hermeneutic and Foucauldian archive with its language-based emphasis upon recovering the meaning or power-relations behind psycho-physiological processes.¹⁸ Historical phenomenology enables contemporary scholars to give the embodied experiences of early modern writers their due without dismissing their pre-scientific attitudes and beliefs as simply quaint, superstitious, or empirically wrong. Understanding these experiences in turn provides the grounds for grasping cultural differences and disclosing the horizons of the early modern "life-world." Historical cognitive studies and historical phenomenology are by no means mutually exclusive, for the two related methods are often blended, as in Suparna Roychoudhury's *Phantasmatic Shakespeare*.¹⁹

Part of the scholarly work to be done in historical cognitive studies on the imagination is to articulate the cultural discontinuities between medieval and early modern brain-work. Sixteenth-century faculty psychology underwent less a single epistemic break than a gradual tectonic slide. Thinkers increasingly questioned the Aristotelian truisms of the scholastic-oriented faculty system as more and more classical sources became available, thanks to the exertions of humanist scholars who recovered and distributed alternative texts from Neoplatonic, stoical, and skeptical

philosophical traditions.²⁰ By the 1530s, anatomists returning to the original texts and systems of Aristotle and Galen had discarded the ventricular theory of the brain,²¹ while the faculties and powers slowly gave way to the organs as the structuring principle of cognition.²² Between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there was, as Katharine Park notes, an overall trend of simplifying the byzantine schema of psychological operations theorized by the schoolmen.²³ The last and most significant change involved the gradual shift in emphasis from the intellectual to the organic soul, initiating the slide from the spiritual to the material that reaches its clearest expression in the work of Hobbes. According to Park, the early modern imagination benefited from these “widespread shifts” in faculty psychology.²⁴ The streamlining of the inner senses led to the imagination subsuming more cognitive roles and gaining a dominance it had not hitherto enjoyed. Two recent refinements of Park’s thesis productively sharpen the distinctiveness of the early modern imagination from its medieval precursors. Stuart Clark argues that during the Renaissance the ocularcentric imagination, because of its growing importance to cognition, acquired the reputation of being “an unreliable and undisciplined faculty” that needed to be governed by reason.²⁵ Its cultural centrality was caught up with the rise and fall of the visual paradigm in faculty psychology.²⁶ Clark’s careful scholarship confirms for us once again that recuperating the historicity of the early modern imagination requires parsing its interconnections to other faculties as well as its involvement in widespread trends. With a more focused approach, Roychoudhury considers how Shakespeare seizes upon “the epistemological and epistemic shifts” in the discourse of the imagination to exploit its “endless generativity as a source of aesthetic creation.”²⁷ In Roychoudhury’s account, the messy and disorderly dynamism of scientific change enables Shakespeare to go “beyond the original purview of faculty psychology.”²⁸ As important as the rise of seventeenth-century natural philosophy may be for grasping the innovative imagination,²⁹ we should not lose sight of its transitional state that in no way diminished its debts and allegiances to the longstanding faculty system. After all, the other side to the scholarly work to be done in historical cognitive studies on the imagination concerns recuperating its distinctiveness from post-Enlightenment discourses on psychology. The deep-rooted language of the faculties reverberates throughout representations of the seventeenth-century imagination. As we will see, even Descartes abides by these parameters in his philosophizing on cognition.

The paradigm of the three-faculty soul does not present a view of the imagination congruent with modern attitudes inherited from the German idealists and Romantic poets. In the wake of Blake, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, the imagination for literature became a dominant, if not the preeminent, power of the mind.³⁰ In contrast, the premodern imagination belonged to the body for it was strongly affiliated with sensation, being classified as one of the inner senses which performed the necessary operations in the cognitive interval between the five external senses and the higher thinking of intellection.³¹ For that reason, as some scholars observe, the concept of the mind did not exist in faculty psychology after the manner that it does for modernity.³² Put a little differently, one cannot map the mind-body axis of Cartesianism onto the faculty system, since the cognition conducted by the inner senses was already embedded in the corporeal. This volume counteracts Cartesian assumptions about the “mental” imagination and strives, in Deanna Smid’s words, “to trace a sort of ‘body-imagination’ or ‘imagination-body’.”³³ Doing so means stubbornly preserving some semblance of the psycho-cultural difference of pre-Cartesian cognition.³⁴ The editors of *Embodied Cognition and Shakespeare’s Theatre* further complicate the question, because gendered, racialized, and classed bodies by no means validate a single totality of bodily sameness, while the mind, too, is a “wildly heterogeneous” assemblage of capacities: what contemporaries might regard as the mind-body problem is not a problem at all in the early modern period, but an “open,” “contingent,” and “fluid” assortment of psycho-physiological phenomena.³⁵ We agree, only adding for the sake of historical precision that pluralizing premodern mentalities and corporealities must not forget that thinking was thought to straddle both the body and the soul; otherwise, combatting Cartesianism may take one more into the speculative fleshy realm of Merleau-Ponty than into the pre-Cartesian epoch of the incorporated *anima*. Indeed, Johnson, Sutton, and Tribble’s conception of a “body-mind” does well to rethink the hegemony of mind over body perpetuated by Cartesian dualism, but in the process of rightfully challenging that understanding, the volume’s cognitive-science scope does not have room and time to explore the multifaceted dimensions of faculty psychology. Our collection of essays returns to the problem anew to do just that.

For literary scholars studying premodern cognition, bringing the soul into the modular mix may appear to reintroduce a dualism of sorts. Philosophers have long associated monotheism’s binary of body and soul with Cartesian dualism.³⁶ Nevertheless, Aquinas, whose

Aristotelian-inspired faculty system remains behind early modern beliefs on cognition, distinguished his outlook from Platonism, which regarded the human being as a soul merely using a body, its *de facto* prison. For Aquinas, a person is a hybrid, a composite of both the physical and the metaphysical.³⁷ Explaining the ways in which these two substances actually worked together became the central issue of medieval and early Renaissance debates on the subject: how do the material inner senses and the immaterial intellect interact with one another? Since the imagination belonged to the inner senses, its inferior cognitive abilities would die with the mortal body, not belonging to the soul as did, for instance, the intellective memory. Because the phantasm or sensible species could not be simply impressed upon the intellect, the focus of medieval and early Renaissance debates was on how the immaterial intellect could produce an intelligible species by receiving and acting upon the sense-based phantasm.³⁸ Another way of negotiating the split between lower and upper thinking is to acknowledge what Charis Charalampous terms the “bisected and bi-subjective self,” in effect designating the double cognition that encompasses body and soul. Charalampous’s work foregrounds the “intelligent body,” which grants corporeality’s ability to understand and reason. Coming at the problematic from the opposite direction, Caroline Bynum has drawn out the “somaticization of the soul,” since medieval theology described the soul as having body parts, such as spiritual eyes and ears and, when dealing with purgatory, considered the self to be a psychosomatic unit.³⁹ Intelligent bodies and corporealized intellects challenge further Cartesian dualist accounts.

And yet, to insist on an unqualified Cartesian break, like a distinct scientific rupture, is to court historical exaggeration and inaccuracy when studying the early modern imagination.⁴⁰ What we mean by Cartesianism is the reception of Descartes—less so the sum total of his philosophical writings, which evince ambiguous continuities and discontinuities. In the *Meditations*, Descartes by no means rejects wholesale faculty psychology and actually excludes the untrustworthy imagination from the cogito, equating the intellect, not the inner senses, with the mental.⁴¹ At the same time, in his earlier work, Descartes assigns to the faculty a higher—and, according to Dennis L. Sepper, a “revolutionary”—cognitive role in imposing geometrical models onto the world for harnessing mathematical thinking.⁴² The founder of the “New Philosophy” himself thus looks both backward and forward when it comes to conceiving the imagination. Embodied by Descartes, the two epistemic shifts we want to acknowledge

situate this early modern faculty within a double historical dialectic, which at once distinguishes it from the past and from the Enlightenment. Backward looking, it continues Aristotelianism with Platonic shadings while detaching itself from the quibbling rigors of Aquinas; forward looking, it begins to adapt itself to the emerging new science, while not dispensing entirely with the faculty system.

We thus could do much worse for an image of the premodern imagination than Bacon's invocation of two-faced Janus, the Roman god of time and transitions as well as gates. Bacon's personification not only captures the faculty's doubleness from a historical angle but also describes its ambivalence from a spatial perspective. In *The Advancement of Learning*, he calls the imagination an agent or nuntius, who travels between the two jurisdictions of the "minde," on the one hand the "judiciall" (understanding and reason) responsible for establishing the decree and on the other hand the "ministeriall" (will, appetite, and affection) charged with acting upon that decree. More like a courtier or ambassador than a deity, "this *Ianus of Imagination*," Bacon asserts, "hath differing faces; for the face towards *Reason*, hath the print of Truth. But the face towards *Action*, hath the print of Good."⁴³ Working well within the bounds of faculty psychology, Bacon has writ large a common observation made by today's critics: the imagination holds a liminal position amongst the other mental powers.⁴⁴ In Bacon's description, it mediates between the intellect and the inner senses, between the reason and the will, and between truth and goodness, in other words, between epistemology and ethics. This volume likewise seeks to understand the early modern imagination through its powers relative to other faculties. One of the legacies of post-romanticism is that we have lost sight of the mutual interdependence of the literary imagination and faculty psychology. The literary imagination yields its meanings according to its multiple relations with a constellation of premodern conceptual nodes: the body, the soul, spirits, senses, intellect, will, memory, desire, emotions, and so on.

The chapters, for the most part—and for good reason—concern themselves with the incorporation and implementation of the imagination in romances, plays, and poems rather than focusing exclusively on medical or theological theorizing. The highpoint of innovations in faculty psychology's development occurred between 1200 and 1400 and, although the legacy of medieval scholasticism was being challenged by the time of the sixteenth century, England's writers, rehearsing basic scholastic issues, did not make any substantive philosophical contributions to understanding

the imagination until the seventeenth century with Hobbes and Locke.⁴⁵ Neither do we have definitive theoretical overviews of faculty psychology in English after the manner of, for example, Gregor Reisch's and Philip Melanchthon's influential Latin textbooks.⁴⁶ Relevant passages on the imagination and cognition that may have been read by English writers are scattered throughout homegrown compendia, commonplace books, essays, and medical handbooks as well as translations of similar continental books.⁴⁷ Where exciting and innovative experimentation does occur is in poetry, romances, and plays, simply because English literature during the period was coming into its own as a vernacular force through the growth of the printing press and the development of the theater. With the professionalization of these creative industries—albeit still within a patronage system—poets and playwrights increasingly reflected upon *poesis* to scrutinize their own processes of creation and to justify their performances in light of theology's longstanding suspicions of the imagination, particularly Protestantism's apprehension of the image's associations with Catholicism, superstition, and idolatry. It is no accident, then, that in order to defend their respective poetics, Philip Sidney and George Puttenham strategically posit a firm distinction between a corrupt and a healthy fantasy.⁴⁸ Poets and playwrights continually needed to demonstrate control over their image-making capacities so that readers could trust that their works would not lead their thoughts astray with unruly cognition. Consequently, mental and corporeal self-governance became the subject matter, as well as the *raison d'être*, of many literary works, which were not only guided by the imagination in their creation and reception but also devised allegorically embodied figurations of the faculty.⁴⁹

Literature offers scholars some of the most fertile material on how the early modern imagination pragmatically worked and how writers understood its role within culture. But it also gives them another entry point into faculty psychology through its preoccupation with the embodied image. By foregrounding this preoccupation, the volume's chapters break with a dominant trend in twentieth-century criticism, which, heavily influenced by modernism and post-romantic aesthetics, has treated imagery as a formalist literary element, a verbal building block that contributes to an overall product or object of creativity, centered on the communication of meaning and emotion.⁵⁰ New Criticism would take this methodology to new heights by discouraging readers from committing the affective fallacy, thereby completely emptying figurative language of its psychological import.⁵¹ Needless to say, such a formalist approach to Renaissance

literature is anachronistic, for, as Rosemond Tuve clearly argued during New Criticism's heyday, Renaissance writers held the image up to a criterion of rhetorical efficacy that took into account the mental make-up of their readers for purposes of persuasion.⁵² The period's revival of rhetoric and oratory in education impressed upon preachers, poets, and playwrights the power of the image to persuade and move readers to accept their arguments, attitudes, and beliefs. In recognizing pre-Cartesian embodiment, the collection pursues the cognitive implications of rhetorical imagery with greater resolve. Rhetorical images had an overwhelming impact on the psycho-physiological because thought itself was deemed to be an image generated and manipulated by cognition, which would start with a sensible, continue with a sensory impression and phantasm, and end with intellection, abstraction. And so, emblems, icons, ekphrases, theatrical spectacles, and allegories could directly intervene in and modify the thinking of readers and auditors. Thus the period's rhetorical image is not just a creative product, engendered by and confined to the jurisdiction of the imagination—as romantic writers believed. It was a site of collaboration, competition, and conflict among all the faculties and bore ethical and social consequences for those who conceived it and those who received it. As this volume's chapters demonstrate, literature reflected upon the imaginative processes of cognition by mapping out faculty psychology, and modeled self-governance by exploring character motivation, and yet it also rather significantly marshaled the rhetorical image as a cognitive artifact that allowed authors to sculpt—for better or worse—the interiorities of their readers.

While periodically in conversation with Bacon, Hobbes, and Cavendish, the chapters predominantly deal with the works of Spenser, Shakespeare, and Donne. Two major reasons may account for their prominence in a volume on imagination. First, these three authors are highly skilled at fashioning images, putting into practice Sidnean poetics, which judges literary activity to be a matter of forming a "speaking picture." Outperforming its rival disciplines, poetry for Sidney yields to "the powers of the minde an image" that strikes, pierces, and possesses "the sight of the soule" more effectively than does the abstract precept of philosophy or the unethical exemplum of history.⁵³ Second, these three authors each establish an innovative corpus of work committed to exploring and grasping how interiority determines the trajectory of human experiences and behaviors: Spenser's *Faerie Queene* uses baroque allegorization to dramatize the inner contests of faculty psychology behind his knight's quests; Shakespeare

complicates the soliloquy with introspective ambiguity in order to enrich the portrayal of embodied motivation on the stage; and Donne elaborates over his career as a poet and preacher a sophisticated meditative practice that, caught between Catholicism and Protestantism, finds novel ways of harnessing the power of the conceit to contemplate the divine.

Taking a historicist perspective blended at times with historical phenomenology, the chapters investigate the ways in which early modern literature considers the imagination's interactions with embodied and ensouled processes, as well as manifesting it in various cognitive artifacts, such as allegory, conceits, icons, food, musical instruments, memory theaters, and theatrical properties and persons. This volume's chapters are not limited to the narrow constraints of their subsections, even though these categories serve well to highlight their central arguments. Emphasizing that imagining and fantasizing belonged to a greater cognitive ecosystem, the volume's organization reflects the imagination's interdependence upon and friction with faculty psychology's other operations. The subsections, arranged according to the hierarchy of the faculties, move from the external senses, through memory, the most dominant inner sense, and then to the intellect or understanding, that is, spiritual cognition, while individual chapters regularly nuance, if not problematize, this hierarchy by identifying interdependencies.

"The Visual Imagination" refers not just to the external sense of sight, which, since antiquity, had been "the most privileged of the senses in Western culture"; it more importantly acknowledges Clark's assertion that "the workings of the early modern imagination were conceived of primarily as visual processes," further complicated in the period by the literary tradition of allying poetry with painting, which Sidney integrates into his poetics.⁵⁴ Donald Beecher begins the volume with a close examination of the House of Busyrane, Spenser's allegorical rendering of the imagining faculty in which the rapid succession of embodied images envisages the sequential singularity of Amoret's consciousness, distracted and distressed by lovesickness. Darryl Chalk continues this focus on how the ocularcentric fancy is prone to ill health by turning to *The Winter's Tale*, where Shakespeare manipulates the seen and unseen onstage to heal the rift between the veracity of the external senses and the delusions of the imagination. Amy Cooper, like Chalk, capitalizes on what cannot be seen in order to argue that Donne's response to Protestant iconophobia is to craft images that resist imaginative visualization.

“Sensory and Affective Imaginings” reveals how sensory experiences form the basis of the imagination’s phantasms but can also manipulate them, sometimes in dangerous ways. As part of the inner senses, the imagination connects to and relies upon the sensory impressions filtered by the common sense and upon past experiences stored and revisited in the memory. And yet the imagination could also access the memory’s treasury to hypothesize affects toward actual things and events that had not yet been experienced. Literature simulates this imaginative process of hypothetical affect to instruct interpreters to exercise vigilance when it comes to the senses’ generation of pleasure, thereby stimulating desires which could lead the imagination astray and with it the will. However, as Susan Sachon argues, writers could also instrumentalize this process to guide audiences’ affective responses. Her chapter takes a phenomenological approach to Shakespeare’s violent, embodied language in *King Lear* and *Othello*; his metaphors prompt the audience’s imaginations to conjure familiar sense memories to help them comprehend that which their bodies have not physically known. Catherine Reedy’s chapter on *The Rape of Lucrece* explores Tarquin’s infected imagination as well as its production of falsely objectified images of Lucrece alongside poetic discussions of *raptus* as an embodied affect. And Jan Purnis raises questions of taste—specifically how it can generate imagined affect with respect to appetite—in order to historicize the neglected “imagination of eating”; her chapter shows how this process generates personal, as well as cultural, affective responses that can result in social stigma, illustrated by examples of disgust selected from Shakespeare’s *Pericles* and Ben Jonson’s *Bartholomew Fair*.

The volume’s third section turns to the memory, the imagination’s closest rival and collaborator within the inner senses. The interrelationship between the two types of cognition can be keenly discerned in the art of memory, originally the fourth rhetorical canon that exploits the spatial and visual orientation of Aristotelian faculty psychology in order to enhance the orator’s remembering and recollection.⁵⁵ Expecting its practitioners to craft evocative imagery, the art of memory depends upon the visual imagination so much so that it may be equally deemed an art of the imagination. Bearing this in mind, the chapters unravel the imaginative implications of mnemonic artifice and architecture in literature. William E. Engel grapples with articulating the barely expressible, often evanescent power of the premodern poetic imagination, whose reflective and generative processes he locates in the memory palaces of Langland, Spenser, and Bacon. Considering a less salutary side to imagining, Grant Williams demonstrates

how Spenser's cave of Mammon deforms the classical memory palace to warn courtiers about the treacherous state of mind induced by the mercantile environment's proliferation of golden phantasms. Looking ahead to the last section "Higher Imaginings," Pavneet Aulakh traces through Donne's sermons the ways in which the preacher's imagination and memory implement together a "gallery" of pictures to correct the congregation's erring understanding and wayward will. Rounding out the section, Rebeca Helfer explains how Cavendish's work of fancy establishes a distinctive *poesis* for fictional world-building, based upon, yet ingeniously surpassing, the memory theaters of the male-dominated art of memory tradition.

Lastly, "Higher Imaginings" follows the common view that the imagination was entwined with the sensitive soul, but it pairs this view with the long tradition, stemming as far back as Averroes, "that the agent intellect was God."⁵⁶ The intermediary imagination connects the other faculties with the intellectual soul, and it participates in faculty cognition, which for Aquinas's influential philosophy is both embodied and ensouled. The contributors explore works that accordingly recognize the imagination as the vehicle that operates between the intellect and sensory experience to facilitate higher cognition. Smid explores the distinction between the musical fantasy our senses hear in Shakespeare's *Pericles* and the music of the spheres that our souls, guided by Pericles, access through our imagination. In Donne's poetry Anton Bergstrom explores similar meeting places that beckon readers to bridge the gap between the sensory and spiritual. Also showing how God cannot be fully known, Mark Kaethler explains how Tourneur's characters model, for his audience, the imagination's important role in discerning sensed reality to achieve enlightenment, an ability that the titular Calvinist reprobate of *The Atheist's Tragedy* lacks. Travis DeCook, returning us to Donne and bookending the section, compares his Christological *poesis* with Hobbes's sovereign to argue that modernity signals a shift to a new secular model of the imagination.

The embodied imagination's connectedness to different faculties and modes of thinking, its healthy and sickly involvement in many levels of textual and cultural production, and its varied characterizations by preachers, physicians, poets, playwrights, and other types of early modern authors invite new directions for scholars working in sexuality, gender, class, and other fields. For instance, historical cognitive studies can bring to bear on the embodied imagination timely and germane questions raised by pre-modern critical race studies. Given David Sterling Brown's recent

discussion of Hamlet,⁵⁷ how might Galenic accounts of the imagination harbor humoral presuppositions that stigmatize blackness as a source of the white body's pathological states? Considering Benedict S. Robinson's examination of Phantastes's swarthinness in *The Faerie Queene*,⁵⁸ what other ways might early modern literature personify and racialize the imagination? How might the cognition of such racialized imaginations construct phantasms threatening to English thinking and how might its representations foster xenophobia around invasive images, emotions, and desires, reinforcing idealized notions of white bodies and white minds? Establishing the historicist contexts of the early modern imagination and its mediating roles within the faculty system provides a firm starting point for further interrogations into the social, political, and ethical ramifications of this ubiquitous way of thinking in early modern English literature and culture. In other words, there is still much work to be done in recovering early modern imaginings.

NOTES

1. Although classical times distinguished the imagination from the phantasy, the words "phantasy," "fantsie," and "fancy" were "used interchangeably with 'imagination'" during the early modern period. Rosky, "Imagination in the English Renaissance," p. 50, n. 4. Over the last 15 years, there has been a surge of interest in the cognitive side to the premodern imagination with important studies written by Clark, Butler, Karnes, Smid, and Roychoudhury.
2. A major collection of essays in this area is Mary Floyd-Wilson and Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr.'s volume, in which they challenge the Cartesian dualism "between 'inside' and 'outside'" by showing how "an ecological perspective highlights their mutual penetrability"; their collection remains focused on the body and its environs rather than how the processes understood in faculty psychology influence embodiment within the world. Floyd-Wilson and Sullivan, Jr., "Introduction," p. 3.
3. Helen Gardiner, for instance, can entitle her Harvard lectures *In Defence of the Imagination*, while not really discussing the psychological faculty whatsoever.
4. Daston, "Fear and Loathing of the Imagination in Science," p. 81.
5. Pechter, "The Romantic Inheritance," p. 58.
6. These different imaginations may correspond to a collective memory or a cultural "imaginary" as loosely used after Lacan's notion. See Philip Goldfarb Styr, *Shakespeare's Political Imagination: The Historicism of*

Setting; Chloe Wheatley, *Epic, Epitome, and the Early Modern Historical Imagination*; D.K. Smith, *The Cartographic Imagination in Early Modern England: Re-writing the World in Marlowe, Spenser, Raleigh and Marvell*; Eva Johanna Holmberg, *Jews in the Early Modern English Imagination: A Scattered Nation*; and Jeanne Shami, *Renaissance Tropologies: The Cultural Imagination of Early Modern England*.

7. We recognize the wide range of exciting work on embodiment that is being done in the fields of feminism, gender, sexuality, and race, for we must not forget the term's capaciousness and plasticity: "embodiment as a critical concept bridges the material and the discursive, the experiential and the analytical, the sensory, the affective, and the cognitive." Traub, "Introduction," p. 32.
8. Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*, p. 5.
9. Park, "The Organic Soul," pp. 467–68; Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 43. Katharine Park's landmark essay on the organic soul has had an influential role in setting the parameters of scholarship on faculty psychology. Over the last few decades there has also been a growing attention to the topics of memory, the senses, and affect, within the larger horizon of the body. By way of a few examples, see Engel, Loughnane, and Williams, *The Memory Arts in Renaissance England* on the natural memory; on the external senses, see Woolgar, *The Senses in Late Medieval England*, and Milner, *The Senses and the English Reformation*; and on affect, see Mullaney, *The Reformation of Emotions in the Age of Shakespeare*. This growing attention has generated renewed interest in the cultural and theoretical significance of the premodern faculty system.
10. Milner, *The Senses and the English Reformation*, p. 18.
11. Bakker, "The Soul and its Parts," p. 63.
12. Park, p. 467.
13. Bakker, p. 64.
14. Park, p. 464.
15. On the intellectual powers, see Kessler, "The Intellective Soul."
16. Kaethler has noted the various issues that can stem from anachronistic applications of cognitive science, and while there is merit to their point that 4E cognition is more conducive to literary studies, this volume avoids taking a cognitive lens to the literature in order to instead explore the previously neglected historical dimensions of faculty psychology in cognition and phenomenology. See Kaethler, "Shakespeare and Cognition: Scientism, Theory, and 4E."
17. Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, pp. 39–77; Butler, *Imagination and Politics in Seventeenth-Century England*.
18. Smith, *Phenomenal Shakespeare*, p. xvii; Paster, Rowe, Floyd-Wilson, "Introduction," pp. 13–18. Historical phenomenology must not be

confused with Husserlian phenomenology, although the former loosely draws upon different features of the latter. The former is a practical enterprise informed in part by the latter, which encompasses a major twentieth-century school and method that goes beyond philosophy into the social sciences and sciences.

19. Roychoudhury, *Phantasmatic Shakespeare*, p. 18.
20. Park and Kessler, "The Concept of Psychology," p. 461.
21. Clark, p. 43. For a history of the ventricular doctrine, see Bennett and Hacker, "The Motor System in Neuroscience," pp. 1–52. Quite often the two systems are lumped together, when major differences exist, the chief of which might be that Aristotle approaches the image/phiasm from the starting point of the world, whereas Galen regards it from the cauldron of humors within the body.
22. Park, p. 479, p. 481.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 480–81. One of the casualties was the doctrine of the species, a source of contentious debate in medieval times. See Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*.
24. On the significance of Park's dissertation, see Clark, p. 43.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 49–50.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
27. Roychoudhury, p. 13, p. 15.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
29. For the ways that the imagination influenced the rise of visualized or pictured images in transmitting and understanding scientific knowledge, see Bakker, Lüthy, and Swan, "Introduction," pp. 1–2.
30. For Coleridge, "the human mind can be heightened nearly to god-like state through the Imagination." Jang, "The Imagination 'Beyond' and 'Within' Language," p. 509. See also Schlutz, *Mind's World*, p. 12, and Brann, *The World of the Imagination*, p. 505, p. 509.
31. Park, p. 471.
32. Milner, p. 39. For the difficulty of defining the nature of Aristotelian psychology, see Aho, "The Status of Psychology as Understood by Sixteenth-Century Scholastics."
33. Smid, *The Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*, p. 6.
34. We recognize with the editors of *Embodied Cognition and Shakespeare's Theatre* that the label "mind-body" "bears traces of the two connected dichotomous assumptions that our contributors seek to combat." Johnson, Sutton, and Tribble, "Introduction," p. 1. Inevitably, our terminology and inclinations, which are determined by our own historical placement, may erect conceptual barriers and blind spots, thereby making the retrieval of the unadulterated pre-Cartesian an unobtainable ideal.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 3, p. 6. See also Kaethler.

36. Stump, *Aquinas*, p. 191.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 193. See, as well, Milner, p. 20. When Ficino entered the picture, his philosophizing revised the Aristotelian model, although even this change might not be said to be dualist. See de Boer, “Dualism and the Mind-Body Problem,” pp. 223–24.
38. See Spruit, vol. 1, pp. 7–8, and Milner, p. 38.
39. Charalampous, *Rethinking the Mind-Body Relationship in Early Modern Literature, Philosophy and Medicine*, p. 1, p. 2. Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity*, pp. 291–302.
40. We should not overprivilege the shorthand of “pre-Cartesianism.” See Johnson, Sutton, and Tribble, p. 2.
41. See, for example, Schlutz, p. 4.
42. Sepper, “Descartes,” p. 33. See Nikulin, *Matter, Imagination and Geometry* for Descartes’s contribution to the intellectual history of understanding the relation of mathematics to intelligible matter and the imagination.
43. Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, pp. 105–6.
44. Clark, p. 43; Schlutz, pp. 3–4, p. 5; Nauta and Pätzold, “Introduction,” p. ix; Smid, p. 14; Roychoudhury, p. 15.
45. “Theories of cognition were debated with more passion in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries than they had been since the time of Aristotle and than they would be until the seventeenth century.” Karnes, *Imagination, Meditation, and Cognition in the Middle Ages*, p. 3. See also Park, p. 464. As Milner summarizes, there’s little work done on the fifteenth century probably because of a “vast historiographical lacuna” in this period. Milner, p. 46.
46. Park, p. 465; Kessler, p. 517.
47. For example, see Smid’s list of the motley range of medical, philosophical, natural historical, and theological treatises that she makes use of in her book. Smid, pp. 8–9.
48. Sidney, *Defence of Poesie*, pp. 112–13; Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, p. 110.
49. Although Spenser’s Phantastes—besides Langland’s Imaginatif—is discussed in several chapters, some other examples include Thomas Tomkis’s *Lingua*, with *Phantastes* assisting *Sensus* alongside *Memoria*, and Jonson’s masque *Vision of Delight*, which tempers its allegorical figuration of Fant’sy through the powers of Peace and Wonder.
50. According to Caroline F.E. Spurgeon, it is “the little word-picture used by a poet or prose writer to illustrate, illuminate and embellish his thought.” Spurgeon, *Shakespeare’s Imagery and What it Tells Us*, p. 9.
51. Wimsatt and Beardsley, “The Affective Fallacy.”
52. Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, pp. 180–83.
53. Sidney, p. 91.

54. Clark, p. 46.
55. For a recent introduction to this art, see Engel, Loughnane, and Williams, *The Memory Arts in Renaissance England*, pp. 35–38.
56. Kessler, p. 496.
57. Brown, “Code Black,” p. 111.
58. Robinson, “‘Swarth’ Phantastes,” pp. 136–37.

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PART I

The Visual Imagination



CHAPTER 2

The Imagination in Distress: Amoret's Brain and the Busyrane Factor in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Book 3

Donald Beecher

Wonder it is to see, in diverse minds, / How diversely love doth his pageants
play. (bk. 3, canto 5, st. 1)¹

Spenser's Amoret, in presumed crisis, brings his third book of the *Faerie Queene* to a close. We are told at the outset of Book 4 that she had nearly completed her emblematic role as the embodiment of married love through her union with Scudamour. But her mission remains incomplete, ostensibly causing her to experience a state of obsessive turmoil. The global topic of Book 3 is chastity, one of the most ambiguous of all the virtues, for in essence, in marriage one must give it up to pursue it, and it would seem, in Amoret's case, that even with her vows spoken, she is constitutionally unable to proceed. For the thematically oriented reader, this episode also appears as the finale to a book about the many manifestations

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M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_2

of love, all of them potentially activating the imaginative faculties of the brain by representing love's conflicting images to the self, potentially evoking a maelstrom of emotions. In *Busyrane's House*, a place of confinement doubling as her own brain, Spenser sets up an allegorical tour of the imagining faculty that is concerned with erotic desire, social propriety, and the intentions of prospective mates.² As a product of the imagination, the episode resembles a kind of stream of consciousness by running a court masque inside her brain. Regarding the question of the interiority of characters so revealed, Amoret's lived experience is open to interpretation according to each reader's capacity to absorb all the data afforded by Spenser concerning her emotions, beliefs, and inner experiences in keeping with his or her own endowed capacities (folk psychology) to experience or theorize other minds. In brief, the reader's challenge is to discern the kind of story Spenser is telling us by entering the depth of the protagonist's mind through the images with which it is revealed.

Amoret is held for seven months in the House of Busyrane, its location unspecified, while her husband, Scudamour, is just outside bouncing his head on the ground in dismay over his inability to enter. Amoret is fastened to a pillar in the third room in thrall to Busyrane's magic spell, with the exception of her daily tour in Cupid's ambulatory triumph issuing from the magician's inner sanctum—a pained spectacle of Love's conquests. The entire episode is predicated on the poetic tradition in which Cupid is as ready to display those who, for love, have become psychological wreckage, as he is to appear in masques in celebration of the happily married. The masque in which she is a mutilated prize may be her own phantasmagorical recollection of the one performed at her wedding,³ or it may be a production of Busyrane as author who inscribes Amoret into the pageantry of a sensual culture somehow responsible for the afflictions of her imagination, tantamount to a form of literary rape.⁴ Rendering matters even more complex, this same Cupid is also an agent-narrator troubling her thoughts, the same who lived in the Garden of Venus where Amoret was raised to be “th'ensample of true love” and “chaste affection” (bk. 3, canto 6, st. 52)—in effect one of her former playmates. Cupid, for Renaissance mythologists, had become the compound personification of every dimension of human erotic desire. But in that capacity, he has also become an emblem of the imagination where eroticized images may take rational thinking captive, or even an active “agent” of thoughts concerning aberrant and dysfunctional love, thereby collaborating in or activating the magician's spell over her imagination. In this, allegory strives to

illustrate the complexities of human cognition. Even the early physicians turned to the lore of Cupid for its etiological insights into some of the more mysterious aspects of eroticized thinking.⁵ The mind of the runaway Amoret, profoundly loyal in her love yet missing in action, constitutes a study in the mysteries of the pathological imagination. Her mind is overrun by violent images pertaining ultimately to chastity itself as a perplexing mental imperative of abstinence and engagement.

But first, within the context of Spenserian studies, no assessment can be made on the topic of Amoret's brain without further acknowledgment of the critical debate it inspired, beginning in the 1960s, when the history of ideas and New Criticism gave way to psychological studies, feminist and gender studies, and the new historicism.⁶ Discontentment emerged with the once widely endorsed reading that prevailed from the time of C.S. Lewis down to Thomas Roche, Jr.: that Amoret was made mentally captive by a sudden frigidity on her wedding night, turning her thoughts into a whorl of distorted images,⁷ the meanings of which were revealed through the invention of the magician-ravisher's house. The result is a new kind of chivalric quest as Britomart gains entry not only to a magic house but to Amoret's brain where she breaks the spell simply by virtue of her militant fearlessness and her purposeful chastity in pursuit of Artegall.⁸ It might be said that one chaste maiden is liberated merely by the presence of another and, in the process, the house of weird thinking simply disappears.⁹ But many of the new readings, cherry-picked to interested ends, were barely concerned, if at all, with Amoret's perplexity and state of mind. Lesley Brill said of both Amoret and Scudamour that they were merely immature and inclined to hysteria.¹⁰ Other critics resented the idea that Amoret was held responsible for her own distress or were disappointed that Spenser's allegorical mode failed to account for the interiority of any of the characters involved.¹¹ If Britomart was her psychotherapist in liberating her from the fixations of her own thinking, what constitutes her therapeutic methods? What, in fact, did Britomart know apart from her militancy-fits-all approach to life in the name of an intransigent virtue, so how could she help? In considering the tapestries and masque as but "idle shews" (bk. 3, canto 12, st. 29), was she not manifesting her own incomprehension of them? What was Busyrane to the operations of the imagination in the *camerae* of her brain? For some, these cantos were indeed concerned with the imagination, but only that of the reader subjected to "pornographic" Petrarchan and Ovidian fantasies.¹² Frye sees Amoret as merely the captive reader of Busyrane's sick imagination, which is heavily

influenced by a literary culture deemed oppressively patriarchal.¹³ Spenser's profiling of faculty psychology was misguided because the contents of the house could not be aligned with the preoccupations of a single mind and thus could not serve to endow it with personality and interiority. Putatively in this, Spenser had failed. Yet, his experiment in the projection of the mental faculties of his characters in contemporary scientific terms remains an important dimension of his poetic and cannot be devoid of intended meaning. Castle Joyous already serves as a model for the House of Busyrane as "an outward manifestation of Malecasta's inner state."¹⁴ She is in herself licentious in ways which control her actions, even as her psyche emblemizes a licentious culture. Should not the Amoret episode function in similar ways?

Amoret has a brain with faculties, including an imagination.¹⁵ Busyrane has cast a spell on her personally and is potentially an agent in her cognitive processes, passively or proactively. In her story, her unsettled imagination plays a role in destabilizing her reality. Her marital crisis is enacted as a chivalric plot of abduction, detainment, solicitation, torment, and rescue of a kind popular in court masques as epitomized by St. George, who slays an emblematic dragon with evil intentions in order to rescue a sacrificial maiden, in many versions given in marriage to her liberator. It has all the force of a collective folk tale, its psychological truth verified by its uninterrupted oral transmission. Allegory follows Britomart inside, as it were, in exemplifying an overwhelmed imagination set in motion by neurotic fear—the cause of which is ambiguously personified as a ravisher both internalized as a frenzied process and externalized as a male predator—thus calling for careful analysis in relation to her immediate circumstances. Allegory, it has been said, is little concerned with the specific interiority of persons because it deals in stereotypes. Yet in anatomizing her mental faculties directly, readers must project upon those faculties the fullness of her personhood, granting to her a plenary self with desires, beliefs, and motivations. The profiling of Amoret's imagination now activates our own "commonsense" psychology—our full complex of abilities in intuiting the experiences, values, and intentional stances of others, however literary, stylized, or transformed by conventions. This interpretive process is critical to all readers' participation in the act of reading.

This participation brings us to the Renaissance *scientia* of the imagination upon which Spenser modeled Amoret. Aristotle's *On the Soul* provided a founding scripture on the nature, scope, and uniqueness of the human imagination—that faculty which *represents* sensations of all kinds in

the mind after they are removed from immediate experience. Thus, it dwells upon images or phantasms, for merely to think and learn, a man "must have an image before him,"¹⁶ which is to say that images occupy the mind continuously in random or volitional sequences. They are processed according to the operative virtues of the brain in its sundry chambers or ventricles, whether as aesthetically charged objects, all past events including moments of crisis, or fictive narratives. Such "scripts" may also be contrived in relation to problem solving, self-exculpating rationalizations, confirmation biases, obsessive wish-fulfillments, or soul-terrifying phantasies. Hence, in philosophical terms, the imagination is the linking faculty between sensation and memory; it is the zone where images are held for comparative and analytical investigation, playful and recreative representations, or brooding and often involuntary depictions of the critical choices and circumstances which define our failures and advancements in a survival-oriented world. In its involuntary configurations, it can lead to madness. In that salvo, Aristotle allowed that animals remember what they have seen. Under the influence of those phantasms, they perform many actions, but only humans have "intellect" through which the phantasms are made "intelligible," albeit at the risk of having that reasoning "obscured by passion or disease."¹⁷ In the early modern period, the tri-cameral brain was not only discussed in its finer points, but achieved a place among the received ideas of the age.¹⁸ Even the literati were versed in the leading notions of faculty psychology and could relate the images of art to the originating features of the mind which produced them. Meanwhile, physicians remained faithful to the synchronicity presumed between pathological causes and the psycho-social fixations of the obsessive imagination. As one among many, the medical philosopher, Jacques Ferrand, wrote a lengthy historico-clinical study of erotomania or love melancholy as a disease of the imagination, together with its diagnostics and cures. Spenser, aware of these principles, approached the interiority of his character through the pathologies of the mind. In this, his Amoret becomes one of the clearest literary representations of the "embodied imagination," making her spell of neurosis the substance of her interiority.

By conflating Aristotelian philosophy with the Galenic humors, medical philosophers went on to anatomize all the operations of melancholy love. Love begins with a visible form (phantasm or species) which progresses toward the intellect where it is submitted to reason. Once the image becomes a motion of the appetites, however, reason is disabled.¹⁹ In this "dotage" the "imagination or the judgment becomes depraved—a

condition to be found in all melancholics insofar as they fashion a thousand fantastical chimeras and imagine objects that neither exist nor ever will. Fear and sorrow are the inseparable symptoms of this miserable passion.”²⁰ Amoret, by default, finds a place in this profile.

“Busyrane” may hence personify the errancy of her mind, hi-jacked by obsessions and involuntary passions. Conventionally he does this to her “because his sinful lust she would not serve” (bk. 4, canto 1, st. 4), yet he manifests no direct erotic intentions. The spell is a cognitive, operational assault upon her mental chastity, a violation of her purity.²¹ Largely it is the subconscious mind that chooses the contents of consciousness, prioritizing the issues too urgent to our thriving to be voluntarily repressed, however painful and perplexing. The emotions are a powerful part of that triage process; they incite the replaying of these obsessive images in varied, even phantasmagorical forms. In sum, how people respond to imagery is closely related to the psychophysiology of the emotions.²² Amoret has committed herself to a master script for her life—to love Scudamour “for evermore” (bk. 3, canto 6, st. 53), yet there are elements still terrorizing her, abetted by the Busyrane factor of her own emotionalized thinking.

The tri-cameral brain is the structure within which the faculties of cognition are housed. But Spenser also allegorizes it as the locus of a therapeutic adventure in semi-chivalric terms, thus creating a double mimetic level consisting of the house or palace where characters act and meet, and the interiority of a single brain, hence doubling representational events in the literary landscape as agency within the brain itself. In that double perspective, Spenser experiments, to the extent his conventions allow, with what it is like for a distressed person to experience clinical melancholia. To be sure, the emotions seated in the heart are involved, but her disorder is fundamentally cerebral. Britomart, in circulating through the chambers of her brain, witnesses a plethora of images emblematically pertaining to Amoret’s emotional suffering. In the first chamber there are fixed pictures which Britomart is free to contemplate at her leisure according to her own directed gaze, while in the second room she fixes on images in motion directing her attention as they pass in the form of a military triumph. Spenser models the compound motions of a distressed consciousness according to three complementary modes: volitional attention (looking at pictures), transfixed attention by an autonomous engine of flowing information (the masque), and stunned intellection disabled as though by magic (the tableau of Amoret confronted by Busyrane). They epitomize three ways of characterizing the cognitive sensations of what it “feels like”

to meta-perceive the mind from the stance of a witness. They are models for imagining the flow of information in consciousness. A principal novelty of the experiment is the degree to which thinking is viewed as kinetic and progressive with segues and sequences controlled by implicit narratives concerning the elements of love, just as minds are driven by narrative sequences both volitionally and erratically.

Equally relevant, images might be imprinted in the memory as though by a seal in wax, leaving a print which was not only indelible, but intrusive, forcing itself upon the operations of recollection where, as idea or picture, it invites incessant replay, variation, and misrepresentation. This model for memory traces its origins, again, to Aristotle.²³ The memory print was also defined as a drawing, etched more deeply by the sensations in the soul, the feelings and emotions which affect the residual strength of the picture as something clear, permanent, and impervious to the passage of time.²⁴ Either way, as an indelibly obsessive image or as a successively corrupted image, it was the compulsive awareness of this emergent property that polarized the cognitive processes. This, in turn, leads to *sollicitudo* or immersive thought, fear, anxiety, and distraction, taking persons away from themselves—as though abducted or alienated by their own brains.²⁵ These are the Renaissance models for the sequences of the mind leading to vortices of sundry kinds, to be cured only by medical intervention, namely pharmaceuticals to purge the offending biles, methodical cures, distractions, counsel, travel, the passage of time, or death. The narrative of succeeding images is now driven by frenzied instincts, in turn activated by threatening events in the natural or social environment. Without resolution, the brain resorts to its own compulsive production of *phantasmata*. Allegory, in this, struggles to keep up with the complexity of human thought in its many simultaneous levels of nuance and signification.

Yet readers must also keep up with this double allegory of abduction, magic spells, and deliverance and the exposition of the disturbed imagination. Outside this house of humanist horrors extracted from the tales of antiquity, Scudamour discovers that he cannot do battle with Amoret's ravisher because there is a wall of fire before the door. Seemingly the magician has created it to protect his stronghold, but ultimately it is Amoret's burning passions which keep him away. It is her mind that has locked him out, leaving Britomart to shift between mimetic levels as she prepares to fight through a barrier only to discover that it is no more than an image of Amoret's "continual feare" (bk. 3, canto 11, st. 16). Britomart has already been sermonizing Scudamour, urging him not only to control his grief by

setting virtue over sorrow, but to embrace the more general view that life is wretchedness. Scudamour is far too immature and self-absorbed, however, to ground himself in stoic self-control. Rather, the work of deliverance is reserved for the warrior maiden able to confront both erotic predation and psychological fear with her decisive, goal-oriented personality. All her posturing about the chivalric code and renown being worth more than life pertains only to the chivalric tale. Her real work is to tour the chambers of the female imagination and strategize how to break the spell cast by erratic thinking.

In the first ventricle, Britomart encounters an uncatalogued museum of tapestries representing the brutalities of Cupid as emblematic components of Amoret's impressionable imagination. As mentioned earlier, some critics have seen this, and the entire episode, as Spenser's critique of the Petrarchan and male-driven cultures of courtship. Nevertheless, Spenser's allegorical conventions continue to employ chivalric missions involving mysterious houses, menacing contraptions, enigmas written over doorways, and dangerous inner sanctums as features of the quest to cure a diseased fancy, however passively and implicitly. Mimetic levels now collide and ask for the cooperation of the ideal reader. Britomart is always in martial mode, as the medium demands, to liberate a damsel in distress from a wicked captor. But thematically, she is on a psychological mission to investigate the mental images contributing to a life crisis. After all, when the spell is broken, the entire castle disappears in a trice; all along it has been as insubstantial as thought itself. Only Amoret, mysteriously healed, and Britomart remain, now free to ride away together, whether back to Scudamour in the 1590 version or in search of him through many subsequent episodes in the 1596 version. Her fear and mental confusion are resolved. Spenser's purpose was to provide a pictorial retrospective of the many moods of love including those locked in the *erotomachia* of opposing genders, so the women are guided by chastity, namely the virtue epitomizing women's sexual and social identity. This is key to his purpose in adopting chastity as the theme of the entire book—a matter of sexual continence for both sexes in relation to courtship and marriage. In even broader terms, Britomart, through her visit, observes all the effects of Cupid's blind "wars" upon the entire race, caused by and manifested in the multifarious processes of the imagination. Thus, the tapestries on mythological subjects are conflated with the "thousand monstrous formes" that emerge in Amoret's mind (bk. 3, canto 11, st. 51). Cupid's sadism

and Amoret's negative disposition find common expression through her distracted mind.

As a model of human cognition, Spenser's invention has much to recommend it. Perception, conscious awareness, patterns of reasoning, and memory all play their parts. The Renaissance had built up a vocabulary of its own around faculty psychology, parts of which Spenser was unable to reify, such as the components of all the faculties and sub-faculties according to their respective ventricles. Yet each room illustrates a quality of cognition or a simulation of the ordering of consciousness. The tapestries in the first room represent fixed episodes epitomizing narratives with encoded meanings; in the aggregate, they form a perverse house of memory. And finally, according to Spenser, they represent the tyranny of the triumphant Cupid given free rein by the destructive social practices of lovers. Britomart imposes her own cognitive ordering through her steady gaze and resistant will, but Amoret's relationship to them is more passive. The brain has systemic and subliminal powers to organize what the conscious mind must entertain or endure, and Cupid's tyranny is the allegorical key to it all. The salient anomaly of the human mind is that it is not always the self-willed master of its conscious flow of thoughts, which can also well up from the unconscious. That insight was hardly new to Spenser, but his poetic resources enabled him to nuance what that mental state can be like.

The first room is organized as a temple to love in which the prevailing mood is idolatry and sacrifice, thereby providing yet another allegorical correlative to a mental state. Idolatry suggests an attitude of esteem or worship for an object or person of rarified value, yet it is simultaneously an attitude of abasement or enslavement to a mystical force, an apparition or imposter, connected to fallacy and error. Central to that temple is the altar of the blind Cupid bearing the insignia, "Unto the Victor of the Gods this be." He was the deity to whom all in the room bowed in recognition of his mastery and dominance over their lives. Paradoxically, this adoration is also of the beloved. Amoret's plight over Scudamour is always present, though it cannot be read into all of Cupid's conquests which fill the magician's abode as the house of all ruined lovers. The coalescence is seen in the mental turmoil Amoret shares with those perplexed by amorous demands. She, too, felt love as a "sweet consuming woe" (bk 3, canto 11, st. 45) aestheticized by passion, or as a form of idolatry that claimed a degree of subjugation beyond reasonable mutuality and bonding—hence she is also rather Petrarchan in her regard for Scudamour. This adjusts the

sense of mere “phantasies / In wavering wemens wit” (bk. 3, canto 12, st. 26) as fanciful flights without cause. But where doubts arise from perceived asymmetries in the union, love may reformulate itself “in thousand monstrous forms” (bk. 3, canto 11, st. 51) because all minds have thresholds to their capacities for maintaining coherent thought. Britomart watches it all, but in a “wastefull emptinesse, / And solemne silence” (bk. 3, canto 11, st. 53), for though thought may be animated, it is always solipsistic and private. Everywhere, there are images and motions, but of wraiths, for the house, all along, has been empty except for the pageantry of Amoret’s tormented thinking.

Consciousness, as modeled in the second room, achieves a new dynamism. It is living, three-dimensional, and directed according to the schemata of cultural production. The negative social sequences of love are now embodied in a moving spectacle. In this room, Britomart becomes a passive observer of a masque in the form of an allegorical triumph derived from Petrarch’s “Triumpe of Love” in which the mythology of the winged boy-god is grafted onto the order of the Roman military triumph.²⁶ In these spectacles, winning generals celebrated their returns by parading their prisoners in humiliation along with the spoils of conquered nations. Cleopatra died by suicide to avoid just such a fate. Petrarch seized upon the model of conquerors and the conquered to exemplify the universal victory of love over the pretensions and ambitions of humankind. No device was better suited to organize the multiplicity of defeats and carnage of a psychological kind caused by erotic desire. This same device allowed the persona of the poet, Petrarch—following Dante’s example in *The Divine Comedy*—to incorporate himself into the device both as observer and sufferer. In this way, the triumph becomes an allegory of the poet’s mind, making all the values depicted by those in the accompanying rout—slippery hope, weary rest, obscure glory, false loyalty, and beguiling faith—values which frame human intellection and mental processes. Just as Spenser ransacks antiquity for the most devastating stories of love, Petrarch before him, in true Humanist fashion, likewise pillaged the ancients for the iconography of the triumph. Spenser had found the perfect device for his purposes.

This Triumph of Cupid takes over the middle ventricle of the brain-house wherein Amoret becomes the captive of her own motorized thinking. She is conscious and suffering, to the glee of Cupid, who rides in triumph behind her, temporarily removing his mask to revel in her misery. Rarely, in Renaissance medical treatises, are the phantasms depicted in

such kinetic fashion or compounded into multiple and intercausal parts resembling the stream we so often associate with consciousness. By simple introspection, the sequential singularity of consciousness becomes known to us—that rapid succession of single ideas or images that remains in constant but ever-changing values critical to an adaptive alertness to changing environments. Spenser's device is more effective than any medical description in modeling this phenomenon. The triumph is paced but always moving with the iconography of false love—that which is based on lust and sensuality rather than on charity and friendship. Meanwhile, with the evolution of Cupid as a cultural “meme,” his growing equivocality and complexity required more supple and complex metaphors through which his multiple significances might be exemplified.

Just such paradoxes of love are also carried into marriage where companionate sensuality or eroticized friendship may remain on the brink of disequilibrium. As the emblematic repository of love's mental stances, Cupid must incorporate all the varied, hidden, instinctual, perversely strategic, suspicious, desiring, fearful, and emotionally saturated modes of human thought. Spenser's “stormy whirlwind” (bk. 3, canto 12, st. 3) blowing through the house is a commonplace symbol of the emotions and their mental turbulence. The entire production is not only a triumph, but a masque or a play with argument and dumbshow, a theatrical production anticipating the worn and misleading trope of the mind as a theater—although it will do for Spenser's purposes.²⁷ Fancy appears early in the parade, the epitome of the brain's capacity to misrepresent forms, memories, and precepts. What follows are representations of the kaleidoscopic moods of love, metamorphosing from one to the other, often in deteriorating sequences: hope gives way to self-doubt, then to fear and despondency, leading to despair. Other sequences pertain to duplicity, seeming kindness, and dissemblance, followed by anger and fury. The promiscuity of Amoret's consciousness allows Spenser to generate a thematic finale to the entire book. The masque includes short vignettes of confrontation and accusation incentivized by uncontrolled emotions, followed by a potential for self-harm, the tearing of hair, and even the discounting of costs in the pursuit of goals ending in death and infamy. All these mind states and social sequences walk as people in this semiotic parade. Yet, when Britomart gains entry into the inner room where they had retreated the night before, she discovers that “lo, they straight were vanisht all and some” (bk. 3, canto 12, st. 30). No one was there except Amoret in whose mind alone these forms had performed as phantoms of thought. Depression, for her,

is epitomized by this daily procession of schemata pertaining to the failures of love. She had, after all, been brought by confusion to betray her own marriage.

Finally, there is Busyrane who, for Leslie Brill, presides over a realm entirely constituted of unequal and monstrous love.²⁸ But he also passes a spell upon Amoret, thus serving as the magician homunculus in her brain who engineers the feedback loops related to the provisional drafting of future scenarios. They are forms of planning, but planning so shaped as to frustrate all manner of choice or implementation. Emotions are complex in their origins, but simple in their effects. Options produce feelings, and those feelings arrange themselves on a gradient between pleasure and pain, thereby instructing the organism about how to achieve rewards and avoid suffering. Those hedonic prompts directed our mammalian ancestors to reproduce over millions of years. But sapiens have complicated that process through deficient reasoning, meeting disaster when the emotions aggravate the states of intractable cognition.

Yet something is resolved at the end of Book 3, although Britomart's role in managing Amoret's psychological turmoil is unspecified. As stated above, our brains are generally programmed, architecturally, to give high triage priority to the critical concerns pertaining to mate selection, loyalty, fertility prospects, parental investment profiles, overall sociability, kin connections, and exclusive mutuality for the long haul. It is work Amoret must do at the risk of exposing herself to indecision and the tyranny of the emotions. But the sheer volume of images in the Busyrane cantos is indicative of her computational vertigo. In finding the necessary symmetry of thinking that makes for a harmonious marriage, Amoret and Scudamour have a long way to go. Her nature is too fearful and submissive and his is too eroticized. She has been wooed by a man wielding the shield of Cupid to intimidate her, for "[a]t the sight thereof she was with terror queld" (bk. 4, canto 10, st. 55). Hence, Busyrane could not be dispatched by a stroke of Britomart's uncompromising sword, for only he could undo the spell of threatening images surging through Amoret's mind. Such a task is not unrelated to the image reprogramming employed in the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorders.²⁹ The pictures coursing through the mind are the essence of experience, for their interpretations determine happiness or misery. But how such scripts can be rewritten is beyond Spenser's powers of demonstration. Yet, in her martial way, Britomart succeeds in threatening the Busyrane complex and thereby releases Amoret from her negative fixations. Convention allows that breaking spells constitutes the

reformation of an alienated brain.³⁰ In short, the images we stock prime our realities, making Busyrane the personified agent in the brain who controls the contents of consciousness with its negative and positive phantasms. In controlling him, Britomart alters her thinking.

Thus, Spenser comes to the end of Book 3, and the end of the 1590 edition of *The Faerie Queene*. Easily appreciated is the fact that virtues in action may be illustrated through social exempla. But virtues, in themselves, are states of meta-conscious knowledge and invigilating values; they are emergent properties of human cognition supervising our values in relation to social environments. One must think in virtuous terms before one behaves in virtuous ways. Given the Renaissance medical interest in the corrupted imagination, especially pertaining to the manic and depressive states arising from frustrated love, Spenser had a model for seeing a marital crisis in psychological terms. The swirling décor and theatrical entertainments, tapestries, and masques of an aristocratic household are the elements of an allegory of mind seeking direction and steadfastness through the meta-conscious virtue of chaste yet reproductive matrimony.

Renaissance imaginative writers, in a variety of ways, sought to represent the mind in action, often in troubled and emotional states, from the Euphuistic soliloquies of the prose fiction writers to the rhetorically sophisticated soliloquies of the Renaissance stage. Both were effective literary devices, yet fell short as simulations of human consciousness. Revealing the mind at work in the throes of interior debate has remained a challenge right down to the efforts of the stream-of-consciousness writers of the early twentieth century. Spenser's incredible solution was to have a qualified observer simply walk through the mind of another, at first passively observing, and then, in the third room, actively interceding to put a stop to the compulsive stream captivating her mind. Nevertheless, the conflict between chastity and marriage is not openly debated, and the therapy implicit in Britomart's deactivation of the spell is a matter of convention, for she tells Amoret nothing. She merely rescues her, making Spenser's medium, in this regard, the limitation of his message. Spenser brings us that far.

But if we read Amoret's malaise to the end through the lens of Renaissance medicine, we will discover an idiosyncratic version of her experience. Jacques Ferrand conventionally affirms that melancholy is not the mood that arises from despair, but the humoral cause that determines the characteristic nature of the disease: the fear, sorrow, and mental upheaval. Paraphrasing Galen, he states that "the character and accidents

inseparable from the state of melancholy—are traceable to the blackness of the humor [...thus] all objects presented to the imagination become horrible and frightening.”³¹ Implicitly, then, to produce these symptoms, Amoret’s spell must be tantamount to a surge of black bile. As stated, her interiority now becomes the sum of the pathological states directing the processes of her cognition and compromised self-knowledge. Personhood is redefined by physiological processes. Symptoms become the self in a state of mechanized thought in a maelstrom of suffering. Hence, readers in search of her interiority must think in part like medical diagnosticians, because Amoret appears entirely unable to articulate her own condition. Thought has become like an enchantment or *fascinatio*, its ordering imposed by an exterior guiding force equal to a spell.

At the same time, her cognition continues to function in relation to the species or phantasms of consciousness which are supplied complete with conflicting evaluations by the *virtus estimativa*. This second faculty, when confronted by intense social provocation, is capable (through its binary judgments involving quality and desirability) of delivering to the imagination a species so intense that it will confound the judgment and take hostage the faculties of the soul, thereby setting up a battle between desire and fear so persistent as to produce a chronic disease. In full agreement Thomas Wright states, “[T]here is no Passion very vehement but that it alters extremely some of the four humours of the body.”³² The cautious reader will recognize in this, however, a self-contradiction on Ferrand’s part, because conditions of the mind are now due both to the state of the humors and to the social events which trouble the mind. It is not a debate that can be settled here, but it is a reminder that something relating to her social environment has provoked her flight on her wedding night. Without provocation there is no malaise, yet only melancholy temperaments will turn *contretemps* into pathological states.

Something real has led her into a vortex of thought, a paralysis of the will through morbid introspection. Hence, after all his theorizing concerning the power of images and their role in cognition, the determining properties of the humors, and the states which reshape them, even Ferrand provides an entirely common-sense chapter entitled “Remedies to cure love melancholy in married persons.” In it he sets out his comprehensive list of the causes leading to marital incompatibility or dysfunctionality: the differences in manners and customs, secret antipathies, imperfections of the body, charms and ligatures, an impression that one is not loved, an incapacity to enjoy the genital pleasures, a complete lack of sexual impulses

or incitement, fears, jealousy, or fights without reconciliation.³³ In these, he comes close to Amoret's crisis, yet overlooks the constitutional fear of the transition from chastity to married love, especially with a man who is sexually egocentric and aggressive. Even so, he remains helpful in a pair of chapters defining the causes of mental derangement, conveniently dividing them into the external and internal: the social and the constitutional: the external environment posing crises and trauma, and the bodily humors imposing their systemic readings and effects upon the body and mind. Ultimately, they must be juxtaposed, as they are with Amoret, whose imagination drifts from the sexual conditions of marriage to the mind of runaway phantasms as though instilled by alien forces as she slips into a tempest of disturbing literary analogies, the victim of a Galenic destiny. There are the circumstances, but for Renaissance thinkers, the susceptibilities of temperaments are ever present, configuring in their own ways the images evoked by experiences and cultures. And thus, the faculty of the imagination contrives even the components of temporary madness.

NOTES

1. This citation and all subsequent references to Spenser's *Faerie Queene* are taken from Spenser, *The Faerie Queene: Books Three and Four*.
2. That topic has been under investigation throughout the book, because it represents chastity in many forms from Florimel's pusillanimous flight, to Belphoebe's constitutional chastity, to Britomart's militant and non-negotiable approach to chaste marriage, to the whole question of female subjugation in marriage within a patriarchal system. When those values are politicized, the hermeneutic orientations scatter in all directions.
3. Roche, *The Kindly Flame*, p. 77. Amoret experiences marital union in terms of a wound to the chest and the removal of her heart. This now becomes an image of her anxiety, not a symbol of Busyrane's or Cupid's cruelty. Her crisis is not directly related to sexist male cultural production.
4. Frye, "Of Chastity and Violence," p. 52. Susan Frye imagines Spenser himself, through his view of companionate marriage in which the husband's authority is nevertheless preserved, as "an enforcer of marriage through the threat of rape," because, for her, enforcing gender roles is a form of violence. *Ibid.*
5. In the context of a clinically oriented study of love as a medical condition, Ferrand employs the imagery of Cupid concerning sorrow and mortal pain drawn from the writings of Guittone d'Arezzo in anatomizing the nature of erotic fixations. Ferrand, *A Treatise on Lovesickness*, p. 226.

6. Frye states that New Criticism “tended to discourage discussion of contemporary social and political issues,” leaving faculty psychology as the only mode of interpretation. Frye, p. 51.
7. Gilde was of this school in attributing her crisis to “fear of sexual passion in marriage.” Gilde, “‘The Sweet Lodge of Love and Deare Delight’,” p. 63.
8. James Broaddus states that Britomart’s power resides essentially in her control over her own imagination (bk. 4, canto 6, st. 33). Broaddus, “Renaissance Psychology,” p. 190. Chastity *is* an ordered imagination sufficient in itself to liberate Amoret. Therapy was not required.
9. Frye pointed out that court spectacles often featured plots of imprisonment and liberation, usually of chaste women who are liberated by other chaste women. Frye, p. 56. Here, putatively, Amoret’s subjugation by Busyrane parallels Spenser’s own desire to see the noble and triumphant chastity of Elizabeth I subjugated to marriage.
10. Brill, “Scudamour,” p. 635.
11. Roche observes that “no figure in Spenser has an interior life that lets us ascribe our judgments to that figure’s actions in the poem.” Roche, “Britomart at Busyrane’s Again,” p. 140.
12. Susanne Lindgren Wofford centers her attention on Busyrane as the author of “an allegory of male violence against women, of the kinds of tortures to which males have subjected females in their literary and erotic imaginings.” Wofford, “Gendering Allegory,” p. 10. Moreover, as Britomart progresses through the house, she is reading her own mind rather than Amoret’s. *Ibid.*, p. 10. The male Busyrane cannot write of women; all he can do is dip his pen in their blood. Hence, he too “comes to stand for the potential abuses of allegory itself.” *Ibid.*, p. 11. Wofford’s conclusion is that Britomart settles a cultural practice, while Amoret requires no ministrations because she is captive but steadfast.
13. She proposes further that Amoret was forced to imagine her situation as a form of rape, all of which Britomart was forced to watch. Frye, p. 51.
14. Broaddus creates a compromise between faculty psychology as the mechanism of interiority and allegorical lessons. Broaddus, p. 193. Amoret’s “inner english (sic)” need not be the source of all the images. *Ibid.*, p. 202. The masque can also preach sermons about idleness, inconstancy, and the doomed union of unequal partners.
15. For all her alleged fictitiousness as an allegorical character, we, in our default ways, treat Amoret as a plenary person, granting to her all the traits of personhood, including a brain with faculties and an active imagination.
16. Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 432a.
17. Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 429a.
18. The three-part partitioning of the brain goes back to the ancient Greek philosophers and came to the Latin West through the writings of the

Arabic physicians. Traditionally, all the operations of thought were located in these chambers, with the imagination confined to the middle ventricle. Spenser has the imagination occupy all three.

19. Ferrand, *A Treatise on Lovesickness*, p. 47.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 235. Ferrand is quoting from Galen. Galen, *De locis affectis*, Vol. 8, pp. 190–92.
21. Busyrane may resemble the demons described by Johann Bokel who, in 1599, published a treatise on philters and love potions. He saw them as aerial spirits that could mingle with the animal spirits and disturb the imaginations of their victims—a medical notion espoused by such inquisitionists as Sprenger and Kramer, now (in)famous for their authorship of the *Malleus Maleficarum*.
22. Holmes and Mathews, “Mental Imagery and Emotion,” p. 489.
23. The explanation in terms of wax and seals originates in his *On the Soul*. Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 424a. Memory is like the imprint left by a signet ring once the metal is taken away.
24. Aristotle, *De Memoria*, 450a.
25. Parallel accounts may be located in the writings of the medical philosophers on love in which the images and the idolatry of the beloved are linked to pathological fear and anxiety. Consider the following from Ferrand: “love turns directly upon the citadel of the heart, and once that salient stronghold is made subject, she attacks the reason and all the noble forces of the brain so vigorously that she overwhelms them and makes them all her slaves. Then all is lost: the man is finished, his senses wander, his reason is deranged, his imagination becomes depraved, and his speech incoherent.” Ferrand, *A Treatise on Lovesickness*, p. 252. Amoret’s concerns are rather different, but as a victim of love-induced conflicts, her decline into mental turmoil is similar. Ferrand is paraphrasing one of Spenser’s contemporaries, the French physician André du Laurens. du Laurens, *Second discours*, p. 34^v.
26. The *Trionfi* of Petrarch were begun in the Vaucluse in 1338 and were, for all but the last, completed in Parma in 1343. The sixth, on “divinity,” was not written until 1374. Worthy of note is that Petrarch composed a sequel to the “Triumph of Love,” entitled “The Triumph of Chastity,” in which cruel Cupid is defeated. The model came to England principally through the endeavors of Henry Parker, Lord Morley (1476–1556), who translated *I Trionfi* as *Tryumphes of Fraunces Petrarcke* (published between 1553 and 1556, though written for Henry VIII in the 1540s).
27. Further to the matter of consciousness as a theater, see Donald Beecher’s “Mind, Theatres, and the Anatomy of Consciousness.”

28. Brill, "Chastity as Ideal Sexuality," pp. 21–22. In abducting Amoret, Busyrane becomes the negation of chastity, thus perverting the noble sexual values of her mind.
29. Davies, *Imagination*, p. 81.
30. Even reading can establish negative apprehensions, as the tapestries of Amoret's mind might suggest, dwelling as they do on the failures of love and suffering, in keeping with Britomart's rhetorical summary of life as wretchedness. Readers can also vivify and intensify images and find themselves further transported by the productions of their imaginations. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
31. Ferrand, p. 240, paraphrasing Galen, *De locis affectis*, vol. 8, pp. 189–90.
32. Wright, *The Passions of the Mind in General*, p. 91.
33. Ferrand, *A Treatise on Lovesickness*, pp. 242–51.

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CHAPTER 3

“If all the world could have seen’t”: Imagination and the Unseen in *The Winter’s Tale*

Darryl Chalk

For a play with some of the most famous of all theatrical images, *The Winter’s Tale* contains a significant number of unseen happenings only reported onstage: the strange death of Mamillius and the devouring of Antigonus are offstage events that punctuate a lengthy sequence in which Hermione is imprisoned, gives birth, and then “dies,” all out of the audience’s sight. In Act 5, scene 2, the emotional reunions of Leontes with his daughter and Polixenes are merely described by three unnamed “gentlemen.”¹ At such moments, playgoers are forced to envision the unseen with their mind’s eye. Later, Paulina moves to draw a curtain around Hermione’s statue, to hide it from both the onstage onlookers and the audience, warning: “No longer shall you gaze on’t, lest your fancy / May think anon it

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M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_3

moves" (5.3.60–61).² She is stopped, of course, but why does this play seem to so carefully choose to stage some actions and not others?

Most curious perhaps are the offstage reunions, especially since they offer a much less satisfying preview of the most audacious reunion scene still to come. The Shakespearean stage is littered with descriptions of unseen action, but here events are only recounted when they would surely have been fairly straightforward to stage and no less desired to be seen by the playgoers. The Third Gentleman even self-consciously teases, "Then have you lost a sight which was to be seen, cannot be spoken of," before proceeding to relate a vivid verbal summation of the emotional scene: "There might you have beheld one joy crown another, so and in such manner that it seemed sorrow wept to take leave of them, for their joy waded in tears" (5.2.38–41). What follows is a detailed moment-to-moment account of what could so easily have been enacted with "casting up of eyes, holding up of hands" (5.2.42), Leontes "ready to leap out of himself for joy" over finding Perdita (5.2.44–45), and a sequence of tearful embraces. The emphasis throughout is on what the other gentlemen (and the audience) did not *see* but should have since it apparently "lames report to follow it, and undoes description to do it" (5.2.51–52). Explaining Perdita's reaction to the tale of her mother's death, a moment "which angled for mine eyes" (5.2.75), the Gentleman relays the offstage audience's response with a metatheatrical projection of what might have been the expected response of the playhouse audience, one that will presumably accompany the soon-to-follow statue "resurrection" scene: "Some swooned, all sorrowed. If all the world could have seen't, the woe had been universal" (5.2.81–83). Many critics, including Samuel Johnson, have found this scene less than satisfactory. William Gruber suggests that

because the choice Shakespeare rejects—scenic enactment—seems so clearly to be the right one in this case, his abandonment of it, from a dramaturgical point of view, becomes all the more intriguing. For what reasons might Shakespeare want to trade the theatre's solid foundation in immediate perception, for the belated and apparently enfeebled products of the imagination?³

Gruber is right to argue that the self-consciousness of thwarted expectations here generates an "implicit consideration of the boundaries of drama,"⁴ but I would suggest that this scene, and the careful selection of what is seen and unseen on the stage of *The Winter's Tale*, also provokes a

consideration of the boundaries of perception itself, one that corresponds with early modern thinking about the workings of the senses (particularly vision) and cognition. In concert with medical writing on these subjects, this play presents the relationship between "immediate perception" and the "enfeebled products of the imagination" as particularly fraught.

Early modern models of psychology held that the imagination, one of the mind's key faculties, was responsible for processing images received by the external senses. But the imagination was also thought capable of generating its own mental forms or "phantasms." In this process, vision, paradoxically understood as the most reliable yet easily deceived sense, and the imagination's "inner eye" were subject to dangerous distortions. The "fancy" that so concerns Paulina in the statue scene could lead to misperception: "phantasm" becoming "phantasie." *The Winter's Tale* is acutely, and quite self-consciously, concerned with what is at stake with visual perception and ocular proof.

In a previous essay on this subject, I demonstrated that the first half of the play presents the dangers of an infected imagination: Leontes's raging jealousy, built around a conviction of what he thinks he sees, coins deranged mental phantasms generating tragic carnage, including his son's death from, as we are told, "mere conceit" (3.2.142).⁵ In this chapter, I seek to revisit this examination of *The Winter's Tale's* uniquely detailed interest in fancy's dangerous precarity and extend it into a reading of the play's extraordinary final scenes wherein the manipulation of what is seen and unseen seems deliberately orchestrated and where vision and imagination are again explicitly at issue. I will suggest that the statue scene provides a potential act of visual healing for the rupture between the external senses and the imagination.

FANTASIE IS A VERY DANGEROUS THING

As Stuart Clark has shown, fantasy (*phantasia* in Greek) and imagination (*imaginatio* in Latin) became effectively coterminous in early modern theoretical psychology.⁶ Moreover, the imagination gained a new importance as "the single mediator between the incorporeal soul and the corporeal human body."⁷ Its status as the dominant factor in both the processing and perception of objects presented to the external senses, made the fantasy a particularly delicate pivot point in determining the wellbeing of the premodern embodied mind. In *The Winter's Tale*, as I will show, early modern audiences and readers are provided with a searching meditation

on fantasy's inherent volatility—one that both illustrates the devastating consequences of its capacity for producing cognitive error but also, in ways that counter the period's standard narratives about the imagination, its potential restorative power. In order to better appreciate its singular precariousness in early modern terms and as a means of setting up the ensuing discussion of the play, I will first briefly examine how crucial the imagination became to diagnosing psychophysiological health in medical treatises of the time.

Indeed, the idea that troubling conceits and debilitating mental perturbations could result from the perceptible gap between the body's interior and exterior senses is confirmed in period writing about cognitive processing of sense data. As Katharine Park has explained "sensation was the foundation of cognition," so "[t]he power of sense [...] was equipped to receive the sensible forms or images of material objects—to be distinguished from their substantial or specific forms—without the associated matter." The external senses "corresponded" with "present objects" whereas the inner senses "dealt with absent, past or non-existent objects."⁸ These data were comprised of species, the images or similitudes that constantly radiated from objects in the material world, and then processed by up to five of the brain's internal senses. While the number varies in accord with an intricate debate among those who followed the Aristotelian tradition, most agreed that the common sense was the first repository for individual data, which then passed to the imagination that could generate new images before they were stored in the memory. Such images, known as *phantasmata*, were formed in reaction to the data being processed and, crucially, as Park notes, had "no counterparts in external reality."⁹

In concert with such thinking, Helkiah Crooke, in *Mikokosmographia* (1615), asserts that all knowledge and understanding must come through the external senses: "For if wee conceive any thing in our minds [...] wee shall observe that all things had their original from the outward senses." But the internal senses are thus "imperfect and unprofitable" because they rely on the "message as it were, and information of the outward senses, by which the Image of things are imprinted on it."¹⁰ In the spaces between external reality and the complex processing to which sense data was subjected, much could go wrong. If the internal senses, particularly the imagination, either misperceived or reacted negatively to the data they received, the generation of *phantasmata* could be impressed upon the heart and put volatile passions into motion.

Thomas Wright in *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* (1604), among the most cited early modern texts in studies of emotions, cognition, and the humoral system, similarly positions the imagination as central to cognitive processing and sense perception. In his chapter on “The manner how Passions are mooved,” he explains how the imagination regulates sense data and confirms its essential role in driving the heart’s reaction to the information received by the body’s sensory organs:

First then, to our imagination commeth, by sense or memorie, some object to be knowne, convenient or disconvenient to Nature, the which being known [...] presently the purer spirits flocke from the brayne, by certayne secret channels to the heart [and t]he heart immediately bendeth, either to prosecute it, or to eschewe it.¹¹

This account emphasizes just how fraught, and how sudden, this process can be, with the “heart immediately” reacting to whether the image received is positive or negative, “convenient or disconvenient.”¹² As is continually highlighted throughout Wright’s tract, this perceptual coin flip is more often than not an adverse situation, one that can be exacerbated by the predilections of an individual’s imagination and heart: “for, if the imagination bee very apprehensive, it sendeth greater store of spirites to the heart, and maketh greater impression: likewise, if the heart be very hote, colde, moyst, tender, cholericke; sooner and more vehemently it is stirred to Passions thereunto proportioned.”¹³ While humoral predisposition has an impact on perception, Wright stresses how much “whatsoever passes by the gates of our senses, presently entereth into the court of our imagination” where judgment can be impaired because “a clowdy imagination interposeth a miste.”¹⁴ In the apprehending of a particular image, he attests, “a false imagination corrupteth the understanding” and is thus the root cause of two deleterious consequences: “first, in that the vehemency of the imagination causeth a vehement apprehension and judgment of the witte; secondarily, the false representation breedeth a false conceit in the minde.”¹⁵

Such a view of the imagination’s critical role in determining mental wellbeing is presented in even more stark and emphatic terms by the French writer Pierre de La Primaudaye, whose *The French Academie*, first translated and published in England in 1584, was popular enough to be reprinted multiple times over the next several decades. He defines the imagination as “amongst the internall senses as it were the mouth of the

vessell of memorie” because it is “the eye in the bodie, by beholding to receive images that are offered unto it by the outward sences: and thus it knoweth also things that are absent.”¹⁶ La Primaudaye sees the imagination and fantasy as separate parts of the brain but effectively performing the same function and thus interchangeable terms that he will use “indifferently.”¹⁷ He highlights the “giddines” of the fantasy, which is prone to “sudden” fluctuations in how it deals with the data it processes: “For it staieth not in that which is shewed unto it by the sences that serve it, but taketh what pleaseth it, and addeth thereunto or diminisheth, changeth & rechangeth, mingleth and unmingleth, so that it cut asunder and seweth up again as it listeth.”¹⁸ The production of *phantasmata* is here rendered as a volatile and unpredictable process, with the imagination and fantasy working to cut, edit, transform, and re-combine the images it receives, “sewing” them into patchwork new forms like some kind of insane tailor. But, he avers, the fantasy cannot work autonomously, it can only use and re-deploy what is presented to it by the external senses and, yet, once the data has been received, its capacity for spawning new and quite wayward images is something to marvel at:

So that ther is nothing but the fantasie will imagine and counterfaite, if it have any matter and foundation to worke upon, without which it can build nothing, [...] yet it is a wonder to see the inventions it hath after some occasion is given it, and what new and monstrous things it forgeth & coyneth, [...]. So that in trueth, *fantasie* is a very dangerous thing.¹⁹

The imagination and fantasy can only be contained (“guided and brideled”²⁰) by the higher intellectual faculty of reason. The risk, however, is that a “troubled” imagination will overdetermine the embodied mind’s reaction to a particular set of sensations and this can lead, La Primaudaye suggests, to precisely the kind of “false conceits” posited by Wright: “Therefore they conceive strange opinions, which they imprint so deepe in their braine, that they are not easily rooted out againe.”²¹

For Wright, who agrees that “our imaginations” are “provoked” by “externall sences,” there is one sense that is particularly vulnerable to erroneous perception: sight. In the chapter entitled “How senses move Passions, and specially our sight,” he suggests that we must “attend well our eyes” with particular care to what we “looke upon.”²² He then proceeds to list a series of seemingly contradictory capacities of this faculty that, of all the external senses, has “such varietie of objects to feed and

delight it." On the one hand, "sight was the surest and certaintist of his object and sensation,"²³ but perhaps as a biproduct of its prominence and reputation for certitude, however, it is the sense that is also most disposed to misapprehension. As Wright explains, "no sense imprinteth so firmly his forms on the imagination" and thus "no sense sooner moveth [...] nor no sense perverteth more perilous than this: for if the guide be corrupted, the followers will hardly escape uninfected."²⁴ Vision, the sensory facility upon which we most rely, he suggests, is also the most likely to bring about bodily infection and passionate perturbation through false conceits. All sense data "passeth by the gates of our imagination, the cosin germane to our sensitive appetite," and since images received by the eyes seem to offer such surety and to press so "firmly" on the imagination, this "eye of the bodie," as La Primaudaye called it, can be driven to see everything in a distorted way. This is why, as Wright puts it, we "may well see how the imagination putteth greene spectacles before the eyes of our witte, to make it see nothing but greene, that is, serving for the consideration of the Passion."²⁵

This precarious but also paradoxical interrelation between the act of seeing and the imagination is situated as the central preoccupation of *The Winter's Tale*, a play of two very distinct halves. As will be seen in the remaining sections of this chapter, it is the cause of the vexing and traumatic events of the play's first three acts, before being offered as a potentially restorative act of visual recuperation in its final scenes.

TOO HOT. TOO HOT.

The opening scenes of *The Winter's Tale* provide a particularly pertinent example of a diseased imagination, both produced by and producing a contagion of false conceit, in Leontes's sudden and then sustained frenzy of enraged jealousy. It is forged on stage in a moment of visual misapprehension. His precipitous transformation from calm courtesy to green-eyed madness occurs in real time, in full view of the spectators, while he watches the non-verbal action of his pregnant wife, Hermione, persuading his friend Polixenes to extend his stay in Sicilia. Instead of a description of offstage action, we get a blow-by-blow account of Leontes's emotional turmoil and his perception of body language by stage figures the audience can also see:

Too hot. Too hot:
 To mingle friendship farre is mingling bloods
 I have *tremor cordis* on me. My heart dances,
 But not for joy, not joy.
 [...] to be paddling palms and pinching fingers,
 As now they are, and making practised smiles
 As in a looking-glass; and then to sigh, as 'twere
 The mort o' th' deer—O that is entertainment
 My bosom likes not, nor my brows. (1.2.110–21)

This passage has proved troubling for many critics of this play, its suddenness seen as implausible and Leontes's choice of language untenable. However, if understood in the context of contemporary writing about the imagination and the passions, it becomes much clearer. The visual image of his wife and his friend in close, perhaps intimate, even if innocent, proximity, is one that leaves an immediate and indelible impression on his imagination.

As we saw in the accounts given by Wright and La Primaudaye, the suddenness of his emotional reaction is far from improbable given the rapidity of the onset of symptoms. "The heart immediately bendeth," Wright suggests in response to the spirits sent to it by the brain once the imagination has processed the sensory information. And it is to the palpitations and joyless dancing of his "heart" that Leontes instantly draws attention. As Wright suggests, the heart is the most apt place for the stirring of passion since it is the "seat" of motion and "endued with fiery spirits, [that] fitteth best for affecting." It is thus very common for people to express the "tumult" and "working of Passions" through their impact on the heart: "for who loveth extreameley, and seeth not that passion to dissolve his heart? [...] Whom inflameth ire and hath not heart burning?"²⁶ An infected imagination produced "vehement" passions that could cause the heart "great infirmitie: for the heart being continually environed with great abundance of spirits becommeth too hote and inflamed, and consequently engendereth much cholericke and burned blood."²⁷ With such a view of the impact of undesirable visual perception on the imagination and, subsequently, the heart in mind, an early modern audience would surely have had little trouble accepting the seeming abruptness of Leontes's "*tremor cordis*" and his "too hot" passionate frenzy.

Of course, it is hard to judge the veracity of Leontes's characterization of their behavior. There are no other indications of just how accurately Hermione and Polixenes are embodying this description. It seems crucial

that Shakespeare chooses to stage this happening rather than have Leontes report on something he witnessed off stage. Are they doing exactly as he says, "smiling" and "paddling palms," to which Leontes simply overreacts? Or is this a moment exhibiting a shocked imagination's immediately tenuous grasp of reality? Each production stages the legitimacy of his concerns quite differently, but his subsequent behavior suggests the latter. After Hermione observes that "He something seems unsettled" (1.2.148), noting that he holds "a brow of much distraction" (1.2.151), his remarkable self-diagnoses continue with the declaration that what he has witnessed has disturbed his "Affection" (1.2.140) and caused the "infection of my brains, / And hard'ning of my brows" (1.2.148-49).

Leontes's infected imagination conforms closely to Wright's and La Primaudaye's accounts of how the mind's fantasy can take over one's perception. Stimulated by the false image of his wife and lifelong friend as lovers, and as this object moves from his external to the internal senses, his fantasy begins to forge and coin new images of precisely the kind of "monstrous things" imagined by La Primaudaye, further aggravating his condition. He starts to describe events and behavior to which the audience has no access—they are either offstage happenings or, more likely, entirely fictitious:

Is whispering nothing?
Is leaning cheek to cheek? Is meeting noses?
Kissing with inside lip? Stopping the career
Of laughter with a sigh? [...] (1.2.287-90)

All along, his distorted imagination and increasingly giddy fantasy makes him believe that he genuinely sees these "unseen" nothings:

Ha' not you seen, Camillo—
But that's past doubt; you have, or your eye-glass
Is thicker than a cuckold's horn [...]
For, to a vision so apparent, rumour
Cannot be mute—or thought—for cogitation
Resides not in that man that does not think—
My wife is slippery? (1.2.269-75)

Hermione's affair becomes a "vision so apparent" to Leontes that anyone who cannot "see" what is "past doubt" has no "cogitation," no "eyes, nor ears, nor thought" (1.2.277).

His fellow courtiers, however, tell it like it is. Camillo calls his unhinged rant a "diseased opinion" of which he needs to be "cured" (1.2.298–99). Paulina scathingly invokes the word that makes apparent this play's awareness that it deals with contemporary understandings of a disturbed imagination (one that she will reprise in the statue scene): fancy. She accuses Leontes of offering no "more accusations / Than your own weak-hinged fancy" (2.3.118–19) and that his "jealousies" are "Fancies too weak for boys" (3.2.178–79). The *OED* explicitly associates the term with both the imagination and the fantasy.²⁸ In reporting Mamillius's strange offstage death, a related term is used to define its cause: conceit. According to the *OED*, an obsolete meaning of "conceit" referred to "a person's capacity or faculty for imagining things; fanciful thinking."²⁹ Children were thought to have weak minds, making them dangerously susceptible to infections of the imagination. Mamillius is, of course, present at the fateful moment when Leontes is overcome with jealousy. With an image of a deceitful Hermione implanted in his brain by his unstable, vindictive father, Mamillius is described as thinking himself to death:

Conceiving the dishonour of his mother
He straight declined, drooped, took it deeply,
Fastened and fixed the shame on't in himself;
Threw off his spirit, his appetite, his sleep,
And downright languished. (2.3.13–17)

His demise is later reported as happening by "mere conceit and fear" (3.2.142). In *The Winter's Tale*, the already fraught relationship between things seen and unseen is further ruptured by the diseased imagination. "Fancy" has fatal consequences in this play.³⁰

LEST YOUR FANCY MAY THINK ANON IT MOVES

So what of Paulina's use of this word again at the play's end? What do the reunions of the famed statue scene—where so much that has been left offstage is suddenly, vividly *seen*—have to offer this tale of errant fantasy? The preceding scene with the three gentlemen seems to intentionally set the audience's anticipation for the revelation to come. After describing the

unseen reunion, the Third Gentleman creates for the spectators an image of another offstage happening—the construction of Hermione's statue:

FIRST GENTLEMAN: Are they returned to court?

THIRD GENTLEMAN: No. The Princess, hearing of her mother's statue, which is in keeping with Paulina, a piece many years in doing, and now newly performed by that rare Italian master Giulio Romano, who, had he himself eternity and could put breath into his work, would beguile nature of her custom, so perfectly he is her ape. He so near to Hermione hath done Hermione that they say one could speak to her and stand in hope of answer. (5.2.84–92)

And it is to *there*, we hear, that the newly reunited family is now headed: "Thither with all greediness of affection are they gone" (5.2.92–93). When they, and the audience, finally get to "look upon" (5.3.13; "look," "looked on," and other variants recur some half-dozen or more times in the final scenes) this statue, its lifelike qualities are re-emphasized: "See, my lord, would you not deem it breathed, and that those veins / Did verily bear blood?" (5.3.62–64). The reasons that their "fancy" will "think anon it moves" are obvious and soon to be revealed, but in contemplating Hermione as a statue the audiences onstage and in the playhouse are exposed to an exemplar of theories of art at this time that held "lifelikeness" in painting and sculpture to contain "*spiritus*," thereby "gain[ing] affective power over the spectator" and creating a binding, transformative relationship between the work and the beholder's imagination.³¹

Perhaps this is why Shakespeare attributes the work to Romano. The fact that he was almost exclusively known as a painter rather than a sculptor has made the reference seem baffling.³² Recent scholarship on this issue has, however, suggested that naming Romano as the artist responsible for the statue was not necessarily inappropriate. The description in Vasari's epitaph (often seen as Shakespeare's source for the Third Gentlemen's speech) describes how "the skill of Giulio Romano" made "sculpted and painted bodies breathe."³³ The note here is suggestive enough to make it seem a fitting inspiration for a scene in which at least to the onstage audience, if not the one in the playhouse itself, a statue *appears* to "breathe" and come to life. As Stuart Sillars has shown, Romano was known at this time for his "trompe l'oeil frescoes, in which events painted on flat surfaces are made, through skillful distortions of perspective and

effects of shadow, to appear as solid three-dimensional forms.”³⁴ Such works deliberately blurred the boundaries not only between reality and artifice, but also between painting and sculpture as artistic forms: “All the critical arguments about Romano being a painter and not a sculptor overlook the larger point that, in all of his painted work, it is very, very difficult to tell whether the figures are in pigment or stone.”³⁵

They also tend to overlook the fact that Hermione’s statue is itself painted. We hear from the Third Gentleman that the work has been “many years in doing, and now newly performed” by Romano. The split in the sentence about it being Paulina’s long-term project and then “now newly” completed does not tell us whether Romano is responsible for the sculpture or just the more recent finishing touch of the paint job. The Romano allusion may just have been another act of “misdirection,” as William E. Engel puts it, in the sequence of distractions framing the build-up to the final scene. He suggests that the lifelike painting of Hermione’s statue would more likely have reminded the audience “of the hyperrealism of Spanish painted sculptures of saints embellished with glass eyes, tears and ivory teeth.”³⁶ The potential religious controversy of a peculiarly Catholic kind of visual redemption hinted at here and elsewhere in this final scene aside, it is surely not unreasonable to suppose that the reference to Romano deliberately blurs the distinction between painting and sculpture, setting up, along with suggestions that the work “beguile[s] nature” and “ape[s]” Hermione “perfectly,” the as-yet-unseen statue’s lifelikeness in the audience’s imagination. After all, a player painted to look like a statue, as the boy playing Hermione may have been for the final scene, is as much a *trompe l’oeil* effect as Romano’s paintings constructed to depict convincingly three-dimensional objects. The reference thus almost certainly adds to the set of teasing visual cues provided by the gentlemen that work on the mind’s eye of the spectator and build the tension and anticipation for what will eventually be shown in the next scene.

The revelation of the statue in the final scene of *The Winter’s Tale* continues to toy with the imaginations of the onstage and offstage audiences, self-consciously exploiting expectations about lifelikeness in art to further blur the bounds of theatricality, artifice, and reality. Such complex meta-theatrical layers are coupled with the positioning of Paulina as a female magician or conjurer, in the vein of Prospero in *The Tempest* or Fabell in *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*. As Lucy Munro has noted, Paulina’s necromancy, perhaps more an act “of subterfuge rather than magic,” nevertheless “fuses the apparently supernatural with the materially theatrical, in a

sequence that she both stage-manages and choreographs."³⁷ When Leontes, Perdita, and their entourage arrive at the "removed house" that, as the gentlemen explained, Paulina "hath visited" several times "a day, ever since the death of Hermione" (5.2.95–96), asking "to look upon the statue" (5.3.13) and "to see the statue of our queen" (5.3.10), they are confronted by further subterfuge. Although there is no explicit stage direction, Paulina's admission that she keeps it "Lonely, apart" (5.3.18) and Leontes's later reference to a "curtain" (5.3.59) suggest that the statue remains tantalizingly veiled at the start of the scene.

In the ensuing sequence, Paulina reveals and then carefully controls the group's access to the statue, while the discussion revolves around the limits of visual perception and the affective potential of this object on the viewer's senses and fantasy. Before the curtain is opened, Paulina is at pains to draw attention to how the "dead likeness [...] / Excels what ever yet you looked upon" (5.3.15–16). The statue's lifelikeness is once again emphasized—"Prepare / To see the life as lively mocked" (5.3.18–19)—before the reveal initially generates a dumbstruck response from the onstage onlookers: "I like your silence; it the more shows off / Your wonder" (5.3.21–22). After Paulina's remarking at the marvel of how the "carver's excellence" has somehow captured Hermione's advanced age that "makes her / As she lived now" (5.3.30–32), Leontes encapsulates this extraordinary sight's affective power:

O royal piece!
 There's magic in thy majesty, which has
 My evils conjured to remembrance, and
 From thy admiring daughter took the spirits,
 Standing like stone with thee. (5.3.38–42)

The "magic" of this "piece" pierces Leontes's "soul," conjuring his past shames whilst simultaneously stunning Perdita so effectively that it takes her "spirits" with Medusa-like force, transforming her into its own image of motionless "stone." When Perdita is suddenly reanimated, with a cautionary nod to Catholic "superstition," and moves to "kneel" and "kiss" the statue's "hand" (5.3.43–46), Paulina intervenes with a reminder of Romano's still fresh paintwork: "O patience! / The statue is but newly fixed; the colour's / Not dry" (5.3.47–49). Leontes is obviously overwhelmed with emotion as both Camillo and Polixenes are moved to soothe his "sorrow" (5.3.49) and "grief" (5.3.55) before Paulina again

invokes the artwork's affective power on the viewer's sight: "If I had thought the sight of my poor image / Would thus have wrought you—for the stone is mine—/ I'd not have showed it" (5.3.57–59). It is here that she first attempts to draw the curtain noting the apparent impact on Leontes's fantasy ("lest your fancy") that will soon imagine this "dead" likeness of Hermione to be alive.

The efficacy of Hermione's statue (or Hermione as statue) is such that, as this scene consistently re-emphasizes, the viewer's imagination can transport them not only to think that it is lifelike but impel them to interact with it as a living thing. Despite, or perhaps because, of Paulina's warning, the idea that Hermione might actually be more than stone is intoxicating to Leontes, who again prevents the drawing of the curtain: "No settled senses of the world can match / The pleasure of that madness. Let't alone" (5.3.72–73). It threatens to provoke just the kind of sudden, deranged transformation of his body and mind that we see in the play's tragic first half. The "pleasure" of the "madness" is coupled with an urge for yet more physical contact: "Let no man mock me, / For I will kiss her" (5.3.79–80). Again, Paulina is forced to remind Leontes of the statue's freshly painted state:

Good my lord, forbear.
The ruddiness upon her lip is wet.
You'll mar it if you kiss it, stain your own
With oily painting. Shall I draw the curtain? (5.3.80–83)

The constant interplay in this scene between art and lifelikeness and the potential transformative transaction between viewer and work are all enmeshed with Paulina's teasing theatrical magic as she suggests closing the curtain for a third time.

Her seeming concern over the impact of the statue on the beholder is reminiscent of early modern conceptions of fascination and how vision and imagination were potentially susceptible to poisonous images. In this process, "looking upon" an object (the notion invoked multiple times by both Perdita and Leontes in the final scene of *The Winter's Tale*) operates as a dynamic transaction. Citing the Neoplatonic tradition of Ficino and followers like Agrippa and Castiglione, Thijs Weststeijn has suggested that theories of blood vapors transferred by ocular rays in occult phenomena and diseases such as lovesickness, were also applied to thinking about the power of artworks: "According to early modern 'fascination literature',

looking at an object means infecting it with one's spirit. An intense spiritual transfer may occur, similar to the moment of artistic transubstantiation when painters give life to pigments."³⁸ This exchange of visual rays worked both ways. While "the ultimate transformation of lifeless pigments into living flesh requires an act of the beholder's imagination," it also emphasizes "how an artwork's qualities may affectively change its spectators."³⁹

Paulina's need to keep Hermione's statue veiled in *The Winter's Tale* and its apparent impact on the bedazzled spectators corresponds with certain artworks in the period being curtained over concerns about their seductive lifelikeness and deleterious efficacy. This was particularly the case with images of Medusa, such as those by Rubens and Caravaggio, where "the effect of her gaze" could draw "the 'blood' and 'spirit' from the object of her sight"⁴⁰—akin to Perdita's stony immobility, her "spirits" taken by the sight of her mother in statue form. Weststeijn gives an example from Pausanias of "the statue of 'Aphrodite Morphe'" which "not only wore chains about its feet to impede it from walking, but its face was also covered by a veil to prevent too great a power over its beholders" who might be enticed by the sight.⁴¹ Lovesickness treatises from the period, such as the one by André du Laurens, often convey just how much "love corrupteth the imagination" and could "bee the cause [...] of madness" by including examples of individuals smitten with artworks. In *A Discourse of the Preservation of the Sight* (1599), he explains how "A noble young man of Athens fell so farre in love with a marble picture that was very cunningly wrought" that when he was banned from even coming near the image, "overcome of despayre he slew himself."⁴² Leontes's fancy-stricken response to the statue, his compulsion to kiss it, and Paulina's attempts to re-draw the curtain comprise a sequence that seems to be a deliberate reference to such cautionary tales.

SOME SPIRITUAL PAGEANT

Shakespeare thus deliberately exploits the careful juxtaposition of onstage and offstage, seen and unseen, in this play in order to enhance the impact of the statue scene. But for what purpose? As a plausible answer I suggest that it again has something to do with the play's intensive study of the relationship between vision and the diseased imagination. But, here, instead of further repeating the rendering of the imagination as a perilous phenomenon in medical tracts of the time, persistently vulnerable to errant

cognitive processing and thus infections of the embodied mind, Paulina's carefully scripted theatrical ruse appears to invoke examples in period writing about how it could be healed.

The Flemish physician Thomas Fienus, for example, argued that if the imagination could cause diseases in the body (which he suggested occurred *per accidens* and not *per se* by first stirring up humoral turmoil),⁴³ it was reasonable to conclude that it could also cure diseases. He contends that this requires "the sick man" to have "faith in his physician," and cites Pomponatius who "dared to write that those who sometimes attained health from the worship of the bones of saints attained it only by virtue of the imagination and of the confidence they had in them."⁴⁴ Perhaps this is why Paulina declares that "[i]t is required you do awake your faith" (5.3.94–95); this elaborate ruse and its elongated and concealed build-up are constructed to enhance the belief of Leontes in order to make for a more efficacious healing. Having Hermione simply show up is far from enough.

Further to such a possibility, Stephen Pender has demonstrated how numerous physicians at this time advocated treating afflictions like melancholy and grief by concentrating healing practices on the patient's imagination. He suggests that just as the phantasy was frequently seen as the source of various emotional disorders and perturbations of the embodied mind during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, "[p]recisely in the same period, the imagination was enlisted more and more as fertile ground for emotional therapy; among the many figures on that ground were diversion and distraction, accomplished by producing a contrary passion in the aggrieved or by [producing visual] examples and conceits that inspire recovery."⁴⁵ A curiously pertinent example is provided in the 1612 tract *Approved Directions for Health* where, not long after *The Winter's Tale* was first performed, William Vaughan writes:

The Physitian [...] that will cure these spirituall sicknesses, must invent and devise some spirituall pageant to fortifie and help the imaginative facultie, which is corrupted and depraved; yea, he must endeavour to deceive and imprint another conceit, whether it be wise or foolish, in the Patients braine, thereby to put out all former phantasies.⁴⁶

Verification of such a process of cure by conceit, also suggested as plausible by Fienus, is provided by Robert Burton in his chapter "On the Force of the Imagination" in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). He

attests, "Sometimes death itself is caused by force of phantasy," with illustrative examples such as how the mere thought of the plague could cause infection or sudden death "with conceit" or that seeing another person bleed "or a man hanged" can cause individuals to faint or even "fall down dead." But if conceit is the main cause in such instances, rather than anything outside of the imagination, then it stands to reason, Burton suggests, that conceit can also have remedial effects: "As some are molested by phantasy; so some again, by fancy alone, and a good conceit, are as easily recovered. We see commonly the toothache, gout, falling sickness, biting of a mad dog, and many such maladies are cured by spells, words, characters, and charms." But, as he notes, citing Pomponatius like Fienus before him, "All the world knows there is no virtue in such charms and cures, but a strong conceit and opinion alone."⁴⁷ Is Paulina's spectacular contrivance just such a "spirituall pageant," as Vaughan puts it, or perhaps a "good conceit" as Burton concludes—a spell "devised" to "deceive" and thus heal Leontes's grief and his "corrupted and depraved" imagination by fancy and conceit alone? Though this scene plays upon period anxieties over the power of lifelikeness in art to corrupt the vision and seduce the imagination, it quickly pivots towards the curative potential of such constructed imagery. Though she continues to express concern, Paulina suddenly sees restorative opportunity in Leontes's roused fancy:

PAULINA I am sorry, sir, I have thus far stirred you; but
I could afflict you farther.

LEONTES Do, Paulina,
For this affliction has a taste as sweet
As any cordial comfort. (5.3.74–77)

Paulina asks that the gathered onlookers either leave "the chapel, or resolve you / For more amazement. If you can behold it, / I'll make the statue move indeed, descend, / And take you by the hand" (5.3.86–89). Leontes confirms that he is "content to look on" (5.3.92) and Paulina orchestrates the final coup-de-theater with calls for "Music," and for Hermione to "Descend" with a command that she "Strike all that look upon with marvel" (5.3.98–100). The miraculous reunion is now complete, this time in full view of "the world" who have most certainly "seen't." Leontes is compelled in the play's final speech to ask forgiveness from Hermione and Polixenes: "Both your pardons, / that e'er I put between your holy looks / My ill suspicion" (5.3.148–50).

The scene thus heals Leontes's grief, his "ill" conceit, and perhaps by extension the sense of unease and grief felt by an audience who may also have mourned Hermione, having been deliberately kept in the dark about her fate and from seeing the other reunions. If only such theatrical medication had been administered to poor, forgotten Mamillius—the chance to, as Vaughan suggests, "imprint another conceit" might just have saved him. Nonetheless, after its devastating demonstration of the imagination's volatile fragility, *The Winter's Tale* seems to offer in its final scene something akin to Vaughan's curative spiritual pageant, an "invention" to mend the "imaginative facultie" of Leontes and audience alike and "put out all former phantasies." While, on the whole, the play appears to present the embodied image as a kind of pharmakon, simultaneously capable of both poison and cure, its final moments are carefully orchestrated to leave an indelible image of the potential remedial power of the imagination in the mind's eye of each spectator. It thus stands as a powerful counter-narrative to both the standard medical idea that the imagination was inevitably prone to causing bodily disease through errant vision *and* the palpable images of such presented in the play's own opening scenes. In quite self-conscious ways, therefore, *The Winter's Tale* provides an important example of how art, literature, and theater were seen as being capable of intervening in the very contemporary social and medical ills that they were so often at pains to represent. Shakespeare, like his onstage playwright Paulina, here uses the visual image—whether statue or theatrical emblem—to redeem the mind's sickly phantasms.

NOTES

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented as part of "Invisible Presences: Detecting the Unseen in Renaissance Drama," Shakespeare Association of America, Washington D.C., 2019. I am grateful to the seminar leaders and members and wish to especially thank Katherine Walker, Wendy Beth Hyman, and Jonathan Walker for providing helpful feedback.
2. All citations from *The Winter's Tale* are from Shakespeare, *The Norton Shakespeare: Second Edition*.
3. Gruber, *Offstage Space, Narrative, and the Theatre of the Imagination*, p. 5.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
5. Chalk, "Make Me Not Sighted Like the Basilisk'."
6. Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 42.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
8. Park, "The Organic Soul," p. 470.

9. Ibid., p. 471.
10. Crooke, *Mikrokosmographia*, sig. Iii6^r.
11. Wright, *The Passions of the Minde in Generall*, sig. D7^r.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., sig. D7^v.
14. Ibid., sig. E3^r, sig. E2^v.
15. Ibid., sig. E2^v.
16. La Primaudaye, *The Second Part of the French Academie*, sig. K^v.
17. Ibid., sig. K6^r.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., sig. K6^r-K6^v.
20. Ibid., sig. K6^v.
21. Ibid., sig. L3^r.
22. Wright, sig. L3^v.
23. Ibid. sig. L4^r-L4^v.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid., sig. E2^r.
26. Ibid., sig. D1^r.
27. Ibid., sig. E6^v.
28. See *Oxford English Dictionary*, "fancy, n.," 4a.
29. Ibid., "conceit, n.," 3.8.b.
30. Elsewhere, I provide an extended reading of Leontes's jealousy and Mamillius's death as acts of "contagion by image" in the context of medical understandings of emotion and cognition at this time. See Chalk.
31. Weststeijn, "'Painting's Enchanting Poison,'" p. 141.
32. For a plausible and thorough treatment of this issue, see Rutter's "Shakespeare, Serlio, and Giulio Romano."
33. Qtd. in Rutter, p. 250.
34. Sillars, *Shakespeare and the Visual Imagination*, p. 255.
35. Ibid.
36. Engel, "Kinetic Emblems and Memory Images in the *The Winter's Tale*," p. 80.
37. Munro, *Shakespeare in the Theatre*, p. 138.
38. Weststeijn, p. 155.
39. Ibid., p. 166.
40. Ibid., p. 162.
41. Ibid., pp. 157-161.
42. du Laurens, *A Discourse of the Preservation of the Sight*, sig. R4^r.
43. Rather, "Thomas Fienus' (1567-1631) Dialectical Investigation," p. 363.
44. Fienus, qtd. in Ibid., p. 364.
45. Pender, "Rhetoric, Grief, and the Imagination in Early Modern England," p. 58.

46. Vaughan, *Approved Directions for Health, Both Naturall and Artificiall*, sig. G5^v.
47. Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 256.

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CHAPTER 4

The Iconoclastic Imagination: John Donne's Metaphysical Conceits

Amy Cooper

INTRODUCTION

John Donne's poetry is rich with poetic images—from his titular flea, to the teardrops of “A Valediction: of Weeping,” to the “twin compasses” (26) of “A Valediction Forbidding Mourning”—and it is because of these images that his poetry still commands pride of place in both the literary canon and the classroom.¹ So unique, and even bizarre, were these images to early readers that a new term of art eventually emerged to describe them: the metaphysical conceit.² Although this term would have been unknown to Donne himself, its emergence in the history of Donne's reception exemplifies both a commonplace of Donne scholarship—the centrality of the image to his poetic practice—and an aesthetic problem for critics and scholars: many of Donne's poetic images, that is, metaphysical conceits, cannot actually be visualized. The “twin compasses” of “A

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Switzerland AG 2024
M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_4

Valediction Forbidding Mourning,” for example, have long been recognized by Donne scholars as problematic. The analogy between the feet of a compass and two souls “which are one” (21) begins straightforwardly enough: like the feet of a compass, the lovers’ souls are separated—the “fixed foot” (27) remains in place while “th’ other” (28) traces a circle around it, “end[ing] where [it] beg[a]n” (36); and yet, they are united, forming a single compass—the fixed foot, while remaining centered, “leans and hearkens after” (31) the other foot as it “runs obliquely” (34) around its twin. The image breaks down, however, when the speaker describes the fixed foot as “grow[ing] erect” when the wandering foot “comes home” (32). As Katrin Ettenhuber explains, “the compass cannot complete a circle and return to its centre at the same time.”³ In his edition of Donne’s *Complete Poems*, Robin Robbins concludes that “Donne’s conceit cannot be visualized as a single operation” and resolves the apparent contradiction by insisting that the conceit is an “*analogy* not an ‘image.’”⁴ In what follows, I argue that Donne’s metaphysical conceits *are* images, not merely analogies, and that their failure—the fact that they “cannot be visualized”—is their most important aesthetic quality. Donne carefully constructs images like the twin compasses to frustrate the embodied imagination through techniques of “visual paradox”—representational devices which, in one way or another, create rifts between language, mind, and vision.⁵ I focus on two particular techniques of visual paradox, what I call the *visual category mistake* and *imaginative oversaturation*. Understood in this way, the metaphysical conceit effectively separates the poetic image from the visual cognitive regime in which it had, since classical antiquity, been embedded.

There are, as Stuart Clark has documented, many types of visual paradox tracing back to classical antiquity. The straight stick that appears bent in water,⁶ the square tower that appears round from a distance,⁷ the colorful shimmer of a dove’s neck⁸—these and others can be found in the works of Plato and Sextus Empiricus, figureheads of philosophical skepticism. But the most powerful examples of visual paradox come from the visual arts. *Trompe l’oeil* painting became an important touchstone in the Renaissance, when various techniques of linear perspective enabled new forms of visual paradox, including anamorphic art. While scholars have studied visual paradoxes from within the context of art history and philosophy, less attention has been paid by literature scholars to the role of visual paradox in poetry. In the 1940s, Rosamond Tuve argued for a theory of poetic imagery grounded not in vision or imagination, but in

rhetoric and logic. She explicitly positioned her foundational work, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, against T.S. Eliot, who was responsible, in many ways, for the revival of interest in the so-called Metaphysicals during the first half of the twentieth century and who emphasized the importance of sensation and embodied experience to Donne's imagery.⁹ Tuve rightly seizes on what we might call an anti-visual attitude in Donne's poetry; and yet Eliot was not entirely wrong. Donne is, without question, a visual writer, as Pavneet Aulakh and Anton Bergstrom argue later in this volume. This dual impulse in Donne scholarship derives from a dual impulse in Donne's poetry itself, which despite its hypervisualism, works against the visibility of early modern poetry by experimenting with the limits of visualization.

Scholars risk misunderstanding the nature of Donne's technical innovations in poetic imagery if we fail to recognize his misgivings about vision and the visual imagination. These misgivings can be traced, I argue, to the influence not simply of Protestantism on the poet's famously inscrutable denominational commitments, but to the influence of iconoclasm on early modern poetics.¹⁰ If, as Richard Strier so aptly put it, Donne's religious identity is like the image of a new monarch imperfectly stamped on an old coin, "awry and squint," then his poetics is similarly blurry.¹¹ Donne is an important figure in the history of the imagination because he stands at the threshold between an old poetics and a new. The old, visual poetics of Sidney and Spenser, which I outline below in the first section, was grounded in a shared understanding of cognition as a visual, embodied activity, theorized among physicians and philosophers under the auspices of faculty psychology but practiced by poets under the regime of the memory arts. That earlier regime began to suffer under the pressure of iconoclasm. Narrowly defined, iconoclasm refers to acts of violence against objects of religious veneration. In early modern England, however, the destruction of holy objects was symptomatic of a deeper crisis: iconoclasm is best understood as an aesthetic paradigm that privileges the word over the image.¹² Crucially, iconoclasm extended beyond painting and statuary to include poetry, an art form that was sister to the art of painting in that they were both considered visual arts. For poets like Sidney and Spenser—and, still, for Donne—the poetic image (rather than the word) was understood to be the basic unit of poetic representation. This is a fundamentally alien way of thinking about poetry for readers trained to see text not images when they read a poem. But to see text when reading a poem is like seeing paint when looking at a painting. The emphasis on medium is

coincident to a modern aesthetic paradigm that is iconoclastic in origin. In the premodern aesthetic of the sixteenth century, it was the images pictured forth—not the medium—that mattered. This is the sense in which early moderns understood the Horatian dictum, *ut pictura poesis*, and the sense in which Sidney could claim in the *Defence of Poesy* that “poesy” is an art of “speaking picture[s].”¹³ Whereas the embodied images of earlier poets belonged to a theory of cognition which grounded the relationship between mind, language, and world in a thoroughly materialist model of visual sensory experience, the disembodied images of Donne’s poetry resist such alignments. Donne, I argue in the final section, uniquely experimented with images in ways that defy visualization, incorporating (rather than resisting) the logic of religious iconoclasm into his poetic practice. That is to say, Donne develops a formal response to the threat of iconoclasm by crafting poetic images that cannot be visualized, thereby protecting poetry from its otherwise threatening associations with vision, the body, and the imagination.

THE VISUAL IMAGINATION: METAPHYSICAL CONCEITS

What is a “conceit” and what makes some conceits “metaphysical”? The word “conceit” appears with some frequency in early modern poetry and essays on poetics. In Sidney’s *Defence of Poesy*, for example, it recurs no less than 14 times and is generally used in three ways: it refers most directly to the poet’s “ideas,” “mental images,” or “thoughts”—what Sidney calls the “fore-conceit” of a work of poetry;¹⁴ in some instances, it is used metonymically to refer to the “imagination”;¹⁵ and in other instances we find it used in its more technical, poetic sense to refer to “a fanciful, ingenious, or witty expression, metaphor or turn of thought.”¹⁶ It is this last definition which Samuel Johnson has in mind when referring to the overwrought “conceits” of his “metaphysical poets.”¹⁷ We can see, across these three usages, a tidy system of transmission in which the “mental images” or “conceits” of the poet’s imagination eventually find their way onto the page, in the form of poetic conceits. This understanding of the “conceit”—both mental and poetic—relies upon the Neo-Aristotelian theory of embodied cognition sometimes called the doctrine of species.¹⁸ This model, derived from classical sources but synthesized during the medieval period into a coherent theory by figures like Thomas Aquinas and Roger Bacon, proposes that objects radiate species—an “outward appearance” or “form”—into the world.¹⁹ The organs of sense take on the imprint or

impression of the object—its species—which then propagates through the tissues and organs of the body's "outer senses" to the "inner senses," which vary in number, name, and function, but generally include at least the imagination, judgment, and memory.²⁰ The imagination receives the raw sensory inputs from the body and refashions these anew into mental images—called phantasms, images, ideas, pictures, conceits, etc.—which function as the basis for all thought.²¹ The supposed functions and powers of the imagination also vary, but its primary contribution is creative, assembling out of the body's sensations composite images of things as they are, but also, as Sidney says of the poet, "things either better than nature bringeth forth or, quite anew, forms such as never were in nature."²²

While the original sources for this theory—Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, the anonymous author of *Ad Herennium*, Quintilian, various anonymously authored Greek *Progymnasmata*—may have been known to Sidney, poets would have learned his theory of embodied cognition through the art of memory. In its original, architectural form, classical mnemonic schemes required the practitioner to memorize passages of text (a poem or part of a poem, a speech, the details of a legal case, etc.) by creating vivid, visual images that recall a specific topic and then placing these in the rooms of an imagined architectural space, which can be re-collected later by imaginatively moving in sequence through each room, and visualizing the image there.²³ This method was later, as Mary Carruthers has demonstrated, extended to the book. The architectural mnemonic persisted, and while ancient authors often referred to writing technologies—wax tablets, scrolls, etc.—as supplements to memory, the medieval period transformed these earlier techniques into a new method inspired by the affordances of the codex. Instead of rooms in a building, book-based mnemonics used pages in a book as the locational apparatus for fixing images to be visualized.²⁴ Poets' understanding of the art of memory was practical—informed by theory, perhaps, but grounded in practical application of mnemonic techniques to the art of poetry. As Rebecca Helfer has argued, the art of memory should be understood "as a *poetic* method."²⁵ It was a method for composition—not merely rote memorization—that adapted techniques for making vivid visual images in a memory system to the making of visually vivid poetry.

Spenser allegorizes this process of embodied image-making in Book 2 of the *Faerie Queene*. Alma's castle, an allegory for the body, pictures forth the standard principles of early modern faculty psychology architecturally as three rooms occupied by three sages: the first, Phantastes, represents

the imagination and is associated with contemplation of the future; the second, an unnamed sage associated with judgment, contemplates the present; and the third, Eumnestes (aided by Anamnestes), associated with memory, contemplates the past. Phantastes is described unflatteringly as a young man, “of swarth complexion, and of crabbed hew” whose “sharp staring eyes,” “mad or foolish seemed” as they glare unblinkingly from under “bent hollow beetle brows.”²⁶ As A.C. Hamilton, et al., note, Spenser’s description of Phantastes’s chamber echoes Sidney’s description of the poet:

His chamber was dispaigned all with in,
 With sondry colours, in the which were writ
 Infinite shapes of things dispersed thin;
 Some such as in the world were neuer yit,
 Ne can deuized be of mortall wit;
 [...]
 All those were idle thoughtes and fantasies,
 Deuices, dreames, opinions vnsound,
 Shewes, visions, sooth-sayes, and prophesies;
 And all that fained is, as leasings, tales, and lies.²⁷

The colorful but chaotic images “dispaigned” on the walls of Phantastes’s chamber echo Sidney in that they represent “infinite shapes [...] such as in the world were neuer yit / Ne can deuized be of mortall wit”—or as Sidney puts it, “forms such as never were in nature.” Spenser’s allegory of imagination is decidedly ambivalent, given its association with “opinions vnsound,” “sooth-sayes,” and above all “lies.” But Phantastes is nevertheless the author of “deuices” or “conceits” (as the editors gloss) which, though initially compared to flies, are later likened to bees—a significant shift because bees are a celebrated symbol of poetic creation.²⁸ Like bees, which produce honey and wax, poets deliver to the world sweetness and light. The “end” of poetry, according to Sidney, is after all, to “teach and delight.”²⁹ Out of the body’s raw sensations—the reference to “colour” is key because this was thought to be the proper “sensible” or object of visual perception in Aristotle’s *On the Soul*—Phantastes composes new forms: the species received by the body’s outer senses travel through a complex series of mimetic impressions to the mind—first to Phantastes’s chamber, where those sensations are turned into images, through the middle chamber, to Eumnestes’s chamber of memory, where the images are

stored.³⁰ To be sure, Phantastes's acts of creative composition are described with suspicion, but the images generated in his chamber are what the other two sages—the unnamed sage of judgment and Eumnestes—work upon, through various processes of refinement as they perform acts of judgment and recollection.

As this account indicates, “it was common in Greek, Medieval, and early modern psychology to think of perception as a visual process, whatever the particular source of data.”³¹ And it is the “conceit” or mental image, which functions as the basis for both visual experience and visual representation across poetry and painting, that holds this complex system of visual—and thus embodied—cognition together. That the conceit is fundamental to the visual arts explains why Sidney's account of poetry relies so heavily on analogies with painting and on visual metaphors. He compares the “right” poet to the “right” painter, for example, who when he “painteth [...] Lucretia,” “painteth not Lucretia, whom he never saw, but painteth the outward beauty of such a virtue.”³² Elsewhere, he defines poetry not simply as a representational art, but as a visual art—an art form that “figures forth” a “perfect picture,” “image,” or “speaking picture,” which “strike[s], pierce[s]” and “possesses the sight of the soul,” that is the “imaginati[on],” through practices of “illumination.”³³ Too often, the relationship between sister arts is treated by modern scholars as a given: poetry is *like* painting, and painting is *like* poetry; the nature of the similitude is never fully explained because poetry and painting are assumed to be analogous (having similar functions) rather than homologous (having similar origins). Indeed, the concept of poetic imagery is an oxymoron for many modern readers, who see text not images when they read. In the early modern period, it was understood that what poets and painters “figure forth” are the mental images that form the basis of thought in early modern theories of visual cognition. Our own, modern aesthetic categories and vocabulary—with their continued use of terms like “poetic image” and “metaphysical conceit”—are replete with vestigial traces of this earlier visual, aesthetic regime.

For a long time, it was taken for granted that visual artists of the Renaissance had successfully disciplined vision into rational correspondence with the world as it really is. The development of linear perspective was held up by the art historian William Ivins, for example, as the great symbol of this achievement.³⁴ Since then, scholars like Stuart Clark and Martin Jay have argued convincingly that just the opposite happened, namely that during the sixteenth century vision became an object of

suspicion. The rediscovery of Pyrrhonian skepticism coincided with the Reformation, which together destabilized the epistemological and soteriological foundations of a culture whose systems of knowledge and belief depended on claims to certainty—certainty of knowledge about the here-and-now mirrored, and indeed grounded, certainty of belief about the hereafter. And just as the idiom of certainty had been visual, so too was the idiom of uncertainty: the visual species were newly, under the revelations of skepticism (both secular and divine), *speciosus*—deceptive, mendacious, not to be trusted.³⁵ Because premodern aesthetic and epistemological systems were mutually reinforcing, they were also mutually destabilizing. The distrust of vision extended to works of visual art, and England witnessed several spasms of iconoclasm in its churches and monasteries during the sixteenth century.³⁶ The reformed critique of Catholic spectacle cynically justified the crown's seizure of the Church's wealth and property, but it also created the opportunity for true believers to perform acts of holy desecration. Literal acts of iconoclasm against physical works of art occurred, but the critique of vision had wider, if more subtle, implications for that other visual art, poetry. Donne's poetry stands in relation to the visual aesthetics of Sidney and Spenser as anamorphosis to linear perspective. If linear perspective had served as the emblem for a visual regime which trusted the evidence of the eyes, anamorphosis came to stand for its breakdown.³⁷ In Donne's hands, the poetic conceit became a locus for the crisis facing early modern poets, whose relationship to the poetic image had been deeply upset by the changing status of images, not just among some small subset of Protestant iconoclasts, but within a culture shaken by the skeptical crisis of the sixteenth century. In many ways, Donne's poetry can be described as intensely visual and as still participating in a theory of mind and consequent poetic practice grounded in the memory arts. Donne would have been disciplined in the same mnemonic techniques of composition as earlier generations of English poets, like Sidney and Spenser. But Donne also attempts to break from that tradition in formally innovative ways: the metaphysical conceit is Donne's answer to the problem that visualization poses for a poetics premised on the certainty of sight.

THE ICONOCLASTIC IMAGINATION: METAPHYSICAL CONCEITS

Which brings me to the second half of my opening question—what makes Donne's conceits "metaphysical," and thus distinct from the conceits of earlier poets? Ettenhuber has argued that the term "metaphysical conceit" was not one "that Donne and Cowley" or their fellows "would have recognized."³⁸ She proposes, instead, that the strained, incongruous metaphors so characteristic of Donne's poetry, now anachronistically collected under the label "metaphysical conceit," would have been described in the early modern period, instead, as examples of catachresis. What makes Donne's conceits "metaphysical," in other words, is that they are *catachrestic*.³⁹ Ettenhuber's account of the metaphysical conceit derives from the logical tradition, which emphasizes conceptual distance—between places on a map, between the here-and-now and the hereafter, or between the *topoi* of rhetorical invention—as the defining feature of catachresis.⁴⁰ Her account explains the improbability of Donne's metaphysical conceits—why, for example, he would use the unlikely figure of a compass as an analogy for love-at-a-distance—but it does not explain their failure as images. Other understandings of catachresis circulated in the period that do help us account for those failures. Victoria Silver, for example, derives a different definition from Lutheran theology: in Reformed theology, catachresis refers to "the conflating of two logically incompatible ideas" whose relation is not one of distant but symmetrical correspondence, but rather of incommensurables whose asymmetry highlights the impossibility of correspondence between terms of comparison.⁴¹ Extending Silver's analysis of Lutheran catachresis to Donne, I trace the metaphysical conceit to the tradition of negative or "apophatic" theology—a way of thinking about language and the imagination that is fundamentally iconoclastic. Donne applies the principles of apophatic theology to the poetic art of image-making to generate images that are catachrestic in this second sense—images that are asymmetrical, illogical, askew, that cannot be visualized by the imagination. He achieves this effect, moreover, through two techniques of visual paradox: the *visual category mistake* and *imaginative over-saturation*.

Donne scholars have established his knowledge of the apophatic tradition and traced its influence on his poetry and sermons.⁴² The short poem "Negative Love" succinctly summarizes the logic of apophatic theology in just a few lines: "if that be simply perfectest, / Which can by no way be

expressed / But negatives, my love is so” (10–12). According to the proponents of apophatic theology, like Maimonides in *Guide of the Perplexed*, scriptural expressions that describe God should not be taken literally—when, for example, scripture refers to “the right hand of God,” this is not because God has a right hand. Rather, such expressions serve to accommodate the otherwise alien and unknowable nature of divinity to the limited nature of creaturely minds. The principle of accommodation relies on believers not to mistake the image for the thing-imagined, although of course such mistakes frequently recur throughout scripture.⁴³ To avoid such mistakes, apophatic theologians insist, one must speak in “negatives”—that is, one must avoid positive attributions, whether referring to God’s body parts or, more abstractly, naming his divine attributes such as love, mercy, justice, etc. Positive attribution is idolatrous because it encourages believers to picture God after the image of man, rather than the other way around, and because it places limits on His infinitude, as St. Anselm realized in his revision of the ontological argument in the *Proslogion*.⁴⁴ Such dangers are, crucially, not limited to visual representations of God in paintings and statuary; they extend to language and even to the imagination itself.

This principle—what we might call the apophatic principle—is figured or pictured forth in a favorite poetic image that appears across several of Donne’s poems: the round square. “Upon the Translation of the Psalms by Sir Philip Sidney, and the Countess of Pembroke, his Sister,” opens with a reference to the round square:

Eternal God (for whom whoever dare
 Seek new expressions, do the circle square,
 And thrust into straight corners of poor wit
 Thee, who are cornerless and infinite),
 I would but bless thy name, not name thee now
 (And thy gifts are as infinite as thou). (1–6)

The “circle square”—like the “straight corners” of man’s “poor wit” in line 3 or, elsewhere, in Holy Sonnet 4, “the round earth’s imagin’d corners” (1–2)—comes to stand-in for the central insight of apophatic or negative theology: the perfection of “Eternal God” “can by no way be express’d / But [in] negatives”—or rather, in visual paradoxes. The round square is an important poetic image for Donne because of what it demonstrates about the relationship between language and the visual

imagination. We can imagine roundness and we can imagine a square, but the round square is not something that can be imaged or imagined—that is, visually represented or visualized by imagination. It only exists in language. The round square is catachrestic because it is the product of what ordinary language philosophers, following Gilbert Ryle, would later call a category mistake.⁴⁵ It brings together two separate logics—two categories—of expression together in a way that violates the rules of language. The round square demonstrates the first of the techniques that Donne develops in his experimentation with the limits of visualization: the visual category mistake.

“The Flea,” which also limits or frustrates the reader’s visual imagination but through the poetic device of cataloguing, exemplifies the second technique of visual paradox: imaginative over-saturation. The central conceit of this poem oversaturates the reader’s visual imagination by relentlessly contorting its central conceit: the flea is, first, a flea; then it is a lover who “enjoys before it woo” (7); then an unborn child—“one blood made of two” (8); then a “marriage bed” (13); then a “marriage temple” (13); then a “[cloister]” made of “living walls of jet” (15). By the time the lady “purple[s]” her “nail in blood of innocence” in line 20, readers have experienced a dizzying array of images, each visualizable on its own, but not visualizable together. Like a round square, “the flea” cannot be seen with the “sight of the soul,” as Sidney would put it. This poem pushes an existing trope of the English Petrarchan tradition to absurdity. The anatomy poems, sometimes called Petrarchan *blazons*, such as Sidney’s Sonnet 9 of *Astrophil and Stella* or Shakespeare’s later parody, Sonnet 130, dissect the mistress’s body into a catalogue of images that, if literalized in a single composite, renders her something monstrous to behold. Of course, Stella’s teeth are *likened* to pearls—they are not actually pearls. To imagine a mistress whose teeth *are* pearls, whose mouth *is* a “door,” or whose cheeks *are* “porches” is to read the poem in bad faith—or rather, to read its metaphors and similes as, instead, catachrestes.⁴⁶ A literal reading of the anatomy poem makes available its strange visual logic: visual paradox always lurks beneath the surface of the sonneteer’s similes.⁴⁷ Donne seizes on the catalogues of Petrarchan anatomies because of their visual instability and uses them to confront the aesthetic problem of imaging the unimaginable.

Donne experiments with techniques for creating visual paradoxes across both secular and divine poetry, but the stakes are most urgent in the Holy Sonnets. In Holy Sonnet 2, for example, the two techniques of visual

paradox—imaginative over-saturation and the visual category mistake—converge. The second quatrain of the octet acts as a small inset of the same pattern demonstrated in “The Flea.” This poem catalogues a series of images in quick succession that can each be visualized on its own but not visualized together as a single composite: the speaker, apostrophizing God, is the “thy son” (5), “thy servant” (6), “thy sheep” (7), a “temple” (8), and finally one who has been “[stolen]—nay, ravish[ed]”—by “the devil” (10). The items in this catalogue bear no clear logical relation to one another, which has the effect of highlighting their incommensurability rather than some underlying similarity. The rapid tempo—five discrete images in just five lines—and the anaphoric “thy” create the sense not just that the speaker interrupts themselves as they struggle to capture their relation to God in a series of failed metaphors that do not cohere, but also the sense that the images are building toward some kind of climax. The climactic effect is made literal in the final image, in which the speaker explicitly assumes the subject position of the Petrarchan Lady, who has been “ravish[ed]” by a rival lover. The final image in the catalogue—the image of divine rape—presents readers with a visual category mistake.

The word “ravish” in line 10 carries simultaneously legal and carnal significance: the speaker is “ravish[ed]” in the sense that their soul has been stolen away from God, its rightful owner “as due by many titles,” but also in the sense that they take perverse pleasure in their union with “the devil.” As a legal metaphor, ravishment gives the poem its narrative structure. Initially, as Richard Strier has suggested, the speaker “seems to be formally acknowledging a legal obligation to give over a claim.”⁴⁸ The direction of obligation flows from the speaker—the recipient of divine blessings—to God. But the “titles” by which God can lay claim to the speaker’s soul are revealed in line 11 to entitle the speaker to salvation: “except thou rise and for thine own work fight” reads as a claim that the speaker makes upon God, as if the believer, like Job, can invoke the law as a source of salvation. The poem ultimately rejects this understanding of salvation, and shifts, in a moment of existential despair at line 12, toward an understanding of grace as something that God freely asserts over the believer’s soul. Importantly the word “ravish” gives the poem’s legal framework a gendered dimension. It evokes the concept of coverture—the legal concept dating as least as far back as 1542 by which a woman is “by law under the authority and protection of her husband”⁴⁹—as a metaphor for divine grace. According to the doctrine of imputation, God’s grace covers or masks the believer’s sin in the view of divine law.⁵⁰ The believer’s

sinful nature does not change as a result of receiving grace, nor does the law itself change. The believer can stand before the law only insofar as God sacrificially covers or hides their sin. Like a husband, God gives coverture to the believer's soul, standing-in for her before the law so that she herself is not the recipient of punishment.⁵¹ The legal meaning of "ravish" thus brings the gendered logic of the law into alignment with various complexities of Reformed soteriology. But the carnal significance of "ravish" turns the trope of divine rape into a visual paradox that brings two incommensurate (i.e. human and divine) orders of language and experience together to form a visual category mistake. Much like the speaker of "Batter my heart," who in stilted syntax entreats God to "enthrall me," for s/he "never shall be free / Nor ever chaste except you ravish me" (13–14), the speaker of Holy Sonnet 2 implies a desire to be "ravish'd" back from "the devil," which is to say, ravished by God himself. Both poems invite readers to imagine a rape performed upon a soul by a God who has no body—how is one to visualize this image?⁵²

The conceit in this case is not merely a figure of transport whose sense of distance between things compared is lengthened or drawn out. Rather, the image of divine rape is catachrestic in the sense that Victoria Silver describes: "[A] yoking together of incompatible ideas but not in the simple sense of material to immaterial, visible to invisible worlds, which is the relation we expect of allegory. Rather, it is catachresis in that the figure compares two incompatible orders of [...] meaning and experience[.]"⁵³ This definition emphasizes asymmetry—a misalignment that results from drawing two "incompatible orders" of "meaning and experience" into relation with one another. It is a definition derived from Luther, who sees all of scripture as involving this sort of catachresis—scripture is always accommodating "incompatible orders" of being, namely, the human and the divine. The idea that all language, when used in reference to divinity, is catachrestic underpins the apophatic impulse to use negative expressions. We cannot say what God is only what he is not. Language is of the human order, so to use language in relation to things divine is an "abuse" of language—a use that is improper, perverse. Luther's understanding of scripture thus clarifies the simple definition of catachresis we get in handbooks on rhetoric and poetry from the period. George Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy* (1589), for example, classifies catachresis, along with metonymy, as a figure of "abuse"; it is a kind of "secret conceit" that intentionally misuses words in situations where we "lack" a "natural and proper term or word" for "the thing which we would seem to express."⁵⁴ This

notion that catachrestic conceits (that is to say, metaphysical conceits) can speak beyond the limits of ordinary language has special significance for poets like Donne: because poetry is a visual art, the challenge is to develop a visual equivalent to speaking in “*negatives*”; catachresis offers a technique for doing so. Donne’s metaphysical conceits mobilize language in ways that “abuse” the visual logic of poetic imagery, creating a negative space in the visual imagination where there should be an image. In this way, the visual paradoxes of Donne’s poetry—various iterations of the round square, for example, or the exploded conceits of poems like “The Flea”—use the insights of apophatic theology to enact in the imagination what iconoclasts had enacted in churches and monasteries.

It is important to emphasize that while Donne’s metaphysical conceits—the unimaginable images of his poetry—force us to rethink how the imagination worked for poets in the wake of religious iconoclasm in England, not all poets responded in the same way. George Herbert’s shape poems—“The Altar” and “Easter Wings”—for example, double-down on the visual aesthetic of the older, Sidneyan regime; they are an important reminder that Donne is not representative of all seventeenth-century poets. Rather than a wholesale rejection of vision or the visual aesthetics of poetry, what we see in the wake of the sixteenth-century skeptical crisis is a refraction, like the webbed cracks in broken glass, spreading out in different directions. The skeptical crisis, although a source of profound anxiety for the visual artists of the period, was also a source of great innovation in the formal techniques of representation that came to inform the poetic image as a unit of expression and representation. Donne represents one crack that we can trace forward, not just through his imitators (the so-called Metaphysical Poets), but through Milton, whose *Paradise Lost* similarly develops techniques of visual paradox that defy visualization—as, for example, the “darkness visible” emitted by hellfire,⁵⁵ or the description of Death as a “shape” that “shape had none.”⁵⁶ But a full understanding of the embodied image and its relationship to the history of imagination will require that we trace some of the other cracks in the web, an endeavor to which this present volume helpfully contributes.

NOTES

1. All references to Donne's poetry are cited from Donne, *The Complete Poems of John Donne*.
2. Ettenhuber, "'Comparisons Are Odious?'" pp. 395–399. See also the introduction to Colin Burrow's *Metaphysical Poets*.
3. Ettenhuber, "'Comparisons Are Odious?'" p. 413.
4. Robbins, *The Complete Poems*, p. 260, n. 29–32.
5. Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 2.
6. Plato, *Republic*, p. 273 (602c).
7. Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Scepticism*, p. 31.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, p. 3. See also T.S. Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets." For the impact of Tuve on recent Donne scholarship, see Ettenhuber, "'Comparisons Are Odious?'" p. 413, n. 74.
10. For a recent discussion of Donne's denominational wavering, see Molly Murray's *The Poetics of Conversion*. This essay adopts Murray's approach to Donne's conversion: "I will resist [...] the temptation either to unmask Donne as a crypto-Catholic or crypto-Calvinist, or, conversely, to congratulate him for those poetic moments where he seems 'undone,' unable or unwilling to resolve his own spiritual difficulties. Instead, I will [...] take] Donne at his word: that he was born into the Roman Catholicism of his family, and that he converted to the Protestantism of his nation. This conversion seems to have been sincere, and it was certainly final." Murray, *The Poetics of Conversion*, p. 71.
11. Strier, "John Donne Awry and Squint," p. 357.
12. Cooper, "Allegory and the Art of Memory," p. 803.
13. Sidney, *Defence of Poesy*, p. 10.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 12. The editors gloss "conceit" as "understanding" here, but I read it instead as synonymous with "imagination" because it appears in a list with other cognitive functions—"wit," "memory," and "judgment"—and because the word "enlarging" makes more sense in reference to the storehouse of imagination than to thought in general.
16. *Oxford English Dictionary*, "conceit, n.," 3.10.a. Indeed, the *Oxford English Dictionary* cites Sidney as one of the early sources for this use. *Ibid.*
17. When, in the life of Cowley, Samuel Johnson coins the term "metaphysical poets," it appears in a detailed analysis of their "conceits," which he describes unflatteringly as "slender." Johnson, "Cowley," pp. 19–21.
18. Clark, p. 15.
19. *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. "species, -ei." As "a surface film given off by physical objects," the editors suggest a connection to the Greek word

- εἰδωλον, which Liddell and Scott define as an “image in the mind, idea,” “fancy,” “idol,” in *A Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “eidolon.” For a fuller discussion of the vocabulary of vision and thought, see Clark, Cooper, and Katherine Tachau. Clark, pp. 9–38; Cooper, “Francis Bacon’s Idols,” pp. 340–342; Tachau, *Vision and Certitude*, pp. 3–26.
20. For an account of pre-Kantian aesthetic judgment, especially in relation to the representational arts during the Renaissance, see David Summers, *The Judgment of Sense*.
 21. Smid, *The Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*, p. 17.
 22. Sidney, pp. 8–9. There is, as Smid has argued, great variety in early modern accounts of faculty psychology, but one thing that remains consistent across them is the importance of images, typically created in the imagination and stored in memory. *Ibid.*, p. 17. The specific paths that those images take as they travel, materially, through the organs of the heart and brain, vary widely, but the role of images themselves was relatively consistent.
 23. For a clear account of the architectural mnemonic in classical sources, see Frances Yates, Ruth Webb, and Jocelyn P. Small. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp. 3–8; Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination, and Persuasion*; Small, *Wax Tablets of the Mind*.
 24. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, pp. 316–17.
 25. Helfer, *Spenser’s Ruins and the Art of Recollection*, p. 8.
 26. Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, bk. 2, canto 9 st. 52.
 27. bk. 2, canto 9, st. 50–51. In their edition of Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*, which this chapter uses for all Spenser quotations, A.C. Hamilton, Hiroshi Yamashita, Toshiyuki Suzuki, and Shohachi Fukuda direct readers to “Sidney’s praise of poets who invent ‘forms such as never were in nature’ (*Defence of Poetry*: 78)” in their annotations to bk. 2, canto 9, st. 40, line 4. Spenser, p. 244.
 28. In their gloss to line 7 of stanza 51, Hamilton, et al., gloss “Deuices” as “conceits.” *Ibid.*, p. 244.
 29. Sidney, p. 10.
 30. Aristotle, *De Anima*, p. 665 (2.418a, 4–7).
 31. Clark, p. 10.
 32. Sidney, p. 11.
 33. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
 34. Ivins, Jr., *On the Rationalization of Sight*. For a discussion of Ivins, see Clark and Jay. Clark, p. 1; Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, pp. 59–60.
 35. Clark, p. 2. See also Jay’s account of the “baroque ocular regime.” Jay, p. 45.
 36. Eamon Duffy argues that the Edwardian Injunctions of 1547 led to a wave of iconoclastic destruction, in which “statues and niches were pulled down,

- windows painted over or broken, walls whitewashed and covered with texts against idolatry." Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 454.
37. On anamorphosis, see Clark, p. 3.
 38. Ettenhuber, "'Comparisons Are Odious?'" p. 395. For a list of "Metaphysical Poets," see Teskey, "The Metaphysics of the Metaphysicals," p. 237.
 39. Ettenhuber, "'Comparisons Are Odious?'" p. 395.
 40. Ettenhuber, "'Comparisons Are Odious?'" p. 405.
 41. Silver, *Imperfect Sense*, p. 213.
 42. See for example Michael Martin and Gary Kuchar. Martin, *Literature and the Encounter with God*, p. 64; Kuchar, "Petrarchism and Repentance in John Donne's *Holy Sonnets*," p. 544.
 43. For an account of idolatry as error and of Maimonides's contribution to this definition of idolatry, see Halbertal and Margalit, *Idolatry*, pp. 109–116, and Maimonides, *Guide*, p. 51.
 44. In the eleventh century, St. Anselm of Canterbury attempted to craft an ontological argument (i.e. an *a priori* argument for the existence of God) in the *Monologion*, in which he defined God as the greatest being in existence. Anselm revises his argument in the *Proslogion* by defining God as "that than which a greater cannot be thought." St. Anselm, *Monologion and Proslogion*, p. 135. The *Monologion* offered a positive definition of God, whereas the *Proslogion* incorporates the insights of apophatic theology to develop, instead, a kind of negative definition. If God is *N* in the *Monologion*, he is *N+1* in the *Proslogion*. St. Anselm, *Monologion and Proslogion*. See also Graham Oppy's *Ontological Arguments and Belief in God*.
 45. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind*, p. 16.
 46. Sidney, *Astrophil and Stella*, sonnet 9, lines 5–7.
 47. Kuchar, p. 537.
 48. Strier, p. 368.
 49. *Oxford English Dictionary*, "coverture, n.," 9.a.
 50. Strier points readers to Luther's "Preface to Romans" and *Commentary on Galatians* as well as Calvin's *Institutes*, and he argues that Donne himself "shows a firm grasp of this conception in the verse epistle to Rowland Woodward, 'Like one who'in her third widowhood,' lines 13-15." Strier, p. 374.
 51. For a discussion of "covering" in Reformed understandings of grace and divine law, and in relation to the story of Job, see Silver, *Imperfect Sense*, pp. 66–69.
 52. See Ettenhuber, "Sex and the Disjunctive Syllogism," p. 655. See also Kuchar's reading of the Petrarchan Lady in "Petrarchism and Repentance" as structurally analogous to the position of God in Reformed soteriology—

they are objects of both desire and abhorrence. Colby Gordon's recent transgender reading of Donne's "The Funeral" offers a new and interpretively rich way to understand the gendered logic of Donne's poems. Gordon, "The Sign You Must Not Touch." However readers imagine the gender of the speaker in Holy Sonnet 2—male, female, intersex, or transgender—the problem with the image is its invitation to imagine God as having a body.

53. Silver, *Imperfect Sense*, p. 213.
54. Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, p. 263.
55. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, bk. 1, line 63.
56. *Ibid.*, bk. 2, lines 666–67.

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PART II

Sensory and Affective Imaginings



The Phenomenal Imagining Body in Shakespeare

Susan Sachon

Let me have a surgeon; / I am cut to the brains. (*King Lear*, 4.6.173–74)¹

As an expression of grief, King Lear’s words sound odd to a modern audience, particularly his call for a surgeon to cure an emotional wound. Yet the audiences for whom Shakespeare’s *King Lear* was originally written would have responded to this idea in a very different way, as various discourses of the time illustrate. Michael Schoenfeldt observes, for example, that “[o]ne of the most fascinating aspects of early modern thought is its frequent recourse to corporeal narratives to explain phenomena that we would treat as intellectual, emotional, cognitive, or spiritual.”² Whereas, in modern terms, Lear might be described as “out of his mind” with grief—a term that encapsulates a fundamental difference between modern and early modern approaches to psychology—in Shakespeare’s metaphor, the mind is far from being absent. Instead, its presence dominates the imagination in a physiological sense from which we have become almost disconnected. The quotation thus reminds readers and audiences that in

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M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_5

early modern faculty psychology, the imagination functioned, not as a disembodied ability, but as a fleshy organ within the brain, close to the organic (mortal) soul.

Framed by this knowledge, Shakespeare's choice of metaphor becomes easier to understand. Its corporeal content clearly illustrates early modern embodied thinking, embedded within his writing. But even for an early modern audience, accustomed to expressions of grief couched in visceral terms, *Lear*'s words still conjure a disturbingly violent image that begs the question: what did Shakespeare hope to achieve by it? For Shakespeare, as a working playwright and later, a shareholder in *The King's Men*, keeping his audiences engaged was surely of paramount importance. He needed to encourage audience empathy, to put audience members into perceptual contact with his actors as closely as possible, even if those watchers and listeners were some distance from the stage. The answer to this dilemma was to engage their senses. The important role the senses played in the mind's functioning was widely accepted, as Katharine Park observes, "[f]or almost all fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Aristotelians, sensation was the foundation of cognition, a truth which they summarised in the formula: 'There is nothing in the intellect that was not first in the senses.'"³ And for early modern audiences, hearing and seeing a play in the theater was a multi-sensorial experience, as Katharine A. Craik and Tanya Pollard point out: "men and women respond to plays and poems not only with their minds and souls but also with their hearts, hands, viscera, hair, and skin."⁴ My aim in this chapter is to explore the writing strategies that Shakespeare employs to engage and stimulate his audiences in this way—and in doing so, to reveal the early modern sensory imagination at work. My method will involve detailed close readings of selected examples from *Othello* and *King Lear*, through a phenomenological lens.

Phenomenology is explained by Stanton B. Garner, Jr., as an "observational stance and set of theoretical strategies" based on the twentieth-century "philosophical tradition founded by Edmund Husserl."⁵ Simply put, it is a way of "seeing" that goes beyond vision, or what we expect to see. The intention behind its deep focus is to "bracket" or set aside any previous beliefs connected with the example under scrutiny, allowing a deeper and broader absorption of experience. For Maurice Merleau-Ponty, following in Husserl's footsteps, the world is grasped "through the agency of my body,"⁶ with the senses playing a vital role in perception: an idea that also resonates powerfully with early modern faculty psychology, whereby "the organs of the body" were seen "as the key to psychological

function below the level of intellection.”⁷ Phenomenology’s embodied approach to analysis is, I suggest, particularly productive for studying pre-modern faculty psychology and, by extension, the imagination, in that it directly contests mind-body dualism. On this basis, and as an interface for bringing my own subjective response into dialogue with what we can glean from the past through historicist research, it can aid our understanding of how the early modern imagination operates within the body’s faculties, helping us to come closer to an understanding of early modern experience.⁸ However, as Bruce R. Smith points out, phenomenology as practiced by Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty has come under critical fire in terms of its apparent “universalist assumptions”: the idea that subjective analysis is representative of all human experience, “regardless of historical and cultural differences.”⁹

One of the ways phenomenological findings can be validated is through cross-disciplinary work,¹⁰ and my approach here follows what Smith and others have called “historical phenomenology.” This method combines intense, subjective scrutiny with “an historicist frame” that considers differences of time and place and includes “a critical/aesthetic frame that attends to the affordances of different media and different genres,” while at the same time putting “the here-and-now inquirer at the centre of attention.”¹¹ Although I, as a living subject in the here-and-now, am unable to “understand such experience” of the past “in the literal sense of standing under or within it,” to borrow Smith’s words, a careful recording of my own, deeply focused experience of Shakespeare’s words is a strong starting point. And by reflecting on my experience, through the lens of historicist research, I can perhaps draw closer to “the felt experience of ‘Shakespeare’ in the past,”¹² while enriching my understanding of his words in the present.

As part of my exploration of the “feeling” imagination, my initial readings will focus primarily on touch: the sense most present in Shakespeare’s writing. As Smith aptly observes, Shakespeare’s plays are “rife with fantasies of touch.”¹³ He also notes the central role that touch played in early modern cognition:

Aristotle’s treatise, ‘On the Soul’, laid out for THWS [the historical William Shakespeare] and his contemporaries the ground plan of the psychology they used to explain what was happening when they sensed things outside their bodies, felt those things in their hearts, thought about those sensed

and felt things with their minds, and acted upon those sensed, felt, and thought-about things with arms and hands.¹⁴

The examples I have chosen, from *King Lear* and *Othello*, are heavily invested in inferred touch, through descriptions of intense, physical experiences or anticipations of violence, likely to trigger a strong audience response. What my readings offer is a unique perspective on the ways in which language can trigger and prompt an audience's imaginative engagement with Shakespeare's embodied images as represented in language heard, and then generated through the imagination as anticipations of touch. As such, they move beyond discussions of language as signification or representation, to an exploration of its function and impact in terms of presence and experience. For to tap into the ebb and flow of such language is to feel the pulse of its communication with its contemporary listeners, and to begin to grasp the strangeness and sameness of its impact on our own body-minds.

The impact of Shakespeare's language, in terms of its sensory appeals, is clearly demonstrated in Lear's "surgeon" metaphor. The word "cut," for example, engenders a vivid anticipation of its implied action: particularly the force, depth, and quality of the cut needed if a blade is to penetrate a bony skull. In listening to or reading Lear's words, the action of cutting can be actively sensed in the body; the specific choice of words in the metaphor, "cut *to*," suggests a way of guiding the hand, a sense of measure and control. Even though we know how impossible it would be to slice through a skull with a knife without bludgeoning, we cannot help but respond to the words we're given. This innate reaction lies within our embedded survival instinct: the imagination feeds and acts on the data it receives from the world outside the body, instantaneously sparking "pre-runs" of potential scenarios through the senses. If we watch someone cutting themselves while slicing through an apple, we instinctively flinch, as though anticipating the pain of the blade. And this perceptual mirroring is also triggered through graphic description.¹⁵

Like many of Shakespeare's most powerful metaphors, Lear's "surgeon" example is designed to shock; it jars our normal expectations, opening up a fleeting moment of access to the intuitive layer of stored, sensory experience that flows just beneath consciousness, so that we respond instinctively to the "attack" of the words. Images enriched by snatches of sensory recall quiver into embodied consciousness as thought races beyond experience to make sense of the new data, with the imagination filling any

gaps in our experiences. Such perceptual gaps occur frequently in Shakespeare's raw and powerful writing, when language shocks or disorients, throwing our normal gaze off-balance so that we see differently. This skewing or varying of perspective lies at the core of phenomenological principles.

As rich and surprising as Lear's words might seem to a modern ear, they would have held a further dimension for his own audiences. The second, reflexive step of my analysis is therefore to consider my findings within a historicist frame. To understand the function of early modern cognition is to appreciate the power of the senses and their porous relationship with the imagination. And yet, as Lear's words also imply, to study the imagination through early modern eyes was to approach it (metaphorically speaking) as much in the guise of a surgeon as a philosopher. In the early modern era, the imagination was, in Deanna Smid's words, a "fleshy body inside the skull":¹⁶ a "physical, cranial" and "bestial" mass;¹⁷ it was one of three "distinct, physical organs,"¹⁸ the others being common sense and memory. To cut the skull down "to" the brains would be to lacerate an active imagination with the possible consistency of a liver, not to mention its attendant organs and two (fleshy) parts of a three-part soul, only one of which (the intellectualive soul) was immortal.¹⁹ The symptomatic outcome of the attack would be the same, now as then, but the experience would be laced with the fleshy presence of these organs and all they represent in physical (and mental) form. If the imagination is perceived in part as a liver-like organ, its consistency offers or affords that quality to the person cutting into it, and this anticipated action shapes the sensory perception of the reader or audience member responding to Lear's words.

With that embodied perception in mind, the examination of specific word choices can suggest a great deal about the intention behind the metaphor's construction. For example, cutting *to* infers *down to*: the application of repeated pressure until the job is done, which tells us far more about the experience of Lear's emotional wounding than we hear from report. Far from sensory images of hot blood and passion, this metaphor speaks of calculated surgery without pain relief, applied over the same wound until the depth of damage leaves no more room for assault. And in early modern minds, this clinical approach would leave not only fleshy organs exposed, but cognition, memory, and the "sensible," mortal part of the soul. This "cutting" is less of an attack, then, and more of an operation to which the patient has no choice but to submit. Hence, the metaphor brilliantly magnifies Lear's self-inflicted vulnerability, for as the Fool

drily observes (in the Quarto text), without the gold that has held Lear's world of power and flattery together, his mind is left exposed: "thou had'st little wit in thy bald crowne, when thou gauest thy golden one away."²⁰ In revealing Lear's mind as an open wound, which is prey to further attacks, Shakespeare highlights the false "covering" woven from his discarded crown: a world created from the flattery of his ambitious family and followers.

Under the intense focus of a phenomenological lens, Lear's metaphor reveals an assault on the spectator or listener's senses that is almost anatomical in its precision, one that reflects a growing early modern interest in anatomy. A similar example occurs in *Othello* when Iago first hints at Michael Cassio's so-called desire for Desdemona. Othello demands to know his ensign's mind in full, and Iago replies: "You cannot, if my heart were in your hand" (3.3.159). His remark conjures a powerfully haptic image, suggestive of hot flesh and blood, the heart's temporal pulsing, and above all, its moist, fleshy texture sensed in the hand. We might never have held a human or animal organ, but this experiential gap causes the sensory imagination to work harder, retrieving all associated images and memories of similar textures, smells, noises, or colors stored in the imagination and memory. And although we now tend to label "images" as purely visual, in the early modern mind, "synaesthetic sense experiences" might be a more appropriate term: a reconstitution teeming with as many possible dimensions as there are outer and inner senses. As Suparna Roychoudhury explains, in the early modern era, sight and inner sight come under one understanding of vision. From the "earliest beginnings," the word "phantasia" (Greek for imagination) encapsulated the ability to "see inwardly. In faculty psychology," she writes, "the eye and the mind's eye exist in a singular relation."²¹ In the case of the heart-in-hand example, with no external visual cue to prompt the mental image of a human heart, the imagination scours the memory in search of suitable material with which to furnish the new perceptual experience.²²

Early modern image experiences were not simply "stored" as data in the memory, however: they were etched into the body as species, as Park and Kessler explain in their discussions concerning the work of Gregor Reisch. Reisch's species "may be impressed on an internal medium," they note, with "the vaporous *spiritus* filling the sense organs and the nerves," traveling up to the brain and heart, "where they provoke passional reactions."²³ For Reisch, the heart was the seat of the passions; for Shakespeare, though, the heart is clearly "also able to see like the eye and think like the

brain,”²⁴ as Roychoudhury points out in her book. This idea certainly resonates through Iago’s metaphor: to put your heart in someone’s hand is to give one your mind. And yet, as representational as that idea seems, Iago’s words evoke a powerful anticipation of touch. Even without direct experience of how a flesh-and-blood heart feels, most of us are likely to know what one might feel like. Experience teaches us early on that flesh is warm and blood is wet and viscous, thereby rendering the texture of a heart into a moist, spongy object in the palm of the hand.

In his earlier Oxford edition of the play, Neill notes Honigman and Dent’s comment that Iago’s metaphor is “a hyperbolic metonym for murder which occurs in a number of plays,” a factor that presumably reduced its shock value for early modern audiences, though it no doubt added a sinister tone to performances. Neill adds that the metaphor may be drawing on “the symbolic language of public executions in which the hearts of traitors were displayed to the crowd by the executioner,” though in Iago’s case, it “seems more closely related to the investigative delving of anatomy, in which the interior spaces of the body were opened to the curiosity of an audience.”²⁵ This idea seems particularly apt in light of Iago’s smug soliloquies that reveal his ulterior motives to the play’s audience. Early in the action, he lays out his plans for Othello’s downfall with anatomical precision, so that those listening may appreciate the subtle tactics with which he penetrates Othello’s emotional defenses. And for an early modern audience, then, the heart metaphor would have held an additional meaning, bound up in experience. There might well have been spectators who had witnessed an execution first-hand, while many others would have handled raw flesh during animal slaughter or food preparation. Any related sensory memories, such as the slightly sweet smell of raw offal, its slippery feel to the fingers, and its dark, bloody moistness to the eye would be ripe for inclusion in any new images evoked by Iago’s words.

In the early modern era, images were understood as a fusion of data that reached the mind via various external senses. According to Reisch, as Park and Kessler explain, “[t]he power of sense [...] was equipped to receive the sensible forms or images of material objects—to be distinguished from their substantial or specific forms—without the associated matter. It could do so using both organs located on the outside of the body and organs located inside the brain.”²⁶ The term “sensible,” here, indicates the synaesthetic quality of the incoming image. Once the image impression reached the inner senses, Park and Kessler note, “Common Sense compared the individual data” that was “gathered by the various

external senses, and perceived qualities such as size, shape, number and motion that fell under more than one sense.” The images were then stored in the imagination and passed on to fantasy, “which acted to combine and divide them, yielding new images, called *phantasmata*, with no counterparts in external reality.”²⁷ Memory “stored not only the images derived from the external sense,” they add, “but also the *phantasmata* and the reactions of estimation,” which recognized them as “part of past experience.”²⁸

As Daryll Chalk notes, however, the early modern “body and mind” could also be “infected and altered” through any of the senses: “the conduits by which [people] interacted with the world.”²⁹ The sensory imagination, as part of the sensitive soul within the brain, was thought to be a very real danger to the health of the intellective or rational (immortal) soul. With data from all five senses mixing in the common sense on entry to the brain, the spread of infection via the imagination (their next port of call), was ever present. Craik and Pollard explain that as mediator between experience, memory, and creative fusion, the imagination was “most closely allied to sensory appetite” and the body, so “least responsive to the tempering effects” of the intellective soul.³⁰ It was also able “to bring about physiological change.”³¹ This idea is suggested in *Othello*, as we watch its protagonist’s mental and physical health deteriorate under the relentless siege of Iago’s poisonous whisperings. Iago’s strategic prompting of images in the minds of others is a device aimed at triggering innate perceptual mirroring:

Would you the supervisor grossly gape on?
Behold her tuppèd? (3.3.397–98)

It is impossible you should see this,
Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys[.] (3.3.404–5)

“Supervisor,” Neill notes, implies that Othello “will become a pimp to his own wife,”³² while “gape on” carries a double meaning of overseer, and wide-eyed, open-mouthed staring. The alliteration on “g” invites extra stress on “grossly” and “gape”; delivered in the right way, the sounds allow the actor playing Iago to subtly imply his simmering contempt for his weak superior. At the same time, the words infer a gagging disgust at Desdemona’s behavior: an emotion designed to be conveyed by the actor’s repeated guttural sound. Early modern listeners were used to thinking of

sound in “tactile terms,” as Carla Mazzio points out: “[w]ords touch skin, blood and bone, and enter the bodily interior as a kind of liquid physiology, altering the substance of heart and mind.”³³ Smith, in an explanation of what he terms the “green potential in early modern verse,” claims that “hearing green” also “*liquifies* words. That potential,” he adds, “is enabled by a physiology of knowing in which the passions ‘hear’ sensations before reason does. The sensations circulate throughout the body as an aerated fluid on which reason’s imprint is always insubstantial.”³⁴ Othello may insist on visual proof of his wife’s infidelity, and yet it is through the flow of sound, with its power to stir the senses, that he is convinced enough of her guilt to murder her.³⁵

Once etched in Othello’s mind and body, Iago’s descriptive image stream moves from a supervised coupling to chaotic and indiscriminate mating. The precise quality and order of the images are key to shaping audience perception as Iago steers Othello’s perceptual gaze from one carnal image to the next, each rich with sensory appeals. It is impossible to imagine monkeys or sheep without their attendant screams or bleating and difficult to think of goats without the memory of their strong scent. Adjectives in the speech are linked to copulation: Neill glosses “prime” as “ruttish” and “hot” as “sexually aroused.”³⁶ The images grow in implied speed and intensity, from the more submissive ewes (linked to Desdemona’s obedient behavior toward her husband) to the more restless jostle of goats and the screams of excited monkeys. Iago skillfully constructs a subtly sensed, cumulative journey of Desdemona’s descent from submissive presence to implied participant in chaotic sexual activity. Through the lens of phenomenological close-reading, Othello’s descent from control to chaos is illuminated as an experience created, fueled, and imprinted by words and generated by the imagination, framed by beliefs that endorse their fluid, penetrative, and material power over body, mind, and emotions.

The speed at which Othello’s reason is overwhelmed by the species coursing through him is evident in the disintegration of his rational speech. His journey into disorder is mapped, like Lear’s, by random references to the haunting *phantasmata* now filling his mind, so any effort at rational conversation is punctuated by spoken scraps signposting their overwhelming presence, some examples of which include: “Handkerchief—confessions—handkerchief” (4.1.35–36); “Noses, ears, and lips!” (4.1.39); and “Goats and monkeys!” (4.1.255). Although Othello’s physical health clearly deteriorates—Iago describes his fit as “an epilepsy” (4.1.46)—it is obvious, from the way these images intrude haphazardly into Othello’s

reasoned speech, that his illness is a direct result of Iago's poisonous promptings. To that end, Iago's attack is clinically planned and laid out for his audience—a strategy to effect Othello's downfall that comes to fruition the moment Othello enters Desdemona's bedroom to murder her. That atmospheric scene is set in the audience's mind and senses through particularly evocative language, whose inferences of touch come alive before the phenomenological gaze.

Act five, scene two, unfolds from a hushed darkness intimated by a stage direction, "*Enter Othello [with a light] and Desdemona [asleep] in her bed*" (5.2), which editors consistently and aptly expand upon, given the multiple references to a candle in Othello's opening speech that complement the time when Desdemona is "*in her bed*" (5.2.7–10). The presence of a candle was an important signifier of darkness in early modern playhouses, where performances took place in the afternoon. But here the candle has an important, additional role as a light extinguished by breath, a reminder that Othello is to kill his wife by smothering her: "Put out the light, and then put out the light" (5.2.7). The setting (the bedroom), the time of day, and the audience's expectations—together with the sounds and rhythms underscoring Othello's words—as well as his appearance from darkness to light, all heighten suspense. With his wife's sleeping body beneath his gaze, Othello justifies his grim intention:

It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul-
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars:
It is the cause. (5.2.1–3)

Neill glosses "cause" as "legal case or suit" as well as "reason, motive," "charge," and "accusation."³⁷ The word choice thereby encapsulates case, trial, argument, and judgment in one utterance. Only the sentence is left to be pronounced, and the audience has already been primed by Iago's suggestion to "strangle her in her bed, even the bed she hath contaminated" (4.1.190–91). Those words in turn prompt the memory of Othello's eager reply: "the justice of it pleases, very good" (4.1.193), as the audience waits for Desdemona's fate to be confirmed in the following act.

For the early modern actor, this scene would present an important opportunity to draw the audience's focus to Desdemona's body, through Othello's own intent gaze. In premodern psychology, subject/object boundaries were fascinatingly fluid, so perceiving the staged body worked

in the same way as viewing an inanimate object. As one of Reisch's "sense objects," Desdemona's body would naturally emit sense images or species "in all directions," some of which would find their way to the "appropriate sense organ" of those watching, where, Reisch believes, "they cause physical changes which in turn change or 'move' the faculty of sense—a motion defined as sensation."³⁸ For an early modern audience, visual perception could become a form of invasion as the species found their way into the body via the external senses, and this idea must surely have lent an added thrill of risk to a watching audience.

In addition to the visual stimulus of the sleeping Desdemona, Othello's words, heavy with sensory appeals, supplement the impressions or species emitted from her body. New images conjured in the mind's eye produce a variety of sensory responses to be delivered to the common sense and passed on to the imagination for re-working and further dissemination throughout the body and mind. Othello's deliberate repetition of "it is" and the unspoken "cause" leave no need for physical darkness to chill his audience. And yet his next utterance is almost a breath of reprieve:

Yet I'll not shed her blood,
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow
And smooth as monumental alabaster. (5.2.3–5)

While the first line shapes a wisp of hope for Desdemona's life, the description of her sleeping body is followed by an immediate reference to death. Alabaster, as Neill notes, "was the preferred stone for tomb sculpture"; the speech therefore draws a parallel "between the sleeping Desdemona and the prostrate figures displayed on the bed-like 'tester tombs' fashionable at this time."³⁹ The speech is shaped to underscore mood, the one-syllable words in the first line echoing Othello's resolve like the rhythm of a firm tread, even as they conform to the iambic heart-beat beneath. The second line, focusing on Desdemona's body, contains a sweeping undulation, the only two-syllable word being "whiter": centrally placed so that the rhythm lifts and peaks around it, mirroring her rising and falling breath. Specific word placement ensures the smoothness of the meter, allowing the heavier stress to fall on the two longer vowel sounds in "scar" and "snow," drawing attention to the whiteness of Desdemona's skin as well as its vulnerability.

"Whiter" and "snow" recall the image of a blanket-like covering that appears perfect when new-fallen but is vulnerable to sully from the

lightest touch or tread. But white is also the hue of “alabaster” in the line that follows, linking stone with snow in terms of color and temperature, bringing together the contrasting images of stone and flesh in a new, blended perception of Desdemona’s body-as-monument, safely preserved in Othello’s mind as pure beyond mortal temptation.⁴⁰ “Scar” would normally suggest an old wound, but the word here infers the hypothetical action of fresh scarring. In declaring that he will not scar or spoil his wife’s white skin, Othello nevertheless prompts audiences to imagine the potential startling image of blood, scarlet against white, and the anticipation of skin being pierced or scored with a blade. This new blend recalls Othello’s earlier threat, “I will chop her into messes” (4.1.184), and its image is full of brutal action that contrasts sharply with the religious imagery running through the speech. His inner conflict is also reflected in the contesting images of light, as the “flaming minister” of justice, and the “Promethean” giver of life that might restore her.⁴¹ His struggle between desire and firm purpose, encapsulated in the opposing images of Desdemona as warm, living body, then body-as-monument, is also subtly reinforced through sound. The long vowel in “snow” gives way to the lift in “[a]nd” in the next line, heralding a more undulating rhythm that carries a mix of light and heavy vowels as the lines move between a description of pliable flesh and immobile stone.

Phenomenology’s embodied approach to language analysis illuminates the nuanced early modern partnership between the imagination and the senses. Every aspect of language is called into play: texture, shape, rhythm, sound, and semantics, all in an embodied appeal to the listener’s senses that evokes an overwhelming desire to touch. Our imaginations respond to an object’s potentiality: to the experiences it affords us. A way of using this idea in performance, I suggest, is through movement. If the actor playing Othello signals his “motor intention” by tracing the air with his palm just above the form of the sleeping Desdemona,⁴² following the curves of her form with his hand, words and action are primed to work together, prompting an innate, mirrored response in those watching and listening. Such perceptual bonding can only invest an audience in the unfolding conflict: we cannot help but sense the pull of Othello’s temptation, even as we are conscious of his intention. Jennifer Rae McDermott observes that “of all [Shakespeare’s] plays, *Othello* is the most densely packed with touch metaphors that intertwine the holding of thoughts with the beholding skin as a way to convey ‘touching’ affect to the audience.”⁴³ But the withholding, early in the play, of touch and information,

also becomes a locus for so many of the play's antithetical concerns. Othello's words crawl with need and sensory desire even as he frames his justification for ending Desdemona's life. In a brilliantly phenomenological counterpoint, the very act of restraint becomes part of his longing that can be palpably felt by those watching.

The idea that Desdemona's infidelity is an infection to be surgically removed from Othello's purity hovers within the language in this example, recalling Iago's earlier, clinical planning of Othello's downfall, and the anatomical inference within the heart-in-hand metaphor. The play's insistent interest in anatomy and its stress on Othello's inner conflict between desire and resistance resonate interestingly with Helkiah Crooke's views, discussed by Roychoudhury, on the benefits of mind and attitude to be gleaned by students of "the human fabric."⁴⁴ Such a student, Crooke apparently felt, stood "to enjoy the sanative benefits of self-control and social adjustment": an observation that echoes "hypercivility," the Italianate form of obsessive self-discipline discussed—in connection with Othello's conflicting behavior—by Elizabeth L. Swann.⁴⁵ Crooke's comments, Roychoudhury observes, imply that dissection of the body should lead to understanding and moderation of the mind.⁴⁶ Thus, through the study of a non-sensible body, a person could begin to exercise reason in order to control affect. The inference is that surgery equates in some metaphysical rather than a purely metaphorical way to self-control. It is little wonder, in the light of these developing views, that Lear calls for a surgeon to heal an emotional wound.

Roychoudhury points out that the growing interest in early modern anatomy drew many of its adherents to point out the foolishness of Galen and others, who preferred to imagine how the body and mind functioned, rather than to examine the fabric of the body itself for evidence to support their theories. She notes Alessandro Benedetti's warning against written accounts of bodily function that lack material evidence, adding that "[t]hese are warnings against imagination," for "mental images, be they the fantasies of philosophers or verbal pictures printed in books, cannot produce solid anatomical knowledge."⁴⁷ This comment infers that we cannot know ourselves through the imagination—an interesting idea in the light of our post-Cartesian, body-mind separation. But as the above examples from *Othello* and *King Lear* show, the embodied imagination is key to who we are; how we process sensory, cognitive, and emotional data; and the ways in which these processes are steeped in sensory experience.

Metaphorically placing a human heart in someone's hand, for example, can tell us a great deal about the role of the sensory imagination in terms of Shakespeare's readers and audiences, both modern and early modern, since theater was and is a principal conduit of communication and exploratory achievement. To tap into the perceptual gaps created by and in Shakespeare's language is, I suggest, to place the heart back within the body of what we understand as "early modern conceptions of literature and its purpose."⁴⁸ For it is ultimately in words and through them that we may glimpse the strangeness and sameness of early modern and modern experience. With the embedded residue of Cartesian dualism eased aside by phenomenology's intentional focus, it is easy to see why our early modern counterparts envisaged the imagination as a bodily organ. Aristotle and those who followed in his footsteps may have lacked anatomical proof of a flesh and blood imagination, but they undeniably felt the imagination's function and presence in the images evoked by language and flushed through the body with a sensory force that kept them in touch with their world. This potent relationship, I suggest, emanates from a deeper conversation within the body that has grown with and been absorbed into the sounds, order, and texture of language, and this is the embodied power used by the sensory imagination to shape our perception.

At the start of this chapter, I set out to explore, through phenomenological close-readings of selected Shakespearean metaphors, early modern perceptions of the ways in which the sensory imagination functioned within the body-mind. The examples chosen, I suggest, encapsulate a particular intention: to engage a listening, watching audience through linguistic appeals to the senses. With my own listening mind intentionally attuned to the sensory impact of each metaphor, I experienced a rich flow of seeing, sensing, feeling, and anticipation of feeling experience, in response to the sound, rhythms, syntax, and semantics of Shakespeare's language. In phenomenology's secondary, reflexive mode, I then traced each response back to the word, sound, texture, or structure that had inspired it, examining the possible reasons for my experience. As with any subjective close reading, that experience reflects as much on the reader as upon her source, for as Smith notes, "[y]ou can't know anything apart from the way in which you come to know it."⁴⁹

We can never know what Shakespeare felt when he penned the examples I've discussed in this chapter or what individual members of his audiences felt as they heard them. But the nuanced language that elicited my own sensory responses infers a writing strategy aimed at engaging

audiences on a deeply embodied level. Although we can never step back into the past, with careful historicist framing, it is possible for modern phenomenologists to reach into the space “between readers, audiences, and thinkers-about-things on the one hand and the poems and plays they read, watch, listen to, and think about on the other,” in search of a deeper understanding of others’ experiences, through their own. This space is what Smith calls “[t]he in-between”: the interface between “subject (the toucher) and object (the touched).”⁵⁰ Touching, in this literary and theatrical sense, is inferred through language that is written to be heard or sounded in the mind and designed to fire the sensory imagination. As feeling subjects, we come to know and think about our world and each other primarily through touch: an idea that was deeply embedded and embodied in early modern literature, and is an integral part, I suggest, of Shakespeare’s communication with his audiences, then and now. And as my final example from *Othello* illustrates, a keen awareness of the shape and sound of embodied language can help an actor to interpret the sensory loading of that language through movement.

As an aid to a study of the early modern imagination, then, a phenomenological close-reading of Shakespeare’s work not only brings us closer to an appreciation of the imagination, in terms of its function within faculty psychology, but it also offers new ways of engaging with his plays on page and stage, in the here-and-now, as we attempt to recover what Smith terms a “felt experience of ‘Shakespeare’” in our own embodied imaginations.⁵¹

NOTES

1. All citations in this chapter for *King Lear* and *Othello* are taken from *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works* unless otherwise specified.
2. Schoenfeldt, “The Unbearable Permeability,” p. 105.
3. Park, “The Organic Soul,” p. 470.
4. Craik and Pollard, “Introduction,” p. 3.
5. Garner, Jr., *Bodied Spaces*, p. 2.
6. Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 408.
7. Park, p. 479.
8. Note: my use of collectives such as “we” and “us” throughout are not intended in a universalist sense. See my book *Shakespeare, Objects and Phenomenology* for a discussion on the challenges of phenomenology as a subjective method as well as Smith’s chapter in *Shakespeare / Sense* for more

- on this subject. Sachon, *Shakespeare, Objects and Phenomenology*, pp. 19–21; Smith, “Framing Shakespeare’s Senses,” pp. 34–36.
9. Smith, “Framing Shakespeare’s Senses,” p. 35.
 10. See my book for my previous discussion on this matter. Sachon, pp. 20–21.
 11. Smith, “Framing Shakespeare’s Senses,” p. 36.
 12. Smith, *Phenomenal Shakespeare*, p. xvi.
 13. *Ibid.*, p. 145.
 14. *Ibid.*, p. xvii.
 15. See Elaine Scarry’s work for further information on the topic. Scarry, *Dreaming by the Book*, p. 147.
 16. Smid, *The Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*, p. 1.
 17. *Ibid.*
 18. *Ibid.*
 19. See Park and Kessler’s explanations of Reisch’s faculty psychology in “The Organic Soul,” in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, pp. 465–7.
 20. Shakespeare, *King Lear*, 1.4.134–35.
 21. Roychoudhury, *Phantasmatic Shakespeare*, p. 110.
 22. Michael Booth explains this phenomenon in terms of conceptual blending in cognitive science: “The mind tries to add what it knows, or perceives, to what else it knows or perceives, to achieve a more comprehensive view.” Booth, *Shakespeare and Conceptual Blending*, p. 7.
 23. Park and Kessler, “The Concept of Psychology,” p. 472.
 24. Roychoudhury, p. 43.
 25. Neill, p. 292, n. 166.
 26. Park and Kessler, p. 470.
 27. *Ibid.*, p. 471.
 28. *Ibid.*
 29. Chalk, “‘Make Me Not Sighted like the Basilisk,’” p. 115.
 30. Craik and Pollard, p. 5.
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
 32. Neill, p. 306, n. 397.
 33. Mazzio, “Acting with Tact,” pp. 178–79.
 34. Smith, “Hearing Green,” p. 168.
 35. See Katherine Hunt’s notes on early modern beliefs that hearing was not only particularly vulnerable to infection but was also directly linked to the heart as a seat of the emotions. Hunt, “Hearing at the Surface in *The Comedy of Errors*,” p. 183.
 36. Neill, p. 307, n. 405–6.
 37. *Ibid.*, p. 372, n. 1, n. 3.
 38. Park and Kessler, pp. 471–72.
 39. Neill, p. 372, n. 5.

40. See Arthur L. Little, Jr.'s comments on whiteness, race, sexual violence, and ritual in this scene; these dimensions of the text stress the racial imaginings this language also promotes concerning white vulnerability. Little, Jr., *Shakespeare Jungle Fever*, pp. 90–93.
41. For Little, Jr., Othello's simultaneous longing to "kill and redeem her, deflower and chastise her" is also "an attempt to save Desdemona's body from losing its whiteness and hymeneal enclosure." *Ibid.*, pp. 90–91. Hence, Shakespeare's construction of Desdemona as an idealized monument purer than snow and without blemish conveys the supremacy of Desdemona's whiteness relative to Othello's violent demeanor, which Little, Jr., shows is a result of Shakespeare's and the era's false portraits of Black men.
42. For an overview of "motor intention," see Merleau-Ponty, p. 370.
43. McDermott, "There's Magic in the Web of It," p. 156.
44. Roychoudhury, p. 49.
45. Swann offers a fascinating discussion of Mary Floyd-Wilson's views. Swann, "Sweet Above Compare?" p. 96.
46. Roychoudhury, p. 49.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
48. Craik and Pollard, p. 5.
49. Smith, *Phenomenal Shakespeare*, p. 36.
50. *Ibid.*, p. xviii.
51. *Ibid.*, p. xvi.

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Infected Fancies and Penetrative Poetics in *The Rape of Lucrece*

Catherine Reedy

A full 60 years after its original, plague-time publication, the once-banished Royalist John Quarles amplified Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*'s sense of poetic justice by turning to the inner physiology of Tarquin's "fancy" and the murderous power of raped women's songs.¹ In his 1655 Octavo (O8), Quarles reframes Shakespeare's text to an unprecedented degree. In this text, one encounters yet another of the period's many disturbingly eroticized portraits of Lucrece, what Katherine Duncan-Jones describes as a titillating "erotic pin up" for "less serious-minded men."² In this case, Lucrece stands fully dressed in nearly sheer fabric, close-lipped with phallic sword piercing her breast as Shakespeare's portrait looms above the scene in authorial dominance.³ Underneath the image, a couplet emphasizes the uniquely feminized pain of silence—"The Fates decree, that tis a mighty wrong / To Woemen Kinde, to have more Greife then Tongue"⁴—one which will become uniquely undone by Quarles's startling finale to the *Lucrece* (O8). Indeed, rather than end in the same fashion as the original

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M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_6

narrative poem, gesturing as it does toward the paraded, speechless corpse of Lucrece, Quarles instead adds the murderous songs of transfigured, raped women who actualize vengeance through the “full bodied notes / Discharged from the Engins of their throats”; this flock of ravished “*Philomels*” murders Tarquin by destroying his “fancy,” namely his imagination.⁵

This chapter takes Quarles’s additions to Shakespeare’s text as a starting and returning point to reconsider the ways in which the violence done to Lucrece’s body can be rethought through a more careful consideration of the imagination as an embodied component of faculty psychology. It will examine the complex dynamics among the potentially deceptive senses and the faculty of the imagination, or what Suparna Roychoudhury calls the “disorderly and mediatory image-making power” of the mind.⁶ Along with other activities, like sensation and memory, the imagination was a key part of the complexities of faculty psychology, a system in which the mind’s discrete powers were understood to act materially within the sensitive, or animal soul. While the imagination primarily dealt with the preservation and manipulation of sensible forms in the mind, as will be further explained, Shakespeare, Quarles, and other writers from the period center on its unreliable and at times unpredictable connections with the external senses and the inner wits, as exemplified by Tarquin’s infected “fancy” and Lucrece’s fragmentary “conceits.” Sexual violation, vengeance, sympathy, and no less than artistic expression itself are caught up in the complexities of the inner workings of an embodied system of cognition.

The auditory vengeance outlined above in Quarles’s newly penned afterword, “The Banishment of Tarquin, or The Reward of Lust,” offers one vision of both the danger and power of the relationship between the senses and the imagination. There, the peculiar fantasy of justice relies on a tit-for-tat logic, a kind of penetration-for-penetration, where Quarles crafts a simplistic division between the “raped body” of Lucrece and the “raped mind” of Tarquin.⁷ He tries to ward off the sonic assault (“With that he stops his ears, but all in vaine, / His fancy turns all *Philomels*”),⁸ but the replicating “notes” nevertheless enter “the portal of his ears” in order to “pay *Lucretia*’s debt” of revenge:

First, they encamped about his eares, and send
A party out of notes, which recommend
Themselves unto him, whilst affrightn’d he
Decayes, and reels into an extasie;

Then they assault him with full bodied notes
Discharged from the Engins of their throats.⁹

An eyeless corpse remains at the close, left behind to rot as the vengeful birds scatter. If Tarquin shuts his ears and fancy to Lucrece's earlier pleas, Quarles suggests that poetic justice is achieved through the weaponized, bodily emissions of morphed rape victims. Prominently on display is the dangerous embodiment of the imagination and its intimate dynamic with invasive sensory input. Sensation, understood as both contagious and ravishing, forms the basis of Quarles's depictions of sexual violence and its aftermath.

At a first glance, this nightingale-mediated revenge, issued through replicating and invading "full-bodied notes," seems at odds with Shakespeare's approach to the "poor bird" Philomel, whose "sad strain[s]" of music shape Lucrece's own poetic imitation (1131).¹⁰ And yet, in his scene of auditory assault, Quarles is picking up on Shakespeare's deep engagement with the complicated mix of embodied imaginations on display in his narrative poem: imaginations shown to be dangerously and unpredictably impacted by the imprinted *phantasmata* of sensation. Resituated within the increasingly streamlined cognitive faculties during the early modern period as "the single mediator between the incorporeal soul and the corporeal human body,"¹¹ the imagination becomes both in the period and in Shakespeare's poem a kind of "central gateway" between the lower order sensations and higher order actions of the rational intellect and will.¹² In his *Lucrece*, Shakespeare considers not only Tarquin's inner faculties, influenced as they are by Collatine's praise of Lucrece, but also Lucrece's own imaginative encounters with an astounding variety of fictive works, from music to painting to performance. Even more, Shakespeare broadens his scope to consider art, from bird songs to his own poem itself, as an intimate and dangerous enterprise forged out of the fraught relationship between sensation and the imagination. As this chapter will show, Shakespeare uses both the language of contagion and sexual violation to depict the poems' disparate, embodied imaginations as means to both dramatize and subtly critique the penetrative poetics in this narrative of rape and trauma.

The resulting focus appears, in fact, so deeply internal that the text is often described as caught up in its own rhetorical wordiness, a stylistic choice often described as being disembodied. Unlike Shakespeare's other plague-time-produced, narrative poem, *Venus and Adonis*, so filled as it is

with sweat and stench, with the feel and heft of the body, *Lucrece* offers elaborated displays of language: ornamental and excessive, digressive and aphoristic, a textual code that displaces even Lucrece's enticing physical body with rhetoric.¹³ Earlier critics in particular found this lack of embodiment and hyper-focused textuality as accounting for the poem's many failures, both in terms of content and aesthetics.¹⁴ In contrast, more recent critics have considered how the "foregrounded artifice" of the piece produces a variety of fascinating narrative and psychological effects,¹⁵ including Lucrece's own "metadramatic interiority," where Lucrece enters into a "virtual poetic ontology" of "self-wounding Ovidian eloquence,"¹⁶ as she and by extension Shakespeare become poets "'ensnared' in rhetoric's chains, [and are] both source and medium of [their] own eloquence" in Jenny Mann's terms.¹⁷ In Lynn Enterline's account, this interiority, as a prototype for Shakespeare's other "wordy" tragic hero, Hamlet, exposes the processing of the "unspeakable event" of rape by showcasing the "collapse" of the usually functional differences between language and body, representation and event.¹⁸

Yet even if *Lucrece* can feel at times disembodied, caught up in page-long apostrophes and studded with *sententiae*, this chapter argues that the poem's engagement with representation exposes a necessarily material, sensorial set of interiorities. From the moans, tears, and sighs emitted from her body to the painted figures striking her eyes and ears, nails and tongue, Lucrece's traumatic processing of rape occurs through her body. In this manner, Quarles's later additions are not that different from the original poem, given that Shakespeare's representations of faculty psychology produce more subtle embodiments. Moreover, the myriad sensations undergird Shakespeare's complex presentations of no less than three imaginations with complicated inner dynamics. If the imagination had become a mediator for the entire cognitive system of faculties itself, it is one that stands between sensation and representation, the animal and rational soul, and the common sense of the forebrain and the motive "will" of the *cogitativa*, a penetrated and penetrating force of the mind. The physiological landscapes of Shakespeare's Tarquin, Lucrece, and imagined reader all dangerously contaminate and are contaminated by the outside world, and yet the imagination of each documents a fundamentally distinct approach to aesthetics and ethics. As such, *Lucrece* exposes the ways in which the imagination conjured uneasy questions about the tangle of embodied and disembodied states that emerge in the aftermath of rape. The chapter illuminates the ways in which Shakespeare presents Tarquin's infected

imagination as fascinated with the idea or image of Lucrece he creates, which is not altogether different from the men parading her dead body as an icon of virtue by the end of the poem or the objectified images of Lucrece in Shakespeare's culture. Unlike Quarles's later exactment of poetic revenge on Tarquin with an army of Philomelas invading the rapist's mind, Shakespeare instead presents Tarquin's and other men's fantasies of Lucrece—imaginings that serve their own purposes and reflect the images of Shakespeare's patriarchal society—as disconnected from Lucrece's own embodied imaginings of art and the world.

Shakespeare's poem is thus preoccupied with the ways in which the men violently construe and possess their image of Lucrece. Early modern writers often treat the imagination as the key to aesthetic power from the making to the consumption of art. This association between the imagination and poetry is well-known, from Sidney's notorious "zodiac" of poetic wits to Bacon's pairing of poetry and the imagination, set against history/memory and philosophy/reason. Yet aesthetic discourses are even more specific in spelling out the dynamic interplay between the at-times unreliable senses and their penetrative invasion of the inner wits of readers and spectators. Shakespeare himself spells out the interplay in many sections of the poem that are charged with being digressive in their shifted investment in the so-called *paragone*, or genre of debate over the relative power of artistic media, traditionally painting and poetry. In these aesthetic moments, however, whether Lucrece is listening to Philomela's songs or looking at a painted image of the fall of Troy, the "imaginary work" (1422) of reception and the artistic creation are made apparent. To take one example of this doubled set of imaginations at play, Lucrece examines the "[c]onceit deceitful" (1423) of the painted "piece" (1366) of Troy, crafted by a "conceited painter" to strike the imagination of the viewer who must fill in the whole for the parts, in this case body parts: "A hand, a foot, a face, a leg, a head [which] / Stood for the whole to be imagined" (1427–28). Aesthetic "conceit," used here as another of the many synonyms for imagination, references the imagination's manipulative, illusion-making powers, its powers of preserving and recombining sensory information either unified or subdivided into the *vis imaginativa* and *phantasia* (fantasy or fancy).

However organized, whether between three or five of the so-called "internal wits," the powers of the imagination primarily relate to its position as what Roychoudhury describes as the "necessary bridge between sensation and judgment."¹⁹ Sitting within the hollowed, front ventricle of

the brain, one of the brain's reservoirs of fluid animal spirits,²⁰ the imagination receives and processes the species or transmitted forms of the five senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch—which pool first in the *sensus communis* before stamping their forms onto the receiving brain-matter according to Aristotle's well-known waxy metaphor. The powers of the sensitive or animal soul move from front to back within the brain, eventually landing in the storage system of the *memorativa*. And yet, if the imagination works as the middle link within the sensitive soul itself, standing between the amassed and unprocessed species and the filing cabinet system of the memory, it also provides a link between the choices of the rational soul and the visible actions of the human body itself. The incorporeal actions of the rational soul, often divided into the understanding and the will, or the rational appetite,²¹ draw from the information gathered in the sensitive soul and return back into action and motion through the sensitive faculties, *via* the imagination. Francis Bacon calls this fluctuating faculty “Janus-faced,” simultaneously oscillating between the fluttering sensations of the external world and the moral choices of the human will.²² Hence, as a middling (and meddling) agent, the imagination revels in a captivating ambivalence likened to that of poetry and artistic expression itself, which might create the best or the worst in humanity.

Adding to this ambivalence, the faculty's proximity to sensory data makes it more vulnerable to the competing and contagious material effluvia of the world. Indeed, early modern depictions of the imagination dramatize its exuberant and chaotic mess of sense impressions. In a similar fashion, artistic spectatorship and the reading of texts themselves are described as dangerously invasive, due in part to the potentially contagious influences of sensation onto the spectator's imagination. Artists describe their own aesthetic power as emerging from their sensory penetration into the spectator's or reader's imagination, in what Jennie Votava calls “an emergent discourse of sensory contagion” crafted by performers and writers alike.²³ Critically, this contagious dynamic is then further yoked to the invasive penetrations of sexual violation, such that the “stamping” of species into brain is both infectious and eroticized. George Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy*, for instance, considers poetic “ravishment” to occur only through the pleasurable bombardment of the mind with sensation, as “the minde is not assailable vnlesse it be by sensible approches” that arise through “the delight of the eare.”²⁴ Thus, within the conventional discourses surrounding aesthetics, both contagion and

sexual violence become likened mechanistically to the sensory components of “ravished” imaginations.

Moreover, this concept of imaginative ravishment often draws on a gendered dynamic of competitively penetrative poetics that pits male artists against feminized viewers. Philip Sidney spells out this invasive dynamic of infected and infecting fancies in great detail in both his *Defence of Poesy* and his own poetry, where the euphemistically “ravishing” power of successful love poetry ends by penetrating feminized imaginations.²⁵ Critical to his design are the well-known figures of raped women—Philomela and Lucretia herself—who embody the desired poetic enterprise of ravished imaginations.

Sidney relies on what had become typical within his poems of lament, focused as they were on capturing the internal anguish of the male speaker. This traditional form of complaint is voiced time and time again in nearly all of Shakespeare’s plays, where the infective potential of feminine beauty yokes together the mechanics of sensation with those of contagion. One of the most elaborated examples occurs in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, when Biron complains that the four wounded men have “caught [...] the plague” from their respective women’s eyes.²⁶ One indeed can hear echoes of this logic in *Lucrece* itself, from the description of the “taint[ing]” (38) of Tarquin’s ears to the “enclose[ing]” of Lucrece’s form within “his traitor eye” (73). If these examples demonstrate the overlapping language of infection and love, one finds elsewhere the implication of sexual violence. Sidney’s poetry, influential as it was, often places mental rape as the origin story for the love lyric. Within a poem commonly referred to as “The Nightingale,” Sidney contrasts his pain as a would-be lover with that of the raped Philomela. He writes that “she hath no other cause of anguish / But Tereus’ love, on her by strong hand wroken [sic],” in contrast to his more “plaintful sadness.” He further reduces rape to an event that occurs in the body alone as set against the mind to claim his own competitively worse violation: “Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart invadeth.”²⁷ The claim here finds aesthetic power in sexualized violence, one where lyrical success directly relates to a greater originating violation, and perhaps results in a more penetrating aesthetic output. In other words, his rape is worse, so his verse is better.

This single poetic example of competitive rape centrally appears in Sidney’s more methodical discourse on aesthetics, *The Defence of Poesy*, as he contrasts imaginative poets from those who merely “counterfeit only

such faces as are set before them.”²⁸ Drawing from the visual arts, Sidney describes truly gifted poets as crafting

[that] which is fittest for the eye to see,—as the constant though lamenting look of Lucretia, when she punished in herself another’s fault; wherein he paints not Lucretia, whom he never saw, but paints the outward beauty of such a virtue.²⁹

Fantasy’s various toys and conceits described above now morph into the idealized form of Lucretia, or Lucrece, whose “outward beauty” reifies her as an object of reader’s sensory consumption. In part, she becomes a figure of paradox, both as a materially impressed “waxen mind” and as an impressing form unleashed by poets. This combination of the inscribed and inscribing qualities of Lucrece makes her, for Shakespeare and for the period, a “defiantly productive cipher.”³⁰ As such a cipher, Lucretia morphs from a full-bodied, human being and into a mere vehicle for the imagination: one that might productively stamp forms into readers’ minds in order to showcase the artistic power of male authors.

Sidney’s reduction of Lucrece into an object of fancy that ravishes a poet’s imagination takes on wider resonance through artistic representations of her in widely circulated objects of the early modern period. The popular trade in the simultaneously eroticized and moralizing associations of her “outward form,” and, as we will see, in Shakespeare’s poem engages in this network in ways that perpetuate Lucrece’s objectification. From stamping seal rings that impressed her three-dimensional image in wax to medallion-lined jewelry “caskets” of exemplary women, Lucrece was commonly represented on possessions and thereby rendered into a cultural object of fascination, an image of the patriarchal imagination. As a cipher of presence-and-absence in Jacobson’s account, Lucretia serves as a model of wifely chastity and as such was a regular part of bridal gift exchanges, from wedding *cassoni* to the split gemmel ring of a newly betrothed couple.³¹ Lucretia’s form also appears as an ornamental cittern created by Girolamo de Virchi of Brescia for Duke Ferdinand of Tyrol, an instrument Carla Zecher perceives as more for “display than for music making.”³² Virchi’s cittern links the production of sound to Lucretia’s rape and suicide, going so far as to carve Lucretia’s head and impaled, exposed breasts as the instrument’s peg-box, the metal strings emerging from her death wounds and strung across the pear-shaped, Venus-shelled instrument. Critically, whether in art that emphasizes the political repercussions of

Lucretia's suicide or in art that highlights her psychological trauma, the myth of Lucretia often focuses on her body's ability to move its spectators.³³ Likewise, artists, from cittern players to painters and poets, imagined themselves to use Lucretia's body as the very matter propping up the beauty of their own aesthetic power through its sensorially contagious force. Her bleeding body literally and figuratively tunes their artistic productions. She offers a gutted but ambivalent feminized body, one hollowed out for a masculinized "voice."

Shakespeare certainly participates in this instrumentalization of Lucrece, who does indeed imaginatively turn herself into a self-destructive instrument as she imitates Philomela:

To imitate thee well, against my heart,
 [I] Will fix a sharp knife to affright mine eye,
 Who if it wink shall thereon fall and die.
 These means, as frets upon an instrument,
 Shall tune our heart-strings to true languishment. (1137–41)

Nevertheless, if *Lucrece* the poem becomes, like the character, an instrument through which Shakespeare the author might seek financial stability, given the pestilential closing of the theaters, *Lucrece* also consistently critiques the model of ravishing poetics and penetrated imaginations that had become such a central part of sonneteering and the love lyric as a whole. Shakespeare exposes the limitations of this approach in part by separating out three central imaginations in representing the different bonds between sensation and the inner wits in Tarquin's, Lucrece's, and the ideal reader's minds. Remarkably, each of these embodiments draw on unique configurations of the faculty system itself, such that visual, auditory, and tactile species, conceits, wills, and thoughts impress themselves diversely within the represented minds of Tarquin, Lucrece, and the (imagined) reader of Shakespeare's poem.

Starting with Tarquin, Shakespeare opens his narrative poem with an exaggerated version of the competitive, ravishing poetics of Sidney's infected imagination, where verbal tropes, including "the conventional language of desire" pave the way for the poem's violence, colored as they are with the militaristic invasions or battered households of sonneteering.³⁴ The action of the first half of the poem leading up to the rape, focused as it is on Tarquin's internal desire for Lucrece, presents Tarquin's fantastical vision of Lucrece: "Within his thought her heavenly image sits"

(288) and “confounds his wits” (290). From the start, her divine shape—partly formed by narrative, as “by our ears our hearts oft tainted be” (38), and partly through the re-conjuring of her image in his imagination—splits from the reality of her earthly body, with its breath issuing in a “helpless smoke of words” (1027). Moreover, as a visual form she wreaks havoc on the entire system of Tarquin’s inner wits. Shakespeare repeats again and again the visuality of Tarquin’s encounter with Lucrece, an ocular dynamic directly impacted by “thoughts” and “wills” throughout the poem. Like countless lamenting lovers before him, Tarquin gazes at Lucrece’s body as an aestheticized object, one understood to penetrate his own psyche. The iterative acts of visuality—he “gazeth,” (366), he “[r]oll[s] his greedy eyeballs in his head” (368), and so on—connects with the double-meaning of “[l]ook” (372), as both Tarquin narratively and the reader meta-narratively render her body desirous. The command to visuality implicates the reader in Lucrece’s rape, as outlined by Joel Fineman, where the “poem’s own rhetoricity” “speak[s] to its reader’s ‘ear’ so as to ‘taint’ its reader’s ‘heart.’”³⁵

Shakespeare only amplifies this objectification as the scene continues, as Tarquin compares Lucrece’s body to the stone-cold, carved object in the very moment before her rape. Tarquin stands before her bed while she sleeps and pictures her to be a sculpture: “like a virtuous monument she lies, / To be admired of lewd unhallowed eyes” (391–92). The poem appears to be yet another artifact from the era that is deeply suspicious of visual culture, stemming from the ambivalent hierarchy of sensation described by Stuart Clark as showcasing vision as both “the most noble and certain sense but also the most corruptible and most corrupting.”³⁶ Indeed, color as deception litters the poem from start to finish, culminating in the final, emblematic spilling of Lucrece’s blood after her suicide. Her blood itself turns into a material emblem of her violation, where streams of “black,” corrupted, and “stained” blood congeal alongside the “untainted,” “blushing,” red blood of her innocence (1743, 1749, 1750). Suggestively, the black hue of Lucrece’s corrupted blood speaks to Shakespeare’s racializing of Tarquin within the poem and his connection to Shakespeare’s other “painted tyrants.”³⁷ If colored blood makes Tarquin’s race itself infectious for Lucrece, it also suggests a fundamental legibility both of Tarquin and of Lucrece as visual artifacts that penetrate and are penetrated.

Yet, Shakespeare suggests that Tarquin’s infected and infecting imagination arises not simply from his eyes, but from a coloring of his

perception of human beings themselves who become reduced to images. Strangely too, his perceptual and sexual violence emerges from a lack of attention to his sense organs and a dangerous reliance on his higher order rational systems of will and thought. His incorporeal will dominates his fantastical visions and blocks him off from the competing sensory effluvia yearning to enter the portals of his ears and eyes: “What he beheld, on that he firmly doted, / And in his will his wilful eye he tired” (416–17). Tarquin dresses his “wilful eye” with his “will,” and, as Lucrece awakes and begins her lengthy pleas, he continuously returns to his will as a dominating, hardening force: “My will [...] marks thee” (487); “Will is deaf” (495); etc. Crucially, he rejects the reality of her sensible body for the unreal fantasy body living in his thoughts, as the poem juxtaposes the “heaven of his thought” (338) with his perception of her in the moment: “His ear her prayer admits, but his heart granteth / No penetrable entrance to her plaining” (558–59). Shakespeare thus shows how the traditional poetics of ravished-and-ravishing minds pervert each side of the equation in its reduction of women into emblems of desire and conquest. Put simply, her personhood has not penetrated his imagination, but his idea of her as an aestheticized object of beauty has colored his ability to see. The image of Lucrece, not Lucrece herself, is the source of his imagination’s desire.

Oddly, Tarquin is not the only character in the poem to treat Lucrece as a sculpted monument. What Shakespeare exposes about the inner workings of Tarquin’s mind is apparent with other men as well. The frame of the poem—with its politicized, Latinate “Argument” and the poem’s final stanza—present Lucrece’s corpse as a moving spectacle, or a body that, in the Argument, creates “one consent and general acclamation, / [such that] the Tarquins were all exiled, and the state government / changed from kings to consuls” (39–41).³⁸ Similarly, by the poem’s end, Brutus and his fellow masculine revengers storm the streets to “show her bleeding body thorough Rome, / And so to publish Tarquin’s foul offence; / Which being done, with speedy diligence, / The ROMANS plausibly did give consent / To TARQUINS’ everlasting banishment” (1850–55). As a corpse, her body is granted stability and clear interpretative meaning and operates uniformly on the senses of many disparate spectators. Surprisingly, both of the seemingly opposite men within the poem—the rapist Tarquin and the avenging Brutus—scheme to use Lucrece’s body as a monument for their wills, in keeping with the conventional aesthetics of invasive “outward forms” of beauty and virtue mentioned earlier. Their goals surely

differ ethically, yet both dismiss Lucrece's interiority, instead choosing to see her as an artifact of aesthetic power. Brutus indeed condemns Lucrece as acting from the "childish humour from weak minds" in creating "wounds [to] help wounds, or grief [to] help grievous deeds" in her suicide (1825, 1822). Lucrece thus becomes a phantasm for the men's pleasures or their political agendas. Tellingly, Brutus's subsequent publication of Lucrece's "bleeding body" through Rome and its subsequent incitement repeats Tarquin's consumption of her as a visual artifact. Presumably, the eyes are less lewd and unhallowed in the streets of Rome, and yet they too view the leftover, lifeless body of Lucrece now morphed into an emblem of virtue, the "marble" monument of a blood-let body that can impress upon the waxen insides of spectators' imaginations.

Exposing the distortions and cruelties that arise from the tangle of visual forms and willful eyes of conventional ravishing poetics, Shakespeare offers a different approach to artistic production from Lucrece's perspective. Just as he did with Tarquin, Shakespeare focuses on Lucrece's internal responses to the crisis; unlike with Tarquin, however, Lucrece's inner world becomes immediately inundated with sounds, sights, and touches. Moreover, as the narrative moves from Tarquin to Lucrece, from pre- to post-rape, the language of "will" and "thought" is replaced by "conceit" and the "imagination." Both terms, in fact, occur for the first time just at the moment of transition when Shakespeare pulls away from depiction of the assault and moves to an apostrophe on the assault: "O deeper sin than bottomless conceit / Can comprehend in still imagination!" (701–2).³⁹ Shakespeare continues to use "imagination" and its variants four more times, as well as "conceit" three more times, in the second half of the poem.⁴⁰ Even from this rudimentary sketch, one can see how Shakespeare crafts Tarquin to become wholly occupied by his mental projection of Lucrece: one constructed by his eye, will, and thought, and shut off from any competing sensory data from the outside world. In contrast, Lucrece becomes almost hyperaware of the world's conflicting bits and pieces of *phantasmata* and species, and she consistently connects these everyday sensory imprints to aesthetics. Lucrece understands her own body in quite different terms from the men of the text who, as we have seen, imagine or present her as a sculptural monument voided of blood and effluvia. In contrast, Lucrece describes the process by which she will hoard all of the materiality of her violation in order to "grace the fashion / Of her disgrace" to men returning home from camp:

Besides, the life and feeling of her passion
 She hoards, to spend when he [Collatine] is by to hear her;
 When sighs and groans and tears may grace the fashion
 Of her disgrace, the better so to clear her
 From that suspicion which the world may bear her. (1324–28)

Part of this storing up of the elements of her pain speaks to her need to narrate her violations believably, in order to “clear her / From [...] suspicion,” like countless rape victims before and after her plight.

Yet even as she hopes to communicate her trauma through her body—the held in and purged sighs, groans, and tears that might stage her innocence—she does not want to become reduced to one of the very “monuments” described by Tarquin and Brutus alike. As she mourns her predicament, she pleads, “[m]ake me not object to the tell-tale Day!” (806). Moreover, she contrasts everlasting monuments of virtue and vice with the fleeting signs offered by her body’s fluid emissions: “I alone, alone must sit and pine, / Seasoning the earth with showers of silver brine, / Mingling my talk with tears, my grief with groans, / Poor wasting monuments of lasting moans” (795–98). If she fears how she will be read and storied by other characters—nurses, children, and Collatine himself—she yearns to void herself of her blood less to become a “tell-tale” spectacle than to rid herself of the materially felt shame of her violation. Her thoughts are in line with the all-too-common experience of rape survivors, who in many instances experience somatic symptoms, or the “conversion of mental experiences or states into bodily symptoms,” in direct proportion to the unreality and dissociation they experience during sexual violence.⁴¹

Most of the poem indeed gives credence to her concerns about the legibility of any visual sign itself. It is not even clear in the traditional hierarchy of the senses whether sound or vision is more responsible for “tainting” the heart or imagination. Throughout, the poem exposes sensory data as being a swirling mess of unpredictability. As noted, Lucrece’s own voice, imagined materially elsewhere as “the helpless smoke of words” (1027), fails to move Tarquin because of his impenetrability. Yet in other instances, to more receiving spectators, her body communicates despite itself, moving some to shame or embarrassment, as in the case of the groom, or to shared sympathy, as in the case with her maid.

In the latter case, feminized physiologies, while increasing vulnerability in all their soft waxiness, produce a more fertile, imaginative bond that

operates outside of rational thought. What contemporary writers would call “contagious affect” is on display when Lucrece encounters her maid. Nothing is spoken, and yet sorrow spreads through a “sympathetic” replication described, remarkably, as an “enforcing,” penetrating ravishment:

But as the earth doth weep, the sun being set,
 Each flower moistened like a melting eye,
 Even so the maid with swelling drops ’gan wet
 Her circled eyne, enforced by sympathy
 Of those fair suns set in her mistress’ sky,
 Who in a salt-waved ocean quench their light,
 Which makes the maid weep like dewy night. (1226–32)

Unlike other forms of vocal penetration, a mirroring, liquid power connects the women through “moistened,” “melting eyes,” “swelling drops,” “salt-waved” oceans, and “dew,” in what Catherine Nicolson calls a “display of imitative emotion.”⁴² While Nicolson finds this imitative dynamic to amplify rather than relieve Lucrece’s pain, one also finds a healthy, yearned-for release, as the hoarded “steams” and vapors are replaced by floral and oceanic images of consonance. Instead of the competitive circuit of ear-raping sounds, grief is shared and enforced through the hidden, contagious powers of “sympathy.”

Here, in “enforcing sympathy,” one finds an alternative to the conventional portrait of aesthetic power as one of ravished-and-ravishing imaginations. Notably, this scene persists in a dynamic of force of a kind, yet it is one that occurs outside of rationality and even language itself. The natural magic of sympathy, where like-for-like species trigger mirroring responses, allows Lucrece’s pain to impress itself into the inner flesh of her maid’s imagination. Notably, this emotional sharing does not lead to action, namely to rape or revenge, but instead to shared mourning. They stand “a pretty while” (1233) not doing anything but “filling” (1234) and “spilling” (1236), “[g]rieving themselves to guess at others’ smarts” (1238) rather than directly sharing their woes through language.

Shakespeare feminizes this deeply felt emotional response and aligns it to a gendered account of the imagination’s influence by sensation and outside forces in general. Whereas Tarquin’s will lords over his imagination and sensation, Lucrece, and women more generally, remain physiologically softer, more receptive to the sensory impressions in their hidden ventricles:

For men have marble, women waxen minds,
 And therefore are they formed as marble will.
 The weak oppressed, th'impression of strange kinds
 Is formed in them by force, by fraud, or skill. (1240–44)

Even if they become more vulnerable to false impression, in the infantilizing logic of this Aristotelian-inflected authorial interjection, women's greater openness to the world connects Lucrece to the ideal reader: one surprisingly more attuned to the swirling and contradictory mess of sensation. In other words, a more deeply felt, feminized embodiment rejects the masculinizing monument-making strategies of violence witnessed throughout the poem. If sensation threatens the imagination with its sloppy, infective, and violating forces, it still allows for a more authentic and ethically-centered engagement with the world itself.

The reader, encountering these different approaches—the sculptural, masculine “wills” set against the performative, feminized “conceits”—thus faces a meta-narrative challenge set by Shakespeare. That is, Shakespeare seems to ask readers across the astounding variety of aesthetic forms within the poem whether they can engage with Lucrece as a mere emblem of poetic ravishment or as a form emerging from a mess of imagined sensory bits. Shakespeare partly turns to the ideal reader by using Lucrece herself as a model for such a readership. Lucrece herself again and again bonds with especially fragmented, missing figures of the past, from the birds she hears from a distance, whom she links to Philomela, to the painted figures she sees in the well-known, digressive moment when Lucrece encounters the “piece / Of skillful painting made for Priam's Troy” (1366). The scene is dubbed “the most explicit and unequivocal example of a Shakespearean ekphrasis” across his oeuvre,⁴³ and it is often referenced in relation to Shakespeare's interest in the *paragone* of artistic forms, as here a visual artifact competes with Philomela's (and Lucrece's) songs. And yet within this scene we also find in the competition of media-against-media another vision of “enforced sympathies” of imitative imaginations that rejects Tarquin and his ravishing poetics. A key appears in the narration of the painting's stylistic oddities. A limited procession of body parts represents a throng of people, the “nose shadowed by his neighbor's ear” (1416). A single “spear” stands in for the entirety of “Achilles' image” (1424). In part, according to Rachel Eisendrath, the voicelessness of Lucrece's suffering, mapped onto the voicelessness of the past, emerges from this “fantasy of the past's resurrected wholeness to a more

antiquarian sense of the scene's thingly fragmentation."⁴⁴ Unlike the popular Lucretia objects described above—the instruments, sealing rings, and so forth—the painted figures of Troy are not smooth, completely unified representations. They require the imaginative engagement of the viewer and, even then, remain shadowed and partial.

Intriguingly, Lucrece fills in these artifacts with language—she “lend[s] them words” (1498)—and yet she too becomes modified by their influence—“she their looks doth borrow” (1498). In other words, through sensory exchange Lucrece actively uses the figures of the past to “shape her [own] sorrow” and to become an instrument for their pain. Hecuba is indeed where she settles, as she re-imagines their transhistorical communion to occur through sensory exchange:

‘Poor instrument’ quoth she, ‘without a sound,
I’ll tune thy woes with my lamenting tongue
And drop sweet balm in Priam’s painted wound,
And rail on Pyrrhus that hath done him wrong,
And with my tears quench Troy that burns so long,
And with my knife scratch out the angry eyes
Of all the Greeks that are thine enemies. (1464–70)

Her tongue, tears, voice, and knife, believed to be curative “sweet balms” that might imaginatively “quench” ancient fires and “scratch out” the ravages of invading armies, relate to the wider mapping of her violated body onto the body politic that, in Marion Wells’s account, is part of the fetishization of her body by the competitive male authorities of the end.⁴⁵ It also shows an unintegrated, surprisingly broken-up image becoming part of Lucrece’s newly created subjectivity, yet interrupts the “hoarding” economy presented earlier, where any extra tears, sighs, or vapors into her body are stored for a more effective, and potentially contagious, performance. She “los[es] her woes in shows of discontent” (1580) during this protracted scene with the painted Hecuba by realizing that “others have endured” (1582) the trauma she currently feels.

If Shakespeare suggests this scene as a model for his own readers, he presents a very different dynamic of poetry’s impact on the embodied imaginations of readers than that of his predecessors, with their competitive infections and ravishments. If traditional accounts locate their own power in crafting Lucretia as an imaginative form, a smoothly sculpted object of desire and virtue, Shakespeare instead appears to find his own

poetic enterprise on the partial and unpredictable exchanges between readers and fictive characters. Unlike Quarles's nightingales, Lucrece's revenge comes not from her own invasion of the rapist's perverse imaginations; instead, within Shakespeare's poem of dislocation and fragmentation, Lucrece "enforce[s] sympathy" with like-minded readers willing to exchange voices and looks with figures of the past. Thus, Shakespeare ultimately conjures a penetrative poetics of objectification in order to offer an alternative form of imaginative play between reader and fiction: one more richly connected to the challenges and limitations of sensation and materiality.

NOTES

1. Shakespeare, *The Rape of Lucrece* [O8], sig. G5^v.
2. Duncan-Jones and Woudhuysen, "Introduction," p. 37.
3. For more on how this edition participated in the authorial construction of Shakespeare as author, see Hook, "Royalist Shakespeare."
4. Shakespeare, *The Rape of Lucrece* [O8], sig. A2^v.
5. *Ibid.*, sig. G5^v.
6. Roychoudhury, *Phantasmatic Shakespeare*, p. 15.
7. Shakespeare, *The Rape of Lucrece* [O8], sig. G4^v.
8. *Ibid.*, sig. G5^v.
9. *Ibid.*
10. All citations from this point forward for *Rape of Lucrece* are taken from the Arden Third Series, *Shakespeare's Poems*. Any citations from Shakespeare's plays are taken from Shakespeare, *The Norton Shakespeare*.
11. Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 43.
12. Kallenbach, *The Theater of Imagining*, p. 47.
13. See Duncan-Jones, "Playing Fields or Killing Fields," for more on the contrast between *Venus* and *Lucrece*. For more on the poem's interest in "publishing" and the way rhetoric displaces even Lucrece's physical body when Tarquin rapes Lucrece, see Vickers, "This Heraldry."
14. For a paradigmatic example of this reading, see Prince's introductory remarks on *Lucrece* as "overlong, confused, and morbid." Prince qtd. in Duncan-Jones and Woudhuysen, p. 79.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
16. Enterline, *The Rhetoric of the Body*, p. 15, p. 166.
17. Mann, "'Reck'ning' with Shakespeare's Orpheus," p. 37.
18. Enterline, p. 174, p. 153.
19. Roychoudhury, p. 7.
20. Kemp, "Medieval Theories," pp. 277–78.

21. Burton outlines this very succinctly in *Anatomy of Melancholy*, sig. C4^v–C7^v. See also Kallenbach's *The Theater of Imagining*.
22. Kallenbach, p. 47.
23. Votava, "Comedy, the Senses, and Social Contagion," p. 23.
24. Puttenham, *The arte of Englishe poesie*, sig. Z1^r.
25. As a regular term of early modern aesthetics, ravishment was born from the violent carrying away of *raptus* and was used in the period both to describe rape and the ecstatic transportations of sensation. Eggert, "Spenser's Ravishment," pp. 7–8.
26. 5.2.422. Shakespeare also describes love's infection as a "catching" of the plague in *Twelfth Night* (2.1.277), and the rampant metaphors of contagion and love are found most notably in *Romeo and Juliet* but throughout nearly all of comedies and many of his plays in general.
27. Sidney, "4° [The Nightingale]," lines 13–14, line 10, line 24.
28. Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*, p. 218.
29. *Ibid.*
30. Jacobson, "The Elizabethan Cipher in Shakespeare's *Lucrece*," p. 359.
31. *Ibid.* See also Baskins for more on the depictions of Lucretia on wedding *caissoni*. Baskins, *Cassone Painting*, pp. 128–59.
32. Zecher, *Sounding Instruments*, p. 16.
33. Matthes, *The Rape of Lucretia and the Founding of Republics*, p. 6.
34. Maus, "Taking Tropes," p. 78.
35. Fineman, "Shakespeare's Will," pp. 35–36.
36. Clark, p. 24.
37. Little, Jr., outlines Tarquin's racial blackening as connected to his becoming a rapist. Little, Jr., *Shakespeare Jungle Fever*, pp. 45–46. For more on the blackening of Pyrrhus, the "painted tyrant" referenced above, see Ian Smith's chapter on *Hamlet*. Smith, *Black Shakespeare*, pp. 127–133.
38. Duncan-Jones and Woudhuysen, p. 60.
39. While this moment is the first use of "conceit" and "imagination," Shakespeare uses "[i]magine" once earlier, as a note to the reader ("Imagine her as one in dead of night" [449]).
40. This can be contrasted between the two, with the fifteen "thoughts" of the Tarquin section versus the eight "thoughts" of the Lucrece segment.
41. Sciolli-Salter et al., "Depression and Dissociation," p. 586.
42. Nicolson, "Learning to read with *Lucrece*," p. 128.
43. Meek, *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare*, p. 55.
44. Eisendrath, *Poetry in a World of Things*, p. 134.
45. Wells, "'To Find a Face,'" p. 118.

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The “Imagination of Eating”: The Role of the Imagination in Appetite Stimulation and Suppression

Jan Purnis

In *Hygiasticon: Or, The Right Course of Preserving Life and Health unto Extreame Old Age: Together with Soundnesse and Integritie of the Senses, Judgement, and Memorie*, Leonard Lessius outlines the physical and mental benefits of a moderate diet, and he presents strategies for determining, and then adhering to, such a diet.¹ Explaining the challenges of doing so, he writes, “Forasmuch as all the difficultie in setting and keeping of a just measure, proceeds from the sensuall Appetite; and the Appetite ariseth from the apprehension of the Fancie, or Imagination, whereby meats are conceived to be delightfull and pleasant: special care is to be used touching the correction and amendment of this conceit and imagination.”² Lessius’s remark informs this chapter, which focuses on Renaissance understandings of the imagination’s role in appetite and its regulation.³ More specifically, I analyze the function ascribed to the imagination in psychosensory,

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Switzerland AG 2024

M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_7

affective, and physiological responses to food and other ingested products, doing so by concentrating on cravings and aversion.

My aim is to expand knowledge of Renaissance views on the imagination, while also contributing to scholarship on the body and body-mind relationship, the emotions (particularly disgust), and food studies. In these various subfields of Renaissance scholarship, the imagination's absence in the indexes of prominent studies signals that the topic has been largely unexplored.⁴ This is true, too, of studies that explicitly address appetite for food, including Ken Albala's *Eating Right in the Renaissance* and Matt Williamson's *Hunger, Appetite and the Politics of the Renaissance Stage*.⁵ Williamson usefully draws upon the work of Stephen Mennell (and the *OED*) to differentiate between hunger, "a physiological state, defined by Mennell as 'a body drive which recurs in all human beings in a regular cycle,'" and appetite, which Mennell describes in twentieth-century terminology as "driven by the 'appetstat,' by which is meant 'a *psychological*, not simply physiological, control mechanism regulating food intake,'" but neither Mennell nor Williamson discusses the imagination.⁶ Similarly, although the imagination gets an entry in the index of Robert Appelbaum's *Aguecheek's Beef, Belch's Hiccup, and Other Gastronomic Interjections*, it receives only a passing reference in the section on appetite and its regulation, and its importance in Renaissance explanations of appetite is not developed. Instead, Appelbaum claims that "early modern science before the Cartesian revolution could not really *explain* the appetite for food or tie it into a system of instinctual drives. It could only recognize it as an instinct—perhaps as something identical to hunger, perhaps as an epiphenomenon in relation to hunger—which was also, by metonymy, contiguous with other instincts, including the sexual instinct."⁷

In what follows, I first outline what I interpret as a pre-Cartesian explanation of appetite—as opposed to hunger—an explanation that emphasizes the imagination in ways not unrelated to recent research in psychology as well as comments made by Descartes in *The Passions of the Soule*.⁸ I next turn to food aversion and efforts to alter the imagination and instrumentalize it so as to control appetite by provoking a disgust response. I then demonstrate how these dynamics are illustrated in two dramatic works: Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* and Shakespeare and Wilkins's *Pericles*. Responding to Todd Butler's observation in *Imagination and Politics in Seventeenth-Century England* that "interest in the regulation of the body often entails a reading of the mind that emphasizes the competition of reason and the passions rather than the role of intermediary elements such

as the imagination, elements that might provide a more nuanced and complex understanding of political processes,” I argue that although my focus is on consumption habits and health discourse, the examples I analyze offer insight into the sociopolitical importance of the imagination in habit and socialization more generally—shaping not only psychosomatic responses (whether positive or negative) to specific foods and other ingested products, but also to people and behaviors.⁹

Renaissance understandings of the imagination and of appetite for food were influenced by the faculty psychology and theory of the soul they inherited alongside Galenic humoral medicine. In this tradition, the soul—divided into the vegetative, sensitive, and intellective souls—was “composed of a large number of separate faculties or powers, each directed towards a different object and responsible for a distinct operation.”¹⁰ The faculties of the vegetative soul (in plants, animals, and humans) were responsible for nutrition, reproduction, and growth; the sensitive soul (in animals and humans) included motive and perceptual faculties; and the intellective soul (in humans) included the faculties of intellect and will.¹¹ The perceptual faculties of the sensitive soul contributed to the power of sense, which, Park explains, “was equipped to receive the sensible forms or images of material objects” by way of “both organs located on the outside of the body and organs located inside the brain: the former served to sense present objects and corresponded to what were called the five external senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch); the latter dealt with absent, past or non-existent objects and corresponded to the five internal senses,” one of which was the imagination.¹² Park notes that after 1500 philosophers increasingly reduced this number or “conflated them into a single function, usually called imagination,” a conflation evident in the passage from Lessius quoted above in which *fancie* and *imagination* are treated as synonyms.¹³ The idea of species was integral to this theory of sensation: “every sense object constantly emits a multitude of such species (visible, auditory, olfactory and so forth) in all directions,” causing “physical changes” in the relevant sense organs, “which in turn change or ‘move’ the faculty of sense”; “[o]nce in the organs of internal sense, the species may be impressed on an internal medium, the vaporous *spiritus* filling the sense organs and the nerves,” and could then “travel throughout the body.”¹⁴

The concept of appetite—which comes from the Latin for “desire toward”—was also important in this schema, where it had a broader yet more specialized meaning than its association with food.¹⁵ In a chapter on

self-love in *The Passions of the Minde*, Thomas Wright explains that God has provided every creature with “an inclination, faculty, or power to conserue it selfe” by seeking what it needs and resisting anything impeding it from doing so, and he notes that this inclination is divided into “a triple appetite”: natural, sensitive, and reasonable.¹⁶ The first, described by philosophers as “a naturall inclination,” is found in elements and plants; the second, “a sensitue appetite,” in animals and human beings; and the third, “a reasonable or voluntary affection,” in human beings and angels.¹⁷ Of differences between categories, Wright remarks that humans and animals “in their appetites, haue a certain pleasure and delectation, paine or grieffe, the which affections cannot be found in any inanimate creatures.”¹⁸ “Men and beasts” also, unlike inanimate creatures, “with one appetite prosecute the good they desire and with an other they flie the euill they abhor,” though Wright later clarifies that the concupiscible and irascible appetites are not two separate “faculties or powers of the soule,” but that “we haue one sensuall appetite, with two inclinations.”¹⁹ The sensual or sensitive appetite is central to Renaissance understandings of the passions, as is the imagination, which plays a crucial intermediary role between the senses and the sensitive appetite, which, Wright stresses, “cannot loue, hate, feare, hope, &c. but that by imagination, or our sensitue apprehension wee may conceiue.”²⁰ He provides more detail about this relationship when outlining how the passions are moved, writing, “First then, to our imagination commeth by sense or memorie, some object to be knowne, conuenient or disconuenient to Nature”; the imagination, located by Wright in the “former part” of the brain, then sends the “purer spirits” to present the object to the sensitive appetite, located by Wright in the heart, which then determines the appropriate emotional response, drawing upon the humors to aid in undertaking it.²¹

The Renaissance use of the word *appetite* for both the sensitive appetite of faculty psychology and the appetite specifically for food highlights their understanding of the relationship between the two, and thus of the imagination’s role in shaping an individual’s emotional and physiological responses to food and drink.²² This point is further illustrated by Wright’s employment of food and drink-related examples. Relevant to my interest in cravings and disgust, when commenting on the sensual appetite’s two inclinations, Wright remarks that “with one appetite a man desires good wine, and with another detesteth ill wine,” and of the related pleasure/pain principle, he explains that God arranged things in this way, “for who would attend to eating or drinking, to the act of generation, if Nature had

not ioyned thereunto some delectation?"²³ But this same delectation, although it might be biologically necessary for the survival of the individual and species, could lead to over-eating, which was represented as itself harmful to life expectancy and cognitive function, and as uniquely human behavior.²⁴ Although reason ought to control food intake and the imagination and passions, self-love, because of its "affinitie with sense," begins, like a "tyrant," to rebel against reason, and "if reason commaund a temperate dyet, she wil haue exquisite and superfluous dishes"; furthermore, Wright laments that once reason enters into "league" with passions and sense, it "straight-waies inuenteth tenne thousand sorts of new delights, which the passions neuer could haue imagined," including the "exquisite arts of Cookerie."²⁵ It is because of the relationship between the senses and imagination that Lessius advises those wishing to avoid over-eating that they "beware of varietie of meats, and such as are curiously and daintily drest," and that they remove themselves "from the view of Feasts and Daynties, to the end they may not by their sight and smell stirre up the Fancie, and entice on Gluttonie."²⁶ Lessius contextualizes his advice in relation to the more general action of objects on the senses, remarking that "the presence of every object doth naturally move, and work upon the facultie whereunto it appertains," and so for this reason "it is much more difficult to restrain the appetite, when good cheer is present, then not to desire that which is away."²⁷

Thanks to the imagination and memory, however, it is also possible to desire food that is not immediately present. Explaining that the vital spirits "remaine euermore vnited to the imagination," serving "to stir vp the powers of man," Juan Huarte observes of their role in appetite that "when we remember any delicat and sauourie meat, which once called to mind, they straight abandon the rest of the body, and flie to the stomacke and replenish the mouth with water."²⁸ Huarte goes on to caution that in cases of the food cravings of pregnant women this process can result in miscarriage. In a variation of descriptions of the influence of the imagination on the womb and gendered depictions of appetite, Huarte explains how the "motion" of the vital spirits is

so swift, that if a woman with child long for any meat whatsoeuer, and still retain the same in her imagination, we see by experience, that she looseth her burthen if speedily it be not yeilded vnto her. The naturall reason of this, is, because these vitall spirits, before the woman conceiued this longing, made abode in the bellie, helping her there to retain the creature, and

through this new imagination of eating, they hie to the stomacke to raise the appetite, and in this space, if the belly haue no strong retentiue, it cannot sustaine the same, so by this means she leefeth her burthen.²⁹

Whereas depictions of hunger emphasize the digestive organs as the origins of the physical sensations associated with it—as in Wright’s claim that the feeling of hunger is “caused by the sucking of the liuer and defect of nourishment in the stomacke,” in Huarte’s examples, the stomach’s appetite and mouth’s salivation are stimulated after the imagination has first been activated by the sight or smell of delicious foods, or by the memory of their taste, to such a degree that the spirits are diverted from their other tasks, whether physical or mental.³⁰ This is a much more complex and psychological process than that outlined by Albala, who writes: “The mechanics of appetite stimulation were believed to be simple. The empty stomach, having consumed all its substantial humidity, begins to pucker or ‘corrugate and exasperate,’ squeezing out any liquids at the mouth of the stomach, thus causing the sensation of hunger.”³¹

Albala also notes that dieticians emphasized that “the attainment of a sufficient appetite” was “crucial,” as it was “a sure signal that the previous meal had been completely processed,” whereas “eating out of habit,” without being hungry, “risks having unrefined food forced prematurely into the body along with the earlier meal.”³² In order to determine if one habitually overeats, Lessius instructs readers that they can find out the “right Measure” of food for themselves by evaluating their cognitive function before and after meals.³³ As he explains, “If thou dost usually take so much food at meals, as thou art thereby made unfit for the duties and offices belonging to the Mind, such as are Prayer, Meditation, Studies of learning, and the like; it is then evident, that thou dost exceed the measure which thou oughtest to hold.”³⁴ Having acknowledged in the passage with which I began this chapter that “the Appetite ariseth from the apprehension of the Fancie, or Imagination, whereby meats are conceived to be delightfull and pleasant,” he then makes suggestions for how to undertake “the correction and amendment of this conceit and imagination.” Lessius essentially offers guidance on how to alter dietary habits by conditioning the imagination so as to shift the sensitive appetite’s affective response to foods from the concupiscible to the irascible. He advises readers to “imagine these self same things, whereunto Gluttonie allureth us, not to be as she perswades, and as outwardly they appeare, good, pleasant, savoury, relishing, and bringing delight to the palate; but filthy, sordid,

evil-savoured, and detestable, as indeed after a very little while they prove."³⁵ Lessius thus suggests deploying the imagination to counter the sensory appeal of objects by picturing seemingly delicious foods as not pleasant to the taste but instead filthy, and he applies the moralizing rhetoric of "good" and "evil" to foods, rhetoric used in medical as well as religious contexts. For Lessius, the imagination is here not just a tool for appetite suppression, but a means of revealing truths hidden beneath deceptive appearances, appearances that can also deceive the imagination. What he encourages people to imagine is what he understands as underlying reality.

Lessius's strategy resembles Descartes's description in *The Passions of the Soul* of the ways in which all souls may acquire mastery over their passions. One of these ways is a lengthier process, such as breeding up spaniels to behave in a manner opposite to their natural inclinations so that they do not run from a gunshot or toward game.³⁶ The other way, however, can occur through a single event:

It is also convenient to know that although the motions, as well of the kernel as the spirits and braine, which represent certain objects to the Soul, be naturally joynd with those that excite certain Passions in her, yet they may by habit be separated, and annexed to others very different; and moreover that this habit may be acquired by one action onely, and requires not a long usage: as when a man at unawares meets with any nasty thing in a dish of meat which he hath a very good stomack to, this accident may so alter the disposition of the brain, that a man shall never afterwards see any such kind of meat without loathing, whereas before he took delight in eating it.³⁷

Although Descartes does not specifically mention the imagination here, he addresses the representation of objects to the soul, and his example of a sensory-induced transformation in the brain that permanently alters psychophysiological response to a foodstuff, even when there is nothing nasty in it, suggests the influence of the imagination (and memory) in the associative habituation process.

By encouraging eaters to condition themselves to associate delicious foods with something nasty, Lessius's strategy in a sense brings together the two methods of habituation outlined by Descartes for gaining self-control. Lessius assists eaters in perceiving tempting foods as disgusting by emphasizing the effects of the digestive process on such foods, claiming, "Now what can be imagined more unsavourie, or lothsome, then these

dainties, assoon as they have received a little alteration in the stomach? Nay verily, by how much any thing proves more delectable to Gluttonie, by so much doth it instantly prove more abominable in truth, and yeelds the worse and more noysome smell.”³⁸ Lessius’s technique relies upon the imagination’s ability to transfer the sights and smells of vomit and feces to dainties; although all foods are altered when digested, Lessius employs the logic that the more “delectable” something “proves” to gluttony, the more “abominable” it actually is, a logic associated with a more general suspicion toward sensual pleasure as well as luxurious and exotic foods.

Significantly, Lessius not only stresses the underlying vileness of tempting foods, but he also renders those who customarily eat them loathsome as well, stating that those who “give themselves to delicacies, were it not for the help of outward perfumes, would undoubtedly be as intolerable through the evil savours that arise from their bodies, as dead carcasses are,” and “[t]heir excrements likewise are of most noysome savour, and all the breathings of their bodies accompanied with a most filthie smell.”³⁹ Lessius contrasts this with “Countray people, and mechanick artificers, who live temperately upon brown bread, cheese, and other such like ordinarie food,” concluding this section of his treatise by urging, “This matter therefore is often to be thought upon, and the Fancie by continuall meditation accustomed thereunto.”⁴⁰ In contrast to the ideological work done to familiarize luxury goods and the foreign ingredients like sugar that create culinary “dainties,” Lessius associates the bodies of wealthy eaters of “delicacies” with a “most filthie smell,” deliberately distinguishing them from those who eat “ordinarie” (and so local and not exotic) food.⁴¹ Although this is a variation on the longstanding practice of attributing offensive body odors to ethnically different groups, Lessius’s example offers insight into the process of such associations (also often directed toward the poor, who were frequently described using fecal rhetoric) and makes explicit the role of the imagination in doing so. Furthermore, Lessius’s example is not unrelated to more recent constructions of medicalized and moralized attitudes toward individuals deemed overweight or obese, a reminder also then of the imagination’s role in body image.

These examples from Lessius and Descartes highlight Renaissance understandings of disgust and its social function. Disgust has been the subject of much scholarly interest in recent years, including in early modern studies, and in the field of psychology, where it has been described as one of the basic emotions, and, in particular, as a food-related emotion rooted in evolution. As Jonathan Haidt, Paul Rozin, Clark McCauley, and

Sumio Imada explain, what they call "core disgust" is a "guardian of the mouth" and "a food related emotion," but it is "triggered off not primarily by the sensory properties of an object, but by ideational concerns about *what it is*, or *where it has been*," making it "a distinct form of food rejection, different from rejections based on bad taste or fear of harm to the body" but instead on issues of contamination and "the more complex notion of 'offensiveness.'"⁴² Furthermore, they emphasize that "[d]isgust may have its roots in evolution, but it is also clearly a cultural product," and they analyze its extension from food to socio-cultural concerns, explaining this extension by drawing on the works of Lakoff, Johnson, and others on embodied cognition.⁴³ Relatedly, Olatunji and Sawchuck highlight "[t]he function of disgust in various social constructions, such as cigarette smoking, vegetarianism, and homophobia" and note that it is considered "an influential emotion in the onset, maintenance, and treatment of various phobic states, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, and eating disorders."⁴⁴

Despite this recent interest in disgust, however, the role played by the imagination in disgust and food aversion often seems taken for granted rather than explicitly explored.⁴⁵ The example from Lessius's treatise is instructive for its concentration on how the imagination shapes attitudes toward not only foods (and other objects) but also the self as well as other people, groups, and behaviors, and for what it suggests about early modern awareness of the ways in which the imagination can be instrumentalized in public health campaigns and social and political movements. Although Lessius emphasizes individual agency in habit alteration through influencing the imagination by way of "continual meditation," he does nonetheless point to the interaction of biology and culture in the mind-body relationship. Benedict Robinson notes that the *OED* structures its definition of *disgust* moving from the sensory to the social, although his reading of early modern texts suggests instead an increasing emphasis on the sensory over the seventeenth century.⁴⁶ Where he claims that "[i]n disgust, the sensory and the social come into being in intimate mutual relations," I would add that texts like Lessius's include the imagination in that intimate relationship between the sensory and the social.⁴⁷

We can see these dynamics at work in plays of the period. In *Shakespeare and Disgust*, Bradley Irish draws upon recent research on disgust to argue that not only can "visual images of offending food [...] trigger a disgust response," but "literary depictions of food and eating have a similarly strong hold on our mind and body, an association that Shakespeare

leverages throughout his plays” to “harness the affective power of food disgust for a number of strategic ends.”⁴⁸ Similarly, in a discussion of allegory and disgust in *Bartholomew Fair*, Ineke Murakami foregrounds the pedagogical value of disgust. Focusing on memory and drawing on Mary Carruthers’s study of medieval mnemonics, Murakami observes that “[c]ognitive science has subsequently confirmed what ecclesiastical educators once intuited: disgust affects long-term memory” by “provok[ing] a powerful affective response” that “was believed to produce an emotional ‘phantasm’ in the soul, a memorial impression to which one could return” long afterward. “Disgust,” Murakami adds, “was thus instrumental in the acquisition of virtue through *habitus* – habit of mind and intellectual practice – fortifying and recalibrating the reader or listener’s moral compass through memory.”⁴⁹ I wish to complement these studies by drawing attention to scenes in *Bartholomew Fair* and *Pericles* not discussed by Murakami or Irish, scenes in which the playwrights highlight these processes by including characters who “harness the affective power of food disgust” for their own strategic ends, specifically in an effort to effect habit changes, and I wish to underscore the importance of the imagination (not particularly addressed by either scholar) in these strategies.

In *Bartholomew Fair*—a play that also makes reference to the dangers of unsatisfied food cravings during pregnancy—Jonson includes a scene in which Justice Overdo, in disguise, attempts to dissuade Cokes from partaking of ale and tobacco.⁵⁰ To do so, he implicitly engages the imagination of the on-stage audience to strengthen the persuasiveness of his appeal. In a manner resembling that articulated by Lessius, which foregrounds the role of the imagination in this deterrence, and also working to effect material alteration in the brain like that described by Descartes, Overdo encourages Cokes to find something “nasty” in these products, even though not perceptible to the senses. Of ale, he says, “Thirst not after that frothy liquor, ale; for who knows when he openeth the stopple, what may be in the bottle? Hath not a snail, a spider, yea, a neuft been found there? Thirst not after it, youth; thirst not after it” (2.6.10–13). Overdo relies on memories and descriptions of having found something disgusting and potentially harmful in ale bottles, using the imagination to associate all bottles of ale with such things to encourage a psychosomatically negative response to alcohol in his efforts to reform consumption practices. Overdo employs a similar tactic regarding tobacco, first associating the product with something disgusting and then with something noxious. Of the preparation of the tobacco plant, he asks, “And who can tell if, before

the gathering and making up thereof, the alligarta hath not pissed thereon?” (2.6.24–25), adding that the “creeping venom of which subtle serpent, as some late writers affirm, neither the cutting of the perilous plant, nor the drying of it, nor the lighting or burning, can any way persway or assuage” (2.6.33–36).⁵¹ His strategy emphasizes the powerful role of the imagination in concerns about the potential for contamination in the preparation of ingested products, and its potential in shaping consumers’ experiences of those products.⁵²

Like King James in *A Covnterblaste to Tobacco*—and modern public health policy—Overdo continues his campaign by working to render the bodies of smokers disgusting and diseased. Using vivid visual imagery resembling pictures found on current cigarette packaging in many jurisdictions, Overdo activates the imagination to make visible to the mind the effect of smoking on the internal organs. He claims that “the lungs of the tobacconist are rotted, the liver spotted, the brain smoked like the backside of the pig-woman’s booth here, and the whole body within, black as her pan you saw e’en now without” (2.6.38–41). This tactic also resembles Lessius’s focus on the bodily stench of habitual consumers of dainties, a tactic requiring the imagination to smell what lies hidden beneath the perfume. Overdo’s remarks on the blackness of a tobacconist’s organs capture their accumulation of soot, but do so in a way that relates to his association of tobacco with foreignness, as when he emphasizes its resemblance to its Indigenous users, urging, “Neither do thou lust after that tawny weed, tobacco” (2.6.20), and adding that its “complexion is like the Indian’s that vents it!” (2.6.22). King James, too, had stressed that tobacco use is “[a] custome lothsome to the eye, hateful to the Nose, harmefull to the braine, dangerous to the Lungs, and in the blacke stinking fume thereof, nearest resembling the horrible Stigian smoke of the pit that is bottomelesse,” and one of his arguments against the practice aligns it with “the Indian” in a manner meant to dissuade through a negative association of the product with the people, an association strengthened by the workings of the imagination.⁵³

Shakespeare’s depiction of the sex work market in *Pericles* offers another dramatization of the role of the imagination in appetite and socialization, and of the connection between core and socio-moral disgust.⁵⁴ The play includes an example of the imagination’s importance to advertisement and its desired stimulation of appetite. We learn that Bolt has been sent to attract customers for Marina, the business’s most recent acquisition. Asked if he has “cried her through the market” (4.2.84–85),⁵⁵ Bolt answers, “I

have cried her almost to the number of her hairs, I have drawn her picture with my voice" (4.2.86–87). Of the response to this verbal picture, he adds, "There was a Spaniard's mouth watered, and he went to bed to her very description" (4.2.91–92). Not only does Bolt's description of Marina and of the Spaniard's reaction underscore the ability of the mental picturing associated with the imagination to stimulate a physiological response, but it also suggests the overlapping senses of *appetite* as the Spaniard's mouth-watering is an example of the ubiquitous trope linking sex and food.

For her part, Marina urges Bolt to abandon his employment by using food-related disgust to highlight her socio-moral disgust for sex work and to attempt to stress its disgusting and harmful nature to Bolt. She tells him his "food is such / As hath been belched on by infected lungs" (4.6.153–54), working to activate his imagination in such a way as to render the food served in the bawdy house not just disgusting but diseased, thereby associating sex workers and bawds who breathe on it with disease and disgust as well. She then encourages him to do any other job, saying, "Do anything but this thou dost. Empty / Old receptacles or common shores, of filth, / Serve by indenture to the common hangman—" (4.6.159–61). All of these occupations are associated with what is considered disgusting—filth, excrement, and death—though for Marina, they are less disgusting than Bolt's current service.

Having revisited these examples in light of recent scholarship and surveyed the contexts on the imagination and eating, I suggest that the imagination deserves further attention in Renaissance scholarship, particularly for its relevance to the areas of body, body-mind relations, cultural history of emotions, historical phenomenology, and food studies because of the important role assigned to it in the faculty psychology and theory of the soul inherited by the early moderns.⁵⁶ Focusing on Renaissance explanations of appetite for food and other ingested products, I have drawn attention to the ways in which Renaissance understandings of individual and cultural responses to such products need to be read in the context of Renaissance ideas about the relationship between the sensitive appetite, the imagination, and the senses. Doing so foregrounds the psychosomatic nature of such responses since the imagination was understood in the period as a crucial intermediary between the external senses (or memories of sensation) and emotional response, particularly pursuit of what is deemed beneficial or avoidance of what is harmful. But as we have seen, the imagination also plays a crucial role in the interaction of the biological and social realms since it was understood to be capable of—and

requiring—correction and amendment so as to gain control over the passions, including those associated with powerful food cravings. There is much more I could say about the connection between eating and the imagination, including other Renaissance strategies for appetite suppression, but for the purposes of this chapter I have concentrated on examples in which the imagination is instrumentalized to counter food cravings with a disgust response, thereby complementing scholarship on the cultural aspects of disgust and its political function by highlighting the imagination’s role in both enculturation and socialization. Although I have focused on food and ingestion-related examples that point to Renaissance understandings of the imagination-body relationship, I have also suggested that these examples nonetheless offer insight into the politically and culturally significant role of the imagination in habit formation and behavioral alteration, and in shaping psychosomatic responses to medical and other discourses as well as to other people, with either positive or negative effects. Awareness of the imagination’s psychosensory and affective role in these responses makes it possible to recognize the faculty’s activities so as to change them.⁵⁷

NOTES

1. I am grateful to Mark Kaethler and Grant Williams for comments on earlier versions of this chapter, to Luba Kozak for preliminary research assistance, and to Anna Mudde and Robert Piercey for providing philosophical context.
2. Lessius, *Hygiasticon*, sig. D8^r.
3. Lenaert Leys, Latinized as Leonard Lessius, was a Flemish Jesuit, who translated Luigi Cornaro’s *Trattatoro della vita sobria*, which “described a minimalist regimen that many would have considered close to asceticism,” into Latin, adding his own commentary, titled *Hygiasticon*. Guerrini, “The Impossible Ideal of Moderation,” p. 88, p. 90. Lessius’s treatise is briefly discussed by Guerrini, Albala, and Appelbaum, but the focus of this critical attention is on his emphasis on moderation and efforts at quantification rather than on his comments on the relationship between eating and the imagination, only some of which I have space for here.
4. See, for example, *Disgust in Early Modern English Literature*, edited by Natalie Eschenbaum and Barbara Correll; Bradley Irish’s *Shakespeare and Disgust*; David Goldstein’s *Eating and Ethics in Shakespeare’s England*; Gitanjali Shahani’s *Tasting Difference*; and *Culinary Shakespeare*, edited by David Goldstein and Amy Tigner. Wendy Wall’s *Recipes for Thought*

- includes an entry for “food as fantasy/artifice” and discussion of the “*transportative fantasies*” of early modern recipes and readership as well as the “imaginative play” engaged in by recipe creators, but there is no entry for the imagination. Wall, *Recipes for Thought*, p. 70, p. 74. Although the title of Jeffrey M. Pilcher’s review essay suggests that there has been an emphasis on the imagination in recent food studies, the sense in the review is more often a looser use of *embodied imagination* to refer to efforts at “reconnecting the mind and body” rather than the role of the imagination *per se*. Pilcher, “The Embodied Imagination in Recent Writings on Food History,” p. 861.
5. Albala outlines dietetic theories of appetite. Albala, *Eating Right*, pp. 54–56.
 6. Williamson, *Hunger, Appetite and the Politics of the Renaissance Stage*, p. 3. In his chapter on “The Civilising of Appetite,” Mennell describes the “appostat” as like a thermostat. Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, p. 21.
 7. Appelbaum, *Aguecheek’s Beef*, p. 231.
 8. I can only touch briefly on Descartes, but for a relevant problematization of his place in the “Cartesian revolution,” see Yaldir. Yaldir demonstrates that both Ibn Sînâ (Avicenna) and Descartes “agree on the idea that the human soul requires the existence of the body, at least for the occurrence of sensory and imaginary perceptions,” concluding that it is difficult to “reconcile” these thinkers’ thoughts about “hybrid units” consisting of both an incorporeal mind and a body with “Avicennian or Cartesian dualistic psychology.” Yaldir, “Ibn Sînâ (Avicenna) and René Descartes,” p. 275, p. 276. Schlutz also considers Descartes and imagination. Schlutz, *Mind’s World*, pp. 36–79.
 9. Butler, *Imagination and Politics*, p. 9.
 10. Park, “Organic Soul,” p. 466. As Park explains, these ideas represented a “synthesis” of material from Aristotle, Greek Neoplatonism, Galenic medicine, early Christian writers, and Arabic writers on Aristotelian philosophy, particularly Avicenna and Averroes. *Ibid.*, p. 465.
 11. *Ibid.*, p. 467.
 12. *Ibid.*, p. 470. Although there were different opinions, Park uses Gregor Reisch as an example. He identified the five internal senses as common sense, imagination, fantasy, estimation, and memory, locating them in different parts of the brain. Common sense compared data, and the “[i]magination stored these data before passing them on to fantasy, which acted to combine and divide them, yielding new images, called *phantasmata*, with no counterparts in external reality. Estimation accounted for instinctive reactions of avoidance or trust, while memory, finally, stored not only the images derived from the external sense but also the *phantasmata* and the reactions of estimation.” *Ibid.*, pp. 470–71.

13. Ibid., p. 481. For more on Renaissance terminology, see Smid, *The Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*, p. 14.
14. Park, pp. 471–72. Park notes a “gradual disappearance of the sensible *species* from Aristotelian accounts of sensation” as well as an “increasing tendency to favour specific physiological over general philosophical explanations for the organic functions.” Ibid., p. 481.
15. *Oxford English Dictionary*, “appetite, n.,” etymology. See also Ibid., 1–7, and Williamson, p. 3.
16. Wright, *The passions of the minde*, sig. B6^r–B6^v.
17. Ibid., sig. B6^v.
18. Ibid., sig. B6^v–B7^r.
19. Ibid., sig. B6^v, sig. C2^r. In her chapter on passionate animals in *Humoring the Body*, Paster discusses some of this same material from Wright in describing the relationship between the sensitive soul, appetites, passions, and humors, but she does not focus on appetite for food or its relation to the imagination. Paster, *Humoring the Body*, pp. 150–51.
20. Wright, sig. C8^r.
21. Ibid., sig. D7^r. The heart is Wright’s answer to the question of “whether the faculty of our sensitiue appetite hath allotted vnto it some peculiar part of the body.” Ibid., sig. C8^v.
22. The relationship between the humors and passions has received significant scholarly attention, particularly from Paster. Less has been said of the relationship between the humors and the imagination. Lessius informs his readers that an excess of humors “doth pervert the naturall condition and apprehension of the Fancie,” and that “the Affections of the minde follow [...] the apprehensions of the Fancie,” and “the apprehension of the Fancie is conformable to the disposition of the Bodie, and to the Humours that are predominant therein.” Lessius, sig. H2^r–H2^v, sig. H1^v. Lessius uses the fact that people of different complexions dream of different things as an example because dreams are “the apprehensions of the Fancie, when the Senses are asleep.” Ibid., sig. H2^r. Similarly, in his discussion of dreams, Thomas Walkington outlines how “Naturall” dreams “ariseth from our complections,” but he also emphasizes how “distemperature by a late misdiet” may play a larger role than natural complexion. Walkington, *The Opticke Glasse of Humors*, sig. L4^v, sig. L5^r.
23. Wright, sig. B6^v, sig. B7^r. Of this section in Wright, Paster notes, “What is crucial to remark is his interest—shared by his contemporaries who write treatises of the passions—in placing the workings of the passions within the frame of nature, in defining them as necessary for the business of life.” Paster, p. 18.
24. Albala writes that “it was said that humans, being more brutal than beasts, are the only animals who eat beyond their natural appetite.” Albala, p. 55.

25. Wright, sig. B7^r, sig. B5^v.
26. Lessius, sig. D5^v–D6^r, sig. D8^r–D8^v.
27. *Ibid.*, sig. D8^v. For more on taste, see Swann's contribution to *Shakespeare / Sense: Contemporary Readings in Sensory Culture*. Swann, "'Sweet Above Compare?'"
28. Huarte, *The Examination of Mens Wits*, sig. C7^v, sig. C8^r, sig. C8^r.
29. *Ibid.*, sig. C8^r.
30. Wright, sig. D7^r.
31. Albala, p. 55.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
33. Lessius, sig. B11^v.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*, sig. D8^v–D9^r. Albala very briefly discusses this section of Lessius's treatise, first summarizing Lessius's advice not to think about savory foods but to "pretend" that they are "filthy, sordid, evil-flavored, and detestable, which indeed with habitual use they prove to be," observing: "This was a strange psychological tactic and one obviously antithetical to cuisine." Albala, p. 278.
36. Descartes, *The Passions of the Soule*, sig. D1^v.
37. *Ibid.*, sig. D1^r–D1^v.
38. Lessius, sig. D9^r–D9^v.
39. *Ibid.*, sig. D9^v.
40. *Ibid.*, sig. D10^r.
41. For women's role in familiarizing exotic products, see for example Kim F. Hall's "Culinary Spaces, Colonial Spaces." For negative attitudes about foreign foods, see Shahani, pp. 107–34.
42. Haidt et al., "Body, Psyche, and Culture," p. 111, p. 109.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
44. Olatunji and Sawchuk, "Disgust," p. 932.
45. There is mention of "ideational concerns" and "imaginative structures" in Haidt, Rozin, McCauley, and Imada's article and reference to "ideational factors" in Olatunji and Sawchuk's article. Haidt et al., p. 109, p. 122; Olatunji and Sawchuk, p. 935. However, there is not much else said about the imagination, though it is worth noting that Olatunji and Sawchuk trace the "theoretical meaning of disgust" back to Darwin, "who first noted that disgust '[...] refers to something revolting, primarily in relation to the sense of taste, as actually perceived or vividly imagined; and secondarily to anything which causes a similar feeling, through the sense of smell, touch, and even of eyesight.'" *Ibid.*
46. Robinson, "Disgust c. 1600," p. 558.
47. *Ibid.*
48. Irish, *Shakespeare and Disgust*, p. 66.

49. Murakami, "The 'Fairing of Good Counsel'," p. 148.
50. Littlewit convinces his pregnant wife, Win, to pretend she has a longing to eat pig in order to trick her mother, Dame Purecraft (and her mother's suitor, Busy) into allowing her to visit the fair. Purecraft explains to Busy that her daughter "is visited with a natural disease of women, called 'A longing to eat pig'" (1.6.38–39). She adds, "I would not have her miscarry, or hazard her first fruits, if it might be otherwise" (1.6.60–61). All quotations from Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* are taken from the New Mermaids edition of the play. Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*.
51. Knockem also refers to newts and spiders in an earlier scene, saying to Ursula, "What? Thou'lt poison me with a neuft in a bottle of ale, wilt thou? Or a spider in a tobacco-pipe, Urs?" (2.3.17–18).
52. On purity in food studies, see Pilcher, "Embodied Imagination," pp. 872–80.
53. James I, *A covnterblaste to tobacco*, sig. D2^r, sig. B1^v.
54. Of the vexed question of the authorship of *Pericles*, Walter Cohen notes that George Wilkins "probably wrote at least the first two acts and Shakespeare most of the remaining three," which include the passages I discuss here. Cohen, "Introduction," p. 1162.
55. All quotations from *Pericles* derive from *The Norton Shakespeare*. Shakespeare, *Pericles*.
56. For related studies considering the imagination but from different perspectives, see Pender's "Rhetoric, Grief, and the Imagination in Early Modern England" and Harrawood's "High-Stomached Lords: Imagination, Force and the Body in Shakespeare's *Henry VI* Plays."
57. See, for example, Yang, Huang, Cai, Son, Jiang, Chen, and Chen's recent article on upcycled food, "Using Imagination to Overcome Fear." For an important analysis of the psychosomatics of habit, though without explicit discussion of the imagination, see Shannon Sullivan's *The Physiology of Sexist and Racist Oppression*.

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PART III

Artifice and the Mnemonic
Imagination



CHAPTER 8

Confronting Imagination in Langland, Spenser, and Bacon

William E. Engel

The parts of human learning have reference to the three parts of Man's Understanding, which is the seat of learning: History to his Memory, Poesy to his Imagination, and Philosophy to Reason.—Francis Bacon¹

All reflective thinking is poetic, and all poetry in turn is a kind of thinking. The two belong together by virtue of that Saying which has already bespoken itself to what is unspoken.—Martin Heidegger²

IMAGINING IMAGINATION

The Renaissance commonplace of poesy corresponding to imagination offers a fitting point of departure for this excursus on how imagination comes to be disclosed—or unconcealed—through the operations of constructed memory palaces so fundamental to premodern rhetorical thought and practices.³ In the epigraph, Bacon's analogical paradigm for imagining

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Switzerland AG 2024

M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_8

the faculties of human understanding and Heidegger's dictum about the mutually constitutive elements of poetry and reflective thinking both bring in their wake the idea of *mise en abyme*.⁴ Both statements are somewhat circular and yet both also gesture beyond mere self-referentiality. For, as has been shown by contemporary practitioners and critics of extended mind theory (a current movement in cognitive studies that has its philosophical foundations in Martin Heidegger's existential phenomenology⁵), the "frame problem" attending extended mind thinking, like recursive ideation more generally, need not be reductively circular. The frame problem essentially concerns how best to determine appropriate justification for drawing inferences about future actions derived from knowledge of the past and past experiences. And, insofar as assumptions of cognitive science rest on Cartesian thinking, Hubert Dreyfus among others argues that those assumptions need to be overthrown in favor of a more Heideggerian stance before the frame problem can be overcome.⁶ Reminiscent of Bacon's approach to knowledge, Heidegger acknowledges that the advancement of human thought depends on what previously has been considered and yet still might yield fresh results: "Whatever and however we may try to think, we think within the sphere of tradition. Tradition prevails when it frees us from thinking back to a thinking forward, which is no longer a planning. Only when we turn thoughtfully toward what has already been thought, will we be turned to use for what must still be thought."⁷

Recursive thought therefore is—or can be—generative of more inclusive possibilities of conceptual formations that engage with and refract the *mise en abyme* of reflective thinking by acknowledging, appropriating, and overcoming the implicit conceptual impasse. This is what Heidegger is disclosing in his development of how language "as Saying" is a mode of appropriation: "In order to pursue in thought the being of language and to say of it what is its own, a transformation of language is needed which we can neither compel nor invent."⁸ This conceptual *mise en abyme* from which a twisting free seems possible in and through *poesis* is central to Heidegger's characterization of language itself: "We are, then, within language and with language before all else. [...] we try to speak about speech *qua* speech. [...] language itself has woven us into the speaking. [...] The point is to experience the unbinding bond within the web of language."⁹ Moreover, Heidegger is quite specific in his treatment of how to proceed when we try to think about thinking—and the following quotation is especially resonant for this present study because, like Bacon, Heidegger

draws “poesy” directly into the field of his philosophical concerns. Consistent with his signature method of backtracking to expose the pre-suppositions requiring future unpacking, he contends, “as long as we take the view that logic gives us any information about what thinking is, we shall never be able to think how much all poesy rests upon thinking back, recollection.”¹⁰ With this move Heidegger engages and at the same time exorcises the hegemony of discursive thought.¹¹ He self-consciously draws forth and folds within his own analysis a primary contention of Renaissance humanist poetic theory,¹² “interested in establishing that art itself is not something immediately accessible to discursive reason.”¹³ Of special note therefore in both Bacon and Heidegger is the insistence on memory’s perennial role in imaginative thinking, a fundamentally Aristotelian notion deeply embedded in scholastic psychology. This theme is especially evident in Augustine, where imagination’s function is “recording the images of the phenomenal world, not simply noting but of retaining the multiple messages that come through the channels of several senses.”¹⁴ Alcuin’s digest of Augustine’s teachings on the trinitarian soul—whose nature is intellect, will, and memory—says the “products of fantasy and memory are the matrix and materials of all human thought.”¹⁵ Further, Bonaventure among others often treats memory as synonymous with imagination,¹⁶ even elevating its status in faculty psychology because of imagination’s capacity to advance recollection of spiritual truths.¹⁷ Such a way of thinking, drawing on memory images of the past while prefiguring futurity, bespeaks a mode of cognitive practices out of which imagining the imagination might spring fully formed like Athena from the head of Zeus—a myth that “seems to contradict every human analogy.”¹⁸ Concomitantly, and in much the same way that striving to think about thinking is bound up with a self-referential conceptual impasse, when we set about to imagine the idea of the imagination (whether embodied, extended, or otherwise), as Heidegger puts it, “[w]e come to know what it means to think when we ourselves try to think. If the attempt is to be successful, we must be ready to learn to think. As soon as we allow ourselves to become involved in such learning, we have admitted that we are not yet capable of thinking.”¹⁹

The challenge set forth here by Heidegger, of having to learn how to think before we can state in language—let alone understand—what it means to think, pertains ultimately to the imagination, namely, by engaging the imagination to imagine how we might imagine something. Indeed, and to extend the Heideggerian formulation, we need to learn how to

imagine before we can assert or say what it means to imagine. This is where premodern poetics, especially with reference to allegory as a symbolic mode,²⁰ comes into play: as striving to teach us—through practice—how we might go about imagining imagination’s primacy in advancing human learning. For, as Humphrey Tonkin reminds us with reference to *The Faerie Queene*: “Allegory, after all, only makes explicit what is implicit in the artistic process itself.”²¹

As we proceed then, it is instructive to keep in mind one final aspect of Heidegger’s recursive uncovering of the place of poesy in human thought, the “unconcealedness” [*Unverborgenheit*] of truth.²² This notion of “unconcealedness” is what enables our being able to confront, face to face as it were, imagination—as foregrounded in the title of this chapter concerning what Langland, Spenser, and Bacon achieve by virtue of recourse to the memory palace or, synonymously, theater of the mind, wherein Imagination is placed and, in both tropological and Heideggerian senses, dwells.²³ The language of poetry is understood as already having imported the truth of “the beings of beings,” and, although it can be imagined and thought toward, it has yet to be apprehended. Heidegger continues: “The essence of language essences where it happens as world-forming power, that is, where it in advance preforms and brings into jointure the beings of beings. True poetry is the language of that being [*Sein*] that was forespoken to us a long time ago already and that we have never before caught up with.”²⁴

Such an understanding of poesy’s place in the “unconcealedness of the truth” in the long history of Western metaphysics attends my ensuing analysis and sets the limit on further explicit references to Heidegger. References to forms of the verb “confront,” used to indicate our encounter with Imagination, seek to connect to what is implied in the Heideggerian tenet of “unconcealment.” Through *poesis* what is unconcealed is thus by readers confronted. As will be disclosed in the next section, the figure of Imaginatif is, in effect, a homunculus of the character tellingly named Will, an allegorical avatar of oneself situated as if from within a memory theater (Fig. 8.1).

Of this image of the imagination at work, Frances Yates explains: “A memory *locus* which is to contain a memory image must not be larger than a man can reach; this is illustrated by a cut of a human image on a *locus*, reaching upwards and sideways to demonstrate the right proportions of the *locus* in relation to the image.”²⁵



Fig. 8.1 Johann Horst von Romberch. *Congestorium artificiosae memoriae*. Venice: Melchiorre Sessa, 1533. Image used courtesy of The Huntington Library

Such a notion of unconcealedness, concerning the workings of the imagination from within a decorously arranged memory theater, offers a premodern way to profit from Heidegger's insight into the *mise en abyme* inherent in discursively thinking about poesy in general, which is essentially to think about the catalytic conceptual nature of imagination itself. At the same time, and consistent with the aims of this present volume, all three of the texts under consideration bespeak a pre-Cartesian notion of faculty psychology which does not posit an absolute barrier between mind and body.²⁶ Aristotelian faculty psychology, with its taxonomic

topography of the mind having discrete modules, or faculties, each with different tasks,²⁷ held sway well into the sixteenth century.²⁸ And, as will be discussed further in the final section, premodern faculty psychology provides the underlying model of a tripartite pattern for thinking about advancing human knowledge.²⁹ Harry Levin observes that Bacon “drew his conceptual triad from the ancient apparatus of faculty psychology: Memory, Imagination, and Reason.”³⁰ This understanding of poesy, as the expressive form corresponding to the activated imagination, offers a ready way to approach both the personification of imagination in Langland and Spenser through elements associated with the traditional memory arts,³¹ and also Bacon’s privileging of imagination as a reflective and generative process in *New Atlantis*, as that most promising aspect of human cognition disclosed by a new *organon* (or instrument) to usher in a “great instauration” of human learning.³² In reaching for the truth of things in nature through his analogical mirror-world devoted to systematic scientific inquiry, Bacon successfully gestures toward the epistemic prefiguration of modern thought.³³

Before proceeding to the three case studies though, we need to acknowledge in passing the long tradition concerning the unconcealment of the truth by way of *poesis*, which is to say allegorical means. It is not surprising that imagination—sometimes deemed good because tractable, sometimes bad because unruly—remains among the most self-reflexive and self-referential concepts in premodern epistemological thought. The act of imagining, let alone setting in place metaphors concerning a typology of the imagination or typography of the mind, requires a leap of imagination. Literature, especially when enriched by mnemonically resonant images embedded in allegorical tableaux, offers many such examples highlighting this hermeneutic problem built into the representation of cognitive processes. Accordingly, three representative moments in the English literary tradition will provide a heuristic framework for this excursus on the dynamics of confronting premodern imagination. All three involve metacognitively charged passages that signal how the imaginative faculty can be figured as operating in *and as* what amounts to a memory theater generated by the imagination itself; which is to say, as an imaginative construct set to work by virtue of the same conceptual operations already very much at issue. Each example reflects the mechanisms of *poesis* associated with and responsible for representing the imagination, and thereby tacitly calls attention to the constitutive principles resulting in the literary composition in which it is being set up to be recalled and ultimately used by

readers for their own imaginative ends. This will become clearer when seen in practice, starting with Langland's use of allegory to figure forth—while performatively using—the poetically tempered operations of allegory itself.

CONFRONTING IMAGINATION: LANGLAND'S IMAGINATIF

The first stop in our itinerary brings us face to face with the allegorical character—or, more properly, the personification—of never idle “Imaginatif” in William Langland's *Piers Plowman* (c.1380).³⁴ As we reflect on how the imaginative faculty is made to speak poetically about itself, we do well to keep in mind Angus Fletcher's caveat that “the price of a lack of mimetic naturalness is what the allegorist [...] must pay in order to force” the reader “into an analytic frame of mind.”³⁵ Also, typical of quest narratives and dream visions from earliest times, the poet-voyager encounters and engages with newly met allegorical figures before learning their names and self-identifying attributes, which set in train and propel the inward-journey motif.³⁶ In a revelatory threshold moment, Will wakes up feeling wretched for having lost his dream in which he was so close to finding out what “Do-well” signals in the world (11.403–409). “Imaginatif” takes over as his interrogator and, in effect, catechizer.³⁷ When we do learn his name in the opening line of Passus 12, we learn much more besides about the dynamics of memory and image-making that already is in place within Will even as he is only just now coming to recognize it as such:

“I am Ymaginatif,” quod he, “ydel was I nevere,
 Though I sitte by myself, in siknesse nor in helthe.
 I have folwed thee, in feith, thise fyve and fourty wynter,
 And manye tymes have meved thee to [m]yn[n]e on thyn ende,
 And how fele fernyeres are faren, and so fewe to come:
 And of thi wilde wantownesse tho thou yong were,
 To amende it in thi myddel age, lest myght the faille
 In thyn olde elde, that yvele kan suffre
 Poverte or penaunce, or preyeres bidde.[”] (12.1–12)

Imaginatif is a monitor and index of Will's need for reflection and self-reformation. Further, within the larger allegory of the poem, Imaginatif is understood as the “the soul's image-making power, the *vis imaginativa* of

the scholastics,”³⁸ and, as a character in *Piers Plowman*, mediates between the senses and reason.³⁹ Imaginatif represents “the sum of all the intellect can do [...] preparing the self through humility and patience and voluntary submission of the will to God.”⁴⁰ Looking deeper into the conceptual *mise en abyme*, this animated representation of the extent of human intellection appears on the scene only after Will abruptly awakens from a dream-within-a-dream midway through the overarching allegory. At what can be considered the section just after the narrative’s chiasmic tipping-point,⁴¹ Imaginatif takes over as guide and expositor at this crucial and transitional stage in Will’s coming to cognition of his mortal temporality. As a spokesperson for Reason, consecrated to the service of God, Imaginatif discloses, through an involved set of scriptural *sententiae* and common-sense similes paralleling the aims of an *ars moriendi*, the urgency of the poet-dreamer’s need to reflect on life’s end (12.4) and prepare himself for a good death cognizant of the wrath associated with the Day of Reckoning in Christian eschatology.

Imaginatif’s relationality to Will thus portends and embodies the ecstatic vision *par excellence*, literally standing outside oneself as the etymology of “ecstasy” denotes. Moreover, imagining an image used to guide one’s thoughts, and to do so in terms of a figure embodying those activating aspects of one’s own cognitive faculties, draws heavily on the precepts of the memory arts.⁴² The act of imagining one’s place in the world, and for Will doubly so within the already-in-place Christological cosmos he is striving to become aware of through Imaginatif’s guidance so as to know what is incumbent on him to do as a result of having come to this spiritualized understanding, involves the internalization of one’s own body so as to keep in mind the objects mnemotechnically brought before one’s scrutiny—which in Will’s case involves “clergie” and “kynde wit.”⁴³ According to the conventional operations of a “local place system” or “artificial memory,” a person’s own image is conceptualized as being a roving placeholder within a mental construct enabling users of such systems to get their bearings and move from place to place, mnemonic *locus* to mnemonic *locus*.⁴⁴ They imagine themselves within an accommodating place (like the locale where Will encounters and is instructed by Imaginatif) so as to take in and become cognizant of the orderly disposition of lively images (*imagines agentes*), carefully arranged in their designated places (*loci*), the better to be recognized, retrieved, and put to use in the world.⁴⁵

Imaginatif is confronted in *Piers Plowman* to remind Will of what, to his own peril (with reference to the final destination of his soul presently

in jeopardy), he has lost sight and now must seek to recover in hopeful preparation for “a good death.”⁴⁶ This literary design finds an earlier analogue in the personification of Philosophy scourging, reminding, and curing Boethius, in his role as disconsolate prisoner awaiting death: “only a touch of amnesia that he is suffering, the common disease of deluded minds. He has forgotten for a while who is, but he will soon remember once he has recognized me.”⁴⁷ Such a mnemotechnic scheme, like that exhibited by Imaginatif’s orderly teaching of Will through an aptly selected sequence of scriptural quotations and glosses, charts an intellectual movement within an imaginary construct consistent with the practices of pre-modern pedagogy.⁴⁸ The human form, like that imagined as giving shape to Imaginatif in *Piers Plowman*, at once expresses and introjects a figure of the embodied imagination, mirroring in miniature (by way of—and recalling—*mise en abyme*) the mnemotechnical organization and overarching design of the poem. Will after all is the principal means of locomotion for the reader to move from episode to episode, dream sequence to dream sequence, tableau to tableau, spiritual truth to spiritual truth, and place to place within the allegorical artificial memory scheme that is *Piers Plowman*.

IMAGINATION’S WORK: SPENSER’S PHANTASTES

Our second stop brings us to Phantastes in Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene* (1590).⁴⁹ In rhetoric, “the term *phantasiai* is generally reserved for emotionally laden fictions that act powerfully in memory and on the mind.”⁵⁰ True to his name Phantastes is described as having “a sharpe foresight, and working wit” (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 49, line 8).⁵¹ Recalling the initial description of Langland’s Imaginatif, Phantastes “neuer idle was, ne once could rest a whit” (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 49, line 9), constantly beset by “idle thoughts and fantasies [...] [a]nd all that fained is” (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 51, line 9).

Spenser’s version of Imagination “could things to come foresee” (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 49, line 1) and is represented as working within the bounded locale of the topmost part of the memory theater of Alma’s castle (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 44–55).⁵² Readers learn that Phantastes labors alongside personifications of Reason (who “could of things present best aduize”) and Good Memory (who “things past could keepe in memoriee”), to counsel Alma “how to gouerne well” (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 48). Collectively they assist Alma, the well-managed nurturing Soul, to plan prudently and guard against future assaults. As Julian Lethbridge reminds us, the poetry

here “is not dramatically conceived” and “the characters are precisely not characters but allegorical figures”; “they do not reveal developed psyches.”⁵³ Along the same lines, Linda Gregerson offers the following for confronting figures such as Alma and her agents in the turret who function as “primary units of imagination [...] Bound in fruitful tension between metaphorical and narrative obligations, they differ radically from the dramatic characters that were at the time evolving in the public theatre. [...] Spenser willfully disaggregates psychology and character.”⁵⁴ Moreover, as Gordon Teskey points out with respect to the doubling back feature and recursive nature of allegory as a signifying mechanism: “The moments of *The Faerie Queene* comprise not a plot but an array. The array is the field of allegory, and the connections made between the parts of this array, so that it seems to be one and not many, are interpretations, which is to say, just the sort of readings that an allegorical work is designed to elicit.”⁵⁵ It is not the characters as such that give way to extended interpretation, but rather their positioning and counter-positioning with respect to other figures situated in the array.

This section of the epic especially, with its busy ekphrastic descriptions encountered in passing, supplies a specular place for inward-looking and self-reflection. Readers engagingly attend to the lavish interior decorations and designs, “painted faire with memorable gests [heroic adventures] [...] And all that in the world was aye thought wittily” (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 53, line 3, line 9), and to Arthur and Guyon perusing books about their own histories to help them navigate their prospective heroic quests in the world beyond Alma’s Castle through which they rove as active agents (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 59–60). We will recall that “like the cogs and wheels of a machine, the mnemonic ‘places’ enable the whole structure to move and work. Mnemonic images are called ‘agent images’ in rhetoric, for they both are ‘in action’ and ‘act on’ other things.”⁵⁶ Arthur and Guyon function as avatars, pausing to take counsel and moving from place to place within the mnemotechnically designed turret rooms, allowing readers to reflect on the means by which fantastic images are brought before the mind’s eye—again consistent with the principles of typical memory palaces.⁵⁷ This episode exemplifies a self-consciously metacognitive application of *mise en abyme* in the representation of the workings of the imagination with reference to what must be done to keep it functioning at peak performance.⁵⁸ Within Phantastes’s turret workroom, however, unbidden thoughts are ever on the verge of materializing and gaining an upper hand.⁵⁹

Alma's House thus "weaves together faculty psychology and the mnemonic architecture of image and place," successfully integrating "artificial memory with natural memory, raising the question of where one starts and the other ends and suggesting a mentally disciplined equilibrium worthy of the temperate body."⁶⁰ In allegory the mind typically makes a model of itself, and *The Faerie Queene*, mirroring as it does the mind's structure, is both a treatise on and example of the central role imagination plays in human life.⁶¹ Whereas the age-old body *topos* is universal, the journey through it is individualized; for, as Gregerson argues, "universality itself is a faceted phenomenon. In the turret of Alma's Castle, Arthur and Guyon encounter the three faculties of the mind: Phantastes (fancy), Judgment (whom we know by means of attributes though not by name), and Eumnestes (memory). And here the poet makes us understand that these are collective faculties as well as generic faculties of the individual" such that Eumnestes's "scope is not merely that of individual mental prowess and cumulative experience, but of human culture writ large."⁶² Armed with such insights, we do well to return to and review the entrance into the principal memory device capped by the tripartite turrets symbolizing the brain and emblematic of mortal thought becoming conscious of itself, namely the castellated entry threshold.

As with any traditionally structured memory palace,⁶³ Alma's House specifies a predesignated place to begin the analogical journey.⁶⁴ The mnemotechnic place of the vigilant Porter, situated at the forecourt as one enters Alma's domain (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 23–25), sets the scene for the first line of defense to keep gossips and slanderers from gaining access into this allegorical house devoted to temperate thoughts and actions—including the proper interplay of the three who labor ceaselessly in the turret. Readers thus come to confront imagination both as a figure in the poem and as an idea generated by the imaginative faculty. And this includes the commonplace premodern view of the imagination as liable to run amok if not constantly and vigilantly monitored and kept in check, notwithstanding the orderliness of the imagined framework or constructed image within which it is contained and throughout which it might range at liberty, precisely because—and characteristically—"never idle."

IMAGINATION RECTIFIED: BACON'S *NEW ATLANTIS*

Our third and final engagement with an image of premodern imagination is a virtual tour of Salomon's House in Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627).⁶⁵ The guiding mnemotechnic architectural allegory, recalling Spenser's House of Alma, functions as a metaphorical construct concerning the metaphysics of inventing new forms of knowing.⁶⁶

The End of our Foundation is the knowledge of Causes, and secret motions of things; the enlarging of the bounds of Human Empire, to the effecting of all things possible. The Preparations and Instruments are these. We have large and deep caves of several depths...for all coagulations, indurations, refrigerations, and conservations of bodies...and the producing also of new artificial metals[.] (pp. 480–82)

The Father of Salomon's House continues his catalogue of sites of practical experimentation with references to "dispensatories, or shops of medicines"; "divers mechanical arts, which you have not; and stuffs made by them"; "furnaces" and "[i]nstruments also which generate heat only by motion"; "perspective-houses" for making "demonstrations of all lights and radiations"; "sound-houses"; "perfume-houses"; and culminating in "houses of deceits of the senses, where we represent all manner of feats of juggling, false apparitions, impostures, and illusions; and their fallacies" (pp. 483–86).

Significantly, the last stop in this narrative peregrination is a place where false notions and deceptive appearances are put to the test with the aim of debunking them once and for all. The "houses of deceits" are analogous to Spenser's Porter's lodge and Phantastes's chamber, setting in place a mechanism to protect and promulgate true understanding, narratively conveyed by means of *mise en abyme*. For, in this recounting of the active places ensconced within a vast interior landscape of memory, Bacon successfully forges and refines his own imaginative parallel world of the mind by means of which he figures forth the material conditions constituent of an emergent empiricist epistemology.⁶⁷ At the same time, his exercise in *poesis*, albeit presented in "analytico-referential" prose,⁶⁸ embodies and conveys a call to twist free from, overcome, and supersede what elsewhere he identifies as "Idols of the Mind."

Treated in both *Novum Organum Scientiarum* (1620) and his incomplete *Great Instauration* (aphorisms 38–53), and discussed implicitly

throughout *New Atlantis*, Bacon identifies the “Idols of the Mind” as follows: “Four species of idols beset the human mind, to which (for distinction’s sake) we have assigned names, calling the first Idols of the Tribe, the second Idols of the Den, the third Idols of the Market, the fourth Idols of the Theatre.”⁶⁹ Reminiscent of Montaigne’s celebrated acknowledgment of the chimeras characterizing his rampant imagination,⁷⁰ Bacon points out the destabilizing mental constructs that must be confronted—and bracketed off—in his program to advance knowledge:

The idols and false notions which have already preoccupied the human understanding, and are deeply rooted in it, not only so beset men’s minds that they become difficult of access, but even when access is obtained will again meet and trouble us in the instauration of the sciences, unless mankind when forewarned guard themselves with all possible care against them.⁷¹

Bacon’s imaginative epistemic work-around in *New Atlantis* involves his striving to project a way to imagine the unconcealment of the truths of the world still to be discovered without replicating the delusive habits of thought he would demolish. The end of *New Atlantis*, reminiscent of the organizational outline of his *Novum Organum* and reusing the bullet-point pattern for proposed experiments in his posthumously published *Sylva Sylvarum* (1627/1670) concerned with interpreting the nature of things in the material world, is written after the fashion of an expanded and annotated commonplace book. Bacon repurposes this serviceable mnemotechnical method associated with classical learning and typical of humanist pedagogical training to promote a new way of extending the boundaries of what in nature presents itself to be known.

The laboratories, workshops, and other sites constructed for bringing forth new ideas drawn from experimental and experiential learning in *New Atlantis* collectively constitute an active image of a true Temple of Learning devoid of the Idols of the Mind. The whole analogical complex thereby provides a serviceable memory theater for tracing the trajectory of Bacon’s itinerary presaging the achievements that await our putting into practice such a program devoted to imagining what can be disclosed—through unconcealment—about what otherwise is unimaginable. When confronting imagination in premodern literature, one cannot get around projecting and embodying the imaginative process; at best one finds ways—like those tactics associated with *mise en abyme*—to internalize and inhabit imagination along the lines mnemotechnically staged by Langland,

Spenser, and Bacon. Each manages to foreground the conceptual limitations and the liberating potential of allegory in and for the unconcealment of the truth of beings in the world still yet to be discovered, confronted, and rectified.

NOTES

1. Bacon, *The Major Works*, p. 175. Cf. *De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum* (1623), Bacon, *The Works of Francis Bacon*, 1:494, where, as Rhodri Lewis observes, “imagination, memory, and reason are now treated as the ‘faculties’ of the ‘rational soul,’” thus showing the extent to which “Bacon’s philosophical writings are conceptually and terminologically dynamic.” Lewis, “Francis Bacon and Ingenuity,” p. 116. On the Scholastic treatment of the “faculties,” see E. Ruth Harvey, *The Inward Wits*, pp. 1–79, for the operative model of human physiology accepted by medieval learning, with descriptions of the inner senses of *phantasia*, *cogitatio*, and *memoria* (along with the Aristotelian *sensus communis*); and, with special relevance for this present essay, Harvey begins her exposition with reference to Alma’s castle in Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*.
2. Heidegger, *The Way to Language*, p. 136.
3. Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, stresses this period-specific meditative aim of rhetoric; see also her “The Poet as Master Builder,” p. 881, on “a medieval version of locational memory ... developed in monastic circles” [my emphasis].
4. In its simplest form *mise en abyme* (literally “placed into the abyss”) refers to the heraldic term for a shield-enclosed symbolic image in an escutcheon. With reference to a wide range of art forms and cultural expressions, a double-mirroring effect is invoked by virtue of a reduplication in miniature reflecting the larger whole of which it is part, thereby self-consciously calling attention to the otherwise occluded conceptual principles informing its representational status.
5. On this intellectual genealogy and the indebtedness of embodied or embedded cognitive science to Heidegger’s thought, see Michael Wheeler, *Reconstructing the Cognitive World*, pp. 16–19, pp. 188–99, pp. 223–52; for the original formulation of this groundbreaking theory, see Andy Clark and David J. Chalmers, “The Extended Mind,” pp. 7–19; and, on its application in premodern literary studies, Evelyn B. Tribble and Nicholas Keene, *Cognitive Ecologies*. On the “centrality and indispensability of embodied imagination in life and thought,” see Mark Johnson, *The Body in the Mind*, p. xxxviii.
6. Dreyfus, “Why Heideggerian AI Failed,” pp. 335–37, pp. 354–55.

7. Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, p. 41.
8. Heidegger, *The Way to Language*, p. 135.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 112–13.
10. Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking?* p. 11.
11. Kovacs, “Heidegger’s Insight into the History of Language,” pp. 121–27.
12. Cf. Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism*, p. 231.
13. Tonkin, *Spenser’s Courteous Pastoral*, p. 211.
14. Jones, “Imaginatif in *Piers Plowman*,” p. 586.
15. Carruthers, “Imaginatif, Memoria, and ‘The Need for Critical Theory,’” p. 105.
16. Likewise, as Mary Pardo has shown in “Memory, Imagination, Figuration,” p. 57, Leonardo da Vinci significantly elides “the distinction between the offices of memory and imagination.”
17. Gillian, “Memory in St. Bonaventure,” pp. 206–13; Karnes, *Imagination, Meditation and Cognition in the Middle Ages*, p. 5.
18. Kerényi, *Athene*, p. 17.
19. Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking?* p. 3.
20. Fletcher, *Allegory*, p. 3; allegory is “a fundamental process of encoding our speech” that “destroys the normal expectations we have about language, that our words ‘mean what they say’.” *Ibid.*, p. 23, p. 2.
21. Tonkin, p. 194.
22. On Heideggerian *Unverborgenheit*, see Mark Wrathall, *Heidegger and Unconcealment*, p. 4; the ontology of unconcealment becomes the through-thread of Heidegger’s philosophy.
23. “We attain to dwelling, so it seems, only by means of building. [...] [D]welling itself is always a staying with things. Dwelling as preserving[.]” Heidegger, *Building Dwelling Thinking*, p. 323, p. 329.
24. Heidegger, *Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language*, pp. 141–42.
25. Yates, *Art of Memory*, p. 124.
26. See the Introduction to this volume.
27. For reproductions of typical premodern diagrams of the localized mental faculties, see Edwin Clarke and Kenneth Dewhurst, *An Illustrated History of Brain Function*, pp. 11–47.
28. Bloch, *Aristotle on Memory and Recollection*, p. 140.
29. For related humanist rhetorical commonplaces associated with faculty psychology, see Engel, *Mapping Mortality*, pp. 110–12.
30. Levin, “Bacon’s Poetics,” p. 6.
31. On Spenser’s debt to Langland’s notion of *allegoresis*, see Judith Anderson, *The Growth of a Personal Voice*, and on allegory as enabling the discovery of new knowledge, modifying existent knowledge, challenging systems of

- thought, and materially enhancing awareness, see her "Allegory: Theory and Practice," p. 139.
32. Zagorin, *Francis Bacon*, p. 74.
 33. "Bacon's *New Atlantis* is the epitome of the new experimentalism" and it "opens up toward a new discursive future." Reiss, *The Discourse of Modernism*, p. 172, p. 197.
 34. Unless otherwise noted, references to *Piers Plowman* follow the B-text edited by A.V.C. Schmidt. On personifications as powerful tools for thought that help readers remember and manipulate complex ideas by testing them against existing moral and political paradigms, and with special reference to *Piers Plowman*, see Katharine Breen, *Machines of the Mind*, pp. 274–316.
 35. Fletcher, p. 107.
 36. On dreams tracing "the movement of the mind into itself," see Morton W. Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman as a Fourteenth-Century Apocalypse*, p. 64, and on "sleep and dreams" as "attributes of the creative self," see Maria Ruvoldt, *Renaissance Imagery of Inspiration*, p. 3.
 37. The allegorical character identified as "Imaginative," is not imagination in the modern sense but, insofar as "medieval psychology associated this aspect of the mind with memory and with the capacity to make analogies," it denotes "the faculty of forming mental images of things in the exterior world or in the past." Donaldson, *Will's Vision*, p. 119, n. 1.
 38. Carruthers, "Imaginatif," p. 103.
 39. Jones, p. 588. See also A.J. Minnis, "Langland's Ymaginatif and Late-Medieval Theories of Imagination," pp. 71–80.
 40. Pearsall, *Piers Plowman*, p. 12.
 41. Passus 11–12 in the 20-part B-text; Passus 13–14 in the 22-part C-text. Cf. Kruger, "Mirrors and the Trajectory of Vision in *Piers Plowman*," p. 74: "The 'inward journey' of a poem like *Piers Plowman* is directed not only inward but also outward and upward, toward the external and transcendent."
 42. Engel, Loughnane, and Williams, *The Memory Arts in Renaissance England*, p. 5, p. 11, p. 17, p. 32.
 43. Jones, p. 583. Derek Pearsall, in his 1982 C-text edition of *Piers Plowman*, explains that the Middle English "clergie" means "learning, the body of learned men," and "clergialiche" denotes "in a scholarly manner" (7.34); he further glosses "Clergie" as Theology, and "Scripture" as biblical studies (11.81–83). Pearsall, *Piers Plowman*.
 44. Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, pp. 10–14, pp. 206–7.
 45. Yates, pp. 18–28.
 46. On the *ars moriendi* tradition, see Jeanne Krochalis and Edward Peters, *The World of Piers Plowman*, pp. 194–202.

47. Boethius, *Consolation*, 1.pr.2, p. 6.
48. Carruthers, "Imaginatif," pp. 106–11.
49. On Spenser's "dividing the mental faculties into three in accordance with the common medieval and contemporary scheme" with the "front ventricle (or *cellula phantastica*), being the home of the imagination or phantasy," see Douglas Brooks-Davies, *Spenser's Faerie Queene*, p. 168. More recent critical discussions of the broader cultural implications of Spenser's characterization of this figure include Grant Williams's "Phantastes's Flies" and Benedict S. Robinson's "'Swarth' Phantastes."
50. Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, p. 14.
51. All references to *The Faerie Queene* follow the edition by Thomas P. Roche, Jr.
52. Cf. Grant Williams's chapter in this volume. On medieval precedents of pictorial diagrams "in the shape of a building whose components are labelled with moral injunctions and the names of the Virtues," see Lucy Sandler, "John of Metz, *The Tower of Wisdom*," pp. 215–25.
53. Lethbridge, "The Poetry of *The Faerie Queene*," pp. 198–99.
54. Gregerson, "*The Faerie Queene* (1590)," pp. 205–6.
55. Teskey, "Notes on Reading in *The Faerie Queene*," p. 219.
56. Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, p. 16.
57. See, for example, John Willis, *The Art of Memory*, sig. C5^v, treated and glossed by Engel, Loughnane, and Williams, pp. 73–84; and, on a key mnemotechnic paradigm mirrored in *The Faerie Queene*, see Engel, "*The Table of Cebes* and Edmund Spenser's Places of Memory," pp. 9–29.
58. Harry Berger, Jr., "The Prospect of Imagination: Spenser and the Limits of Poetry," pp. 93–120.
59. This dualistic aspect of the premodern poetic imagination is discussed throughout Maik Goth's *Monsters and the Poetic Imagination in The Faerie Queene*.
60. Engel, Loughnane, and Williams, p. 287.
61. MacCaffrey, *Spenser's Allegory*, pp. 13–32, pp. 104–132.
62. Gregerson, p. 208.
63. See Rebeca Helfer, *Spenser's Ruins and the Art of Recollection*, pp. 168–230.
64. Engel, "*Table of Cebes*," pp. 21–23.
65. References to *New Atlantis* follow Brian Vickers's edition. Bacon, *The Major Works*.
66. As Bronwen Price notes: "the complex repositioning of the reader throughout the narrative is key to the ambivalent interpretations the text arouses and opens it up to a range of possible meanings." Price, "Introduction," p. 3. On "literal physical motion" becoming "a new focus of describing the human body in scientific discourse," see Kimberley Skelton, *The Paradox of Body, Building and Motion*, p. 6. Regarding readers being encouraged to

- imagine themselves moving through a stately “built environment,” see Skelton, *Early Modern Spaces in Motion*, pp. 15–29.
67. Cf. W.B. Patterson, “Religion and the Royal Society,” pp. 336–40.
68. Reiss, p. 28.
69. Bacon, *Novum Organum*, § 39.
70. Lawrence Kritzman, *The Fabulous Imagination*, pp. 71–72.
71. Bacon, *Novum Organum*, § 38.

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The Feudal Art of Memory and the Treacherous Imagination: Coveting the Golden Phantasm in Mammon's House of Trade

Grant Williams

If one were faced with the task of selecting a single English Renaissance work that could capture the strangeness of faculty psychology, few would disagree with the choice of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Book 2, where the inner senses are depicted by three quirky wisemen ensconced in discrete rooms: Phantastes (imagination) who foresees things to come; the unnamed sage (reason) who meditates upon present times; and Eumnestes (memory) who studies the past.¹ The skill with which Spenser handles the allegory is suited to unraveling the complications of “mental extension,” which undergirds the constitution of pre-modern cognition and which Cartesian philosophy would later reject.² Faculty psychology presupposes

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Switzerland AG 2024

M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_9

that thoughts, capable of being located in corporeal space, move from one ventricle of the brain to another as they undergo sublimation from sensible forms to intelligibles.³ For Spenser it is only fitting, then, that his poem, a veritable romance of pre-Cartesian cognition, has knights journeying through the landscape and architecture of interiority. Moreover, since cerebral activity, as the extended mind hypothesis has advocated,⁴ is outwardly distributed, Spenser's spatial poem also explores the ways in which minds recruit cognitive artifacts from their social environment to carry out thought processes. With Alma's house, Spenser employs one such apparatus, the memory palace, to model the lesson that the ideal courtier must manage his mental image production with vigilance and discipline. This memory palace acquires its architecture from the manor house, whose imagery and *loci* prompt the courtier to remember a feudal mindset so that he will remain loyal to the crown. Intrigued just as much with the metacognitive as with the pragmatic dimension to memory palaces, Spenser increases our knowledge of the historical ramifications of the extended mind hypothesis. His poem reflects upon not only the affordances but also the constraints supplied by peculiar social environments. Because our faculties share the same spatial continuum with the external world, the places we come to inhabit threaten to inhabit us by way of the continuous encroachment they make upon our mental capacities. And so the architectural materials that we adopt from our environment to construct a memory palace have far-reaching consequences for interiority. The Cave of Mammon, whose treasure rooms imperil Guyon's management of mental imagery by tempting him with an overpowering desire for gold, demonstrates how easily the virtues of Alma's castle may deteriorate in a new setting.

My chapter argues that Spenser warns readers against the threat that the mercantile environment poses to feudal remembering, the mental bulwark of a loyal courtier. Mammon's commercial environment incites covetousness, which stimulates the faculty of imagination to seize control of image production, preventing the courtier from building a stable memory palace. Informed by cultural materialism, recent Spenser criticism on Book 2 has devoted disproportionate attention to studying memory, without contemplating its cognitive connections to the imagination.⁵ It is well known that the early modern period distrusted this faculty, which could corrupt or be corrupted by the emotions and the five senses, eventually unseating the governing faculty of reason.⁶ What is less well known is the imagination's immediate menace to memory; in faculty psychology, the

organs were adjacent to one another,⁷ so the imagination, normally collaborating with the memory, could commandeer the images that formed the basis of remembering, and, ultimately, all thought. The imagination's insubordination worries Spenser no doubt because, as an inward-looking poet, he realizes that the double-edged sword of the image enables him to explore mental states and edify his readers, while inadvertently tempting readers to indulge in lower order thinking that can potentially disrupt their cognitive equilibrium. In Book 2, Spenser assures them that he uses the memory, not the imagination, to manage mental images, and at the same time cautions courtiers that the rise of commercialism—what has been characterized as the political-economic transition from feudalism to protocapitalism—may have staggering cognitive effects, replacing the mnemonic architecture of the stable manor house with that of the forgetful house of trade.

Alma's castle, which bears out an analogy to the well-governed body, both interior and exterior, does not just stimulate allegorical interpretation. It also enacts for readers the art of memory, the fourth stage of rhetoric, which offered the student techniques for memorizing the commonplaces and arguments that could be called upon when delivering a speech. The most labor-intensive form of the art instructs the practitioner to fabricate a "memory palace" in his mind by associating things to be remembered with eidetic images and then by depositing these images in a familiar architectural setting partitioned into distinct locations. Afterward, when returning to the contiguous sites through an act of recollection, the practitioner can sequentially withdraw the various things to be remembered from their proxies. Early modern authors also recruited this method when composing written texts.⁸ Spenser complicates matters by, in effect, overlaying a memory palace upon the allegorical anatomization of an ideal courtier. His allegory of interiority, in which the castle's rooms and their occupants correspond to the body's organs and their respective functions, is regulated by the mnemonic architecture of *imagines agentes* (acting images) and *loci* (places). Readers follow Guyon on his anatomical tour as though they were methodically moving through a memory palace in an act of recollection.

The art of memory implemented by Spenser can be further understood through the theoretical lens of the extended mind hypothesis. As John Sutton argues, the art, though apparently "decontextualized and disembodied" within a person's thoughts, constitutes an example of extended cognition. Like other linguistic forms, it is a "culturally sculpted

internalized” surrogate of a situation “in the external world.”⁹ By and large, rhetoric has long intuited the distribution of cognition to artifice, because it banks on the principle—aptly captured by Carruthers’s phrase “the craft of thought”—that technique can supplement our natural powers of thinking.¹⁰ Rhetoric’s ancient teaching, according to Sutton, addresses “‘the problem of stabilization,’ the need to discipline our ‘mental spaces in ways that tame (though never eradicate) those biologically more ‘natural’ processes of merging and change’”—“to buffer or influence their affective impact, and [...] to ‘drive, sculpt and discipline the internal representational regime’.”¹¹ Sutton’s characterization of cognitive conditioning describes Spenser’s project locally and globally. If the purpose of *The Faerie Queene*, as Spenser’s letter to Raleigh asserts, is “to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline,” Book 2 seeks to discipline the “internal representational regime” of gentlemen, and the house of Alma presents the means of achieving the idealized view of that regime.¹²

Sutton’s analysis, however, raises a contemporary analogue that is misleading in its implications for early modern memory palaces. Citing Carruthers who makes the same comparison, Sutton alleges that the “adept’s mind had become a random access memory,” since “[a]fter successful encoding, items are context independent, to be inspected, recombined, and transformed again only under deliberate executive control.”¹³ Spenser—or his contemporaries—would never have said that any random setting could be used for a *loci* system. Spenser mindfully builds his memory palace out of the timber and stone of the Elizabethan manor house, nostalgically filtered through feudalism to develop the poem’s chivalric ethos. He does so because it folds the courtier’s cognition into a habitation that defines the station and duty of the landed classes, upon which aspiring gentlemen, along with the elite, looked for social guidance. The environment of the manor house would ceaselessly prompt the inhabitants as to who they were, where they came from, and how they should behave. The manor, the domain of the feudal lord, reinforced a sense of deserved place, having inscribed in its movables, rooms, and estate the right of primogeniture. The Tudor period was the time, after all, when heraldry became “all the rage in interior decoration”—from escutcheons carved into stonework and furniture to portraits and family trees showing ancestors and alliances.¹⁴ The genealogical library of Eumnestes does this work in Alma’s house. It is the climactic ventricle whereby the two knights come to know their true selves through reading their respective books, *Briton*

moniments and the *Antiquitie of Faerie lond*, the first a dynastic history of Britain's monarchs and the second a register of the emperors of fairy land (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 59–60). Knowing one's self, an action fundamental for obtaining temperance, requires active remembrance. What might seem odd at first glance is that the knights do not retrieve an image of themselves from their own pedigree; they instead latch onto an image of their "country's ancestry" (bk. 2, canto, 9, st. 60, line 7) belonging to royal genealogical time. As David Lee Miller explains, both books "are structured with reference to the ideal body of the [sic] sovereignty."¹⁵ For the courtier to know himself, his mind must apprehend the thought of Elizabeth I, Gloriana, whom the genealogy culminates in (bk. 2, canto 10, st. 76, lines 8–9). Achieved by the discipline of the art of memory, true cognition is thus, first and foremost, a matter of recollecting and reaffirming one's loyalty to the monarch.

The superimposition of the art of memory onto the courtier's ideal interiority, however, does not frame just memorative cognition; it mediates the entire psycho-physiological apparatus. What am I particularly interested in is how Spenser uses the art to attenuate the untrustworthy imagination. Because this faculty proliferates images without rhyme or reason,¹⁶ Spenser urges readers to restrict its erratic output. Establishing an ordered arrangement inhibits images from any wayward movement and fortifies them against the buffets of emotion and distraction—a place for every image and an image for every place. To the knights' acquisition of self-knowledge, Phantastes, allegorically speaking, makes no noticeable contribution and neither does he, unlike his fellow sages, perform an act of thinking that elicits overt appreciation and wonder from the two guests.¹⁷ His menace to thought is best represented by his disturbing flies, said to encumber "all mens eares and eyes" (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 51, line 3).¹⁸ By inserting reason between the two sages, Spenser also deviates from the common practice of placing the imagination beside the memory.¹⁹ These faculties were normally seen to be adjacent because the memory depended upon the imagination for its images or "phantasms," which it received from the five external senses. As Aquinas, quoting Aristotle's proverbial dictum, says, "nihil sine phantasmate intelligit anima": the mind understands nothing without the phantasm.²⁰ Readers would never guess that these two faculties were supposed to communicate with each other, since their respective images are so ontologically incommensurate: fantasy's swarming flies seem worlds apart from memory's ordered books as well as the middle ventricle's murals. Clearly, Spenser is directing

readers to digest his poem's verbal pictures by means of Eumnestes, not Phantastes. He says as much in his introductory stanza to Book 2, where his "famous antique history," he hopes, will not be judged to be "th'abundance of an ydle braine" and "painted forgery" but instead "matter of iust memory" (Proem.1.2–5). The manor qua memory palace imparts the lesson that image-making should fall under the jurisdiction of remembering.

What remains contained in Alma's castle runs amok in Mammon's cave, an interiority overwhelmed by the imagination. Mammon accordingly bears a strong family resemblance to Phantastes. Sitting in the midst of their respective images (flies and coins), both figures are described as having staring eyes (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 7, line 5; bk. 2, canto 9, st. 52, line 6), which epitomize the imagination's ocularcentric orientation.²¹ Mammon's sooty features also exaggerate the dark complexion of Phantastes (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 3, lines 5–9; bk. 2, canto 9, st. 52, line 4). Swarthisness was a metonym for antic image production since an overabundance of black bile was thought to trouble the imagination with corrupted imagery.²² Similarly, Mammon's association with forge-work (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 3, lines 6–9) has "darkned with filthy dust" (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 4, line 3) his golden undercoat. The undercoat besides his face has symbolically undergone adustion, the distemperate process by which the body's desiccation blackens a humor or a spirit.²³ Begrimed by the soot and fumes of melancholy, Mammon, a perversion of Phantastes, personifies the adusted imagination—Spenser, via humoralism, racializing this mental faculty's pathologization.²⁴

And yet in one important aspect, Mammon bears no kinship to Phantastes. Spenser does not embed Mammon within the socio-political setting through which early modern writers regularly conceived of faculty psychology. Writings from varied discursive quarters understood the mind to be an extension of either a royal court²⁵ or a law court²⁶ to articulate how the relations between interiority's organs could jeopardize self-government. What Spenser explores throughout Canto 7 resembles the emergent cognitive topography sketched out by Samuel Purchas's *Microcosmus, or the History of Man*. Displacing feudalism, Purchas—a clergyman known for his compilation of travel writings partially based upon Richard Hakluyt's unpublished manuscripts²⁷—sees the inner senses extending an alternative administration: "the common sense is the Custome-house, the Phantasie the mint, and the Memorie the Treasurie and Armorie."²⁸ The custom house, mint, and treasury, the institutions

whereby a country controls the importation of precious metals and commodities, loom behind the activities of Mammon's cave, which is referred to as the house of "Richesse" (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 25, lines 8–9) on account of the main treasure room's excessive wealth (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 31, lines 4–5). During the sixteenth century, there was only one custom house that could rival Spenser's vision of boundless treasure: Seville's *Casa de Contratación*. This house of trade oversaw the entire colonial enterprise for Spain and ensured, through its accounting methods and fortifications, that no gold and silver would go astray during transit.²⁹ Upon arrival at Seville, treasure was immediately transported to the high-security Casa, where it was "placed in chests in the treasure chamber."³⁰ Likewise, in Mammon's first storeroom there "was nothing to be seene / But huge great yron chests and coffers strong / All bard with double bends, that none could weene / Them to eforce by violence or wrong" (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 30, lines 1–4).

A house of trade as cognitive architecture introduces a socio-political threat into Spenser's feudal vision, situating Guyon more subtly than does Spenser criticism that contextualizes Mammon's cave within a pronounced postcolonial dynamic. Guyon appears less as an explorer or colonizer³¹ who descends into a New World mine than as an Elizabethan projector, factor, or merchant adventurer, who, in landing at a foreign port city, is vulnerable to disavowing his allegiance to his homebound investor. Enterprising courtiers, great and small, would have been prone to being seduced by the intemperate Mammon. Sir Walter Raleigh, the "ideal" gentleman to whom Spenser dedicates *The Faerie Queene*, was an ambitious projector, who, having secured a royal charter from Elizabeth I in 1584, attempted to establish a colony at Roanoke, Virginia, for the purposes of mining for gold and silver as well as settling the heathen lands.³² Influenced by his "dialogue with the members of the Leicester-Sidney circle [...] who encouraged overseas trade as a way to strengthen England's relationship with other Protestant nations and to check Spanish-Habsburg military expansion," Spenser's integration of mercantile interests into the genre of romance harmonizes with literary trends during the period.³³ John Stow's *Chronicles* (1580) initiated the vogue of celebrating merchant heroes, who "did not reflect a new awareness of the importance of business to the commonwealth" but, instead, "a mentality which saw service to the realm in traditional, chivalric, quasi-feudal terms."³⁴

The journey to the house of trade confronts Guyon with the Renaissance merchant's existential dilemma: how do you preserve feudal loyalty in a

marketplace where money can purchase power and status? When Guyon refuses to swear allegiance to the wealthy Mammon, Mammon points out his faulty logic:

Vaine Glorious Elfe (said he) doest not thou weet,
 That money can thy wantes at will supply?
 Shields, steeds, and armes, & all things for thee meet
 It can puruay in twinkling of an eye;
 And crownes and kingdoms to thee multiply. (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 11,
 lines 1–5)

A knight need not commit himself to the role of servant, when every social estate, whether derived from hero's deeds or a king's crown, may be bought with gold. Spenserian scholars have read Guyon's "temptation" here in light of the cultural friction between traditional feudal and emergent protocapitalist values.³⁵ Slavoj Žižek summarizes the standard Marxist account of how the economic shift to commodification restructures social life:

In societies in which commodity fetishism reigns, the "relations between men" are totally defetishized, while in societies in which there is fetishism in "relations between men"—in pre-capitalist societies—commodity fetishism is not yet developed, because it is "natural production," not production for the market, which predominates. This fetishism in relations between men has to be called by its proper name: what we have here are, as Marx points out, "relations of domination and servitude"[.]³⁶

Žižek's familiar narrative explains how Spenser's two houses organize their respective socio-economic spaces: whereas the manor administers its offices and privileges by degrees of vassalage, the house of trade coordinates its business around the production and management of gold. Spenser's cognitive perspective, however, pushes beyond this standard materialist account of the passage from feudalism to mercantilism. Mammon is not tempting Guyon to commit the sin of greed or to buy into a competing social belief; rather, he is entrapping him with a new way of thinking that enterprising courtiers would have been especially vulnerable to. Choosing Mammon's way of thinking involves sculpting interiority along the lines of the marketplace, not the feudal manor. But make no mistake: Guyon does not defend the genteel or pious attitude that there is something inherently base about money. In his debate with Mammon, he

advocates the “Right Vsaunce” of wealth, which, Aaron Kitch emphasizes, means stewarding riches for the public good rather than seeking private profit.³⁷ A gentleman can toil within a commercial institution, but he must guard against the mentality it fosters.

The mentality expected of a merchant on a trade mission may be discerned in *The Marchant’s Avizo* (1589), a compact vade-mecum, which compiles counsel for young factors and mercantile agents embarking on their first trip overseas. The author John Brown admits that he came up with the instructions out of necessity, since he knew “how greatly myself and many other my countrymen, at our first going into Spain were troubled with difficulties.”³⁸ *The Marchant’s Avizo* proffers itself as a portable artificial memory for the factor, presenting templates of various letters and bills and notes on foreign weights, measures, and currencies. Brown, moreover, includes a little commonplace treasury of “Godly sentences necessary for a youth to meditate upon” as well as instructions on discharging, most importantly, “dutiful service towards almighty God” by praying daily.³⁹ The vade-mecum’s regimen of devotional drills trains the agent’s memory to correlate obeying the faraway master with submitting to the ultimate Lord, as though it were guarding against the possibility of the agent cheating his master of the expedition’s profits. Ingraining this cognitive disposition further, succinct and unambiguous admonitions direct him to abide strictly by his master’s “own order and remembrance,” even if he thinks that his dealings can generate more revenue for him.⁴⁰ The factor cultivates through the arts of memory a feudal mindset of uncompromising loyalty.

Mammon’s cave, into which Guyon must first descend before he can acquire the wisdom of Alma’s castle, portrays merchant thinking gone completely awry. Here, the house of trade, not the manor house, has given interiority its cognitive scaffolding. According to both Maurice Evans and John B. Bender, the cave with its sequence of visually striking icons set in separate backgrounds exemplifies the memorative schemes that Francis Yates found in medieval and Renaissance painting and literature.⁴¹ These two critics, however, misconstrue the cave by dwelling upon the *imagines agentes* without paying close enough attention to the rules codified by the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*—the rhetorical handbook that furnishes one of the most methodical expositions of the art of memory. On the plain in front of Pluto’s gates, the consort of allegorical figures is muddled together with clouds of flying creatures overhead (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 22–23). Such crowding and movement, the *ad Herennium* warns, “weaken and confuse

the impress of the images.”⁴² The figures have not been allocated proper *loci*, either, thwarting the intended recollection; in fact, “trembling Feare still to and fro did fly, / And found no place” (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 22, lines 6–7). “Lamenting Sorrow,” another figure, “did in darknes lye” (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 22, line 8) obfuscating mental visualization, for the art prescribes proper lighting for the *loci*.⁴³ The cave plunges the reader deeper into poor illumination. Its golden roof, floor, and walls, Spenser’s cues stress, were “ouergrowne with dust and old decay, / And hid in darkenes, that none could behold” (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 29, lines 2–3). Throughout the entire house, which never entertains a view of cheerful day, there is “a faint shadow of vncertain light; / Such as a lamp, whose life does fade away” (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 29, lines 6–7).

Why are the rules of the art so flagrantly broken—the architectural elements so defective? Overwhelmed with a desire for gold, the imagination has not remained subordinated to the natural memory, casting off all cognitive discipline. The house of trade allegorizes a corrupted phantasy in which thought—the image or phantasm—has become fetishized in and of itself. When Guyon first comes across Mammon, this parody of Phantastes is feeding his eyes on a mass of treasure in all shapes and sizes turned upside down in his lap:

And round about him lay on euery side
Great heapes of gold, that neuer could be spent:
Of which some were rude owre, not purifide
Of *Mulcibers* deuouring element;
Some others were new driuen, and distent
Into great Ingowes, and to wedges square;
Some in round plates withouten moniment;
But most were stampd, and in their metal bare
The antique shapes of kings and kesars straung and rare. (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 5)

As David T. Read comments, the “stanza compresses the whole procedure of rendering gold into usable currency, a procedure which was almost the sole property of the Spaniards in the late sixteenth century.”⁴⁴ And yet Read—besides Aaron Kitch and David Landreth, both of whom also stress the episode’s manufacture of money—does not consider the stanza’s rich cognitive ramifications that Spenser encourages readers to contemplate.⁴⁵ Early modern writers used the minted coin to figure forth the dualistic

ontology of the phantasm within faculty psychology, hearkening back to Aristotle who took the sensory impression to be stamped or imprinted on the body “just as when men seal with signet rings.”⁴⁶ For that reason, the mental image consisted of a *phantasma* (the image’s physiological trace) and the *eikon* (the image’s capacity to resemble the thing remembered). Not only an apt and ready trope for the brain turning out the coin of thought, minting—as Purchas’s allegory of the inner senses implies—also conveyed the imagination’s peculiar mental capability of creating new impossible things by fusing sensory impressions together (figments or chimeras). In the English translation of the *French Academy*, La Primaudaye suggests a minting process when explaining imaginative cognition: “what newe and monstrous things it [fantasie] forgeth and coyneth, by sundry imaginations arising of those images and similitudes, from whence it hath the first paterne.”⁴⁷ “Forge” and “coyn,” along with “feign,” “frame,” and “counterfeit,” words that leaned toward the discourse of manufacturing, were commonly used in the period “for the active, in a sense creative, functioning of imagination.”⁴⁸

But when Guyon follows Mammon into the underworld, no other mention of “coyn” appears in a narrative fixated on gold. The coins’ various devices might as well be illegible, since the narrator cannot identify the antique rulers “straunge and rare,” a qualification which suggests that the money does not circulate as currency.⁴⁹ What the coins, mixed in with ingots, wedges, and plates (various states of a coin as it is manufactured), bear makes little difference, since Mammon “feede[s] his eye / And couetous desire with his huge threasury” (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 4, lines 8–9). He could not care less about assessing the relative value of the various aureate materials, for when surprised by Guyon, he busies himself with hiding his entire stock by pouring it down a hole. Mammon is captivated by the sensuality—the tactility and the visuality—of the metal itself. The mercantile imagination does not pay heed to the phantasm’s iconicity, whether inscription or shape. Instead, gold, representing the phantasm’s materiality, has bewitched him, holding pride of place in the house of riches.

Mammon’s prioritization of *phantasma* over *eikon* accounts for a truncated manufacturing process that foregrounds only melting “the golden metall, ready to be tryde” (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 35, line 9), that is, to assay⁵⁰ the gold for its purity—though no one ostensibly performs this latter task. Neither does Spenser refer to minting once, nor does he describe anyone beating out discs and striking them with a royal stamp, belying Kitch’s claim that “Mammon plays the part of the Warden of the Mint.”⁵¹ Guyon

witnesses just smelting, the first part of the production of coinage, which involved purifying the metal by skimming the dross from the surface of the molten mass (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 36, line 7). The smelting then does not lead to any forging of specie, but strives for the purest state of gold, what Mammon calls “the fountaine of the worldes good” (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 38, line 6). Given its centrality to the house’s operations, the process of smelting serves as an allegorical correlative of Mammon’s “couetous desire” (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 4, line 9). The burning bright furnaces, whose bellows inflame the fuel (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 36, line 5), stand for the heart, the seat of the passions. In the humoral economy, heat both aids the imagination and excites the passions of the concupiscible faculty to which desire belongs.⁵² Furthermore, the imagination directs these passions to embrace or repel sensory images, since one of its primary functions is to assess the pleasurability of objects.⁵³ At Mammon’s prodding, one desirable object receives all the emotional attention in his house. The imagination has effectively turned desire into covetousness, and covetousness melts the coins down into faceless bullion. In *The Anatomy of the Mind*, Thomas Rogers compares covetousness to the disease dropsy, for just as infected men cannot slake their thirst the more they drink, so covetous men try to possess more and more goods without coming any nearer satisfaction.⁵⁴

The image’s oppressive prominence in the house of riches explains why the architecture fails miserably as artificial memory. Gold coat, gold coins, gold ingots, liquid gold, golden roof, golden floor, golden walls, golden pillars, the great gold chain, and golden apples together transgress the fundamental assumption of mnemonic architecture: *loci* and *imagines* must be clearly distinguished so that individual images can later be retrieved from delineated sequences. In contrast, Mammon’s gold works its way into the house’s very fabric as well as its objects, blurring the distinction between container and contained and collapsing spatial differentiation. There is much gold in the main storeroom that its contents are unthinkable, for “ne euer could within one place be fownd” as many riches (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 31, line 6). The phantasm’s inordinate materiality has rendered mnemonic images useless for thought.

Spenser brilliantly reveals that something is forever lost when the imagination, swayed by mercantile temptations, allows covetous desire to overrun mnemonic architecture, embraces the aureate phantasm, and, like Midas’s touch, reduces the relative functions of places and images to a stultifying sameness. The *ad Herennium* would not take issue with fashioning a mnemonic image out of gold, presumably because the mind,

stirred by the marvelous, would naturally recall something precious.⁵⁵ Yet Mammon's covetousness has accumulated gold to such an extent that this scarce metal has become as common as dirt. In his dialogue with the devil, Guyon knows it for what it truly is: "worldly mucke" (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 10, line 5; bk. 2, canto 7, st. 15, line 8), corresponding to the hylomorphic basis of faculty psychology, in which all earthly things, thoughts included, can be "analyzed as matter (*hylê*) plus form (*morphê* or *eidos*)."⁵⁶ Mammon's worldly muck, nevertheless, does not preserve the stamp of thought that higher cognition needs. In smelting golden artifacts and coins down into molten metal, the hundred furnaces symbolize the degree to which unrelenting covetousness obliterates the mental traces of past experiences and present loyalties—what Žižek identifies as the fetishism of social relations. Whereas in the marketplace gold can be exchanged for any other commodity, in faculty psychology, the coin of thought can never buy back or recover the squandered mnemonic image. Monomaniacal obsession impoverishes interiority, not realizing that the allure of money, which resides in its fungibility—the financial assumption underwriting sixteenth-century Europe's burgeoning international trade—holds no power over the exchangeability of phantasms. To enter Mammon's phenomenological space is thus to embark upon a cognitive katabasis, represented in the cave by a profusion of death imagery. Little wonder then that Guyon encounters there Tantalus (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 58–60), who eternally reaches for unobtainable sustenance and Pilate (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 61–62), who incessantly washes hands that can never be cleaned—fitting emblems for the way in which intemperance brings about in thinking a death-like stasis. In Rebeca Helfer's succinct words, "the very structure of the house conflates gold with ruin."⁵⁷ The treasure-trove of riches is less a memory palace than a tomb of forgetting. The great irony embedded in the episode, then, is that the accumulation of aureate phantasms accrues no actual or potential enrichment but cognitive impoverishment and moribund stagnation.

The treasury in addition to the smelting hall helps Spenser drive home this trenchant irony. Mammon, whose compulsive behavior around gold corresponds to a treasurer, one of the three "judge officials," overseeing the scrupulous day-to-day business of the Sevillan House of Trade,⁵⁸ goes so far as to hoard his inventory, curiously withholding it from any traffic with merchants.⁵⁹ The removal of potential wealth from circulation symptomatizes dysfunction, since healthy imaginations collaborated with the upper faculties. That said, the imagination could function as a temporary depot in that it kept images for a brief period of time before it had to pass

them along the cognitive chain.⁶⁰ And yet, in pre-modern psychology, a healthy imagination would never preside over a long-term treasury. According to Cicero's sententia, "famous in the later middle ages,"⁶¹ memory is the treasure-house of all things. Quintilian explains why the Ciceronian metaphor holds true: "All learning depends on memory, and teaching is in vain if everything we hear slips away. It is this capacity too that makes available to us the reserves of examples, laws, rulings, sayings, and facts which the orator must possess in abundance and have always at his finger-tips."⁶² Truly, Mammon has appropriated the cognitive treasury and thereby laid waste to the rhetorical diversity and variety with which memory supplies cognition so that the humanist-educated mind can efficaciously participate in public discourse. With its ceaseless accumulation of aureate phantasms, the imagination has obsessed over a single thought rather than storing up precious copia. Absent of ekphrasis or *energeia*, the brief, unremarkable, even bland descriptions of the first and second treasure rooms (bk. 2, canto 7, st. 31) reinforce the idea of rampant poverty.

Book 2 of *The Faerie Queene* elucidates the cognitive implications of mental extension for pre-Cartesian faculty psychology. For Spenser, the social space that encroaches upon the courtier's interiority profoundly matters, since the external environment can impede just as much as it can facilitate thinking. Mammon's house of trade, as we have seen, threatens the feudal mind with severe cognitive impoverishment. But the poem also elucidates the internal extendedness of faculty psychology insofar as the imagination and memory sharing each other's capacities can interfere with one another's processes. The imagination works toward disturbing the carefully demarcated divisions of remembering, while the memory works hard to stabilize the volatility of the imagination's image production. For Spenser, then, the art of memory can be applied just as much to the natural imagination as the natural memory. In his manipulations, to what extent is his art really an art of the imagination?

Spenser's efforts to discipline volatile images help us to reassess his conflicted attitude to allegorization, the practice most commonly linked with the poem's image production. If allegory is a type of artificial thinking much like the art of memory, it is a type of thinking that requires continual vigilance on the reader's part. Its menacing aspect, highlighted by Spenser, foregrounds the cultural difference of the early modern imagination. The imagination's danger does not arise just from indulging in flights of fancy, what amounts to epistemological error,⁶³ but from the faculty's proximity to earthly sensuality. There is too much of the material world, not too

little, in imaginative cognition. Through managing the phantasm, the memory palace enables allegory to stave off the mercantile covetousness that results in a mental obsession with *hylé*, worldly muck. Intriguingly enough, Book 2 suggests that allegory's potential instability as a bearer of social memory forges an alliance between poet and Queen against a common foe. Just as Elizabeth needs Spenser to commemorate her sovereignty in an age when Mammon threatens her servants' fealty with oblivion, Spenser needs her patronage to gain the financial security and social recognition for advancing his own courtly ambitions as a defender of feudal interiority in a world of golden temptations.

NOTES

1. Bk. 2, canto 9, st. 47–60. All in-text citations are taken from Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*. “Eumnestes,” meaning “well-rememberer,” is assisted by “Anamnestes,” after Plato’s anamnesis, meaning “reminder.” Phantastes signifies phantasy or the imagination. The second sage does not have a name but has been identified as reason or estimation. See, for example, Vicary, *A profitable treatise of the anatomie of mans body*, sig. D3^r: “In the middest sel or ventrikle [of the brain] there is founded [...] the Cogitatieue or estimatiue virtue.”
2. Descartes’s dualism distinguishes corporeality from the mind on the grounds that the latter is not a body at all but rather a thinking, non-divisible, and non-extended thing separate from the material world. See Skirry, “7.b. The Mind-Body Problem,” np.
3. For a synopsis of faculty psychology’s considerable divisibility, see Katharine Park, “The Organic Soul,” pp. 466–67.
4. See Clark and Chalmers, “The Extended Mind,” p. 7, who postulate that thinking, rather than being confined to flesh and bone, occurs in the couplings between the individual’s brain and its environment—in particular, technological artifacts.
5. Summit, *Memory’s Library*, p. 135, examines imagination and memory less as organs of faculty psychology than as material manifestations of a “lectio of suspicion” with which English book collectors corrected the errors of Catholic textuality to serve the ends of Protestant nation-building. *Ibid.*, p. 105. Landreth, *The Face of Mammon*, p. 58, analyzes the cave’s treasure with reference to “a material ontology of objects.” He assumes memory to be a remembrance of the past without acknowledging cognitive processes, let alone imaginative ones. His analysis stops at the material object, as though remembering were present in the artifact itself, not a person’s interaction with his world that occurs through the historically constructed

- mind. In the most comprehensive work, to date, on memory in Spenser's corpus, *Spenser's Ruins and the Art of Recollection*, Helfer argues that Spenser wages an Augustinian critique against Virgilian epic in order to problematize a vision of the past that celebrates empire and worships power. Though chiefly approaching Book 2 from the perspective of the history of ideas, she still valorizes the materialist assumption that memory is artifactual, subject to ruin and decay. Generally speaking, Renaissance scholarship tends to isolate and materialize memory by privileging physical artifacts and historiographical practices without considering how early modern writers relied upon these artifacts for thinking. For examples of the cultural materiality of memory, see Gordon and Rist's *The Arts of Remembrance in Early Modern England* and Arcangeli and Tamm's *A Cultural History of Memory in the Early Modern Age*.
6. Rossky, "Imagination in the English Renaissance," p. 53; Roychoudhury, *Phantasmatic Shakespeare*, p. 23.
 7. Boughner, "The Psychology of Memory in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*," p. 96.
 8. For a recent introduction to this large field, see Engel, Loughnane, and Williams, *The Memory Arts in Renaissance England*, pp. 1–38. The classic monograph on the specific art of memory—that is, locative memory—is Frances A. Yates's 1966 monograph.
 9. Sutton, "Exograms and Interdisciplinarity," p. 213.
 10. See Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*.
 11. Sutton, p. 211.
 12. Spenser, "The Letter to Raleigh," in *The Faerie Queene*, p. 714.
 13. Sutton, p. 209; Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, p. 7.
 14. Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy*, p. 25.
 15. Miller, *The Poem's Two Bodies*, p. 202.
 16. Rossky, p. 60.
 17. The knights feel pleasure at the "goodly reason" of Estimation (bk. 2, canto 9, st. 54, lines 6–8) and express wonder over the exercise of Eumnestes (bk. 2, canto, 9, st. 59, lines 1–2).
 18. For a Lacanian reading of the images, see Williams, "Phantastes's Flies."
 19. Boughner, p. 96.
 20. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1a. 84, 7.
 21. Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 46.
 22. Babb, *The Elizabethan Malady*, p. 29.
 23. Clark, pp. 58–59.
 24. The drive to whitewash the imagination may spring from the same racist sources as the desire of sonnets to eliminate blackness from the economy of beauty. See Hall, *Things of Darkness*, pp. 62–122. See also, Robinson, "'Swarth' Phantastes," for more on this subject.

25. See, for example, du Laurens, *A Discourse of the Preservation of the Sight*, sig. M1^v, and Davies, *Mirum in modum*, sig. B2^v.
26. See, for example, Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholy*, sig. G8^v, and La Primaudaye, *The Second Part of the French Academy*, sig. K8^r.
27. Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimes in Five Books*.
28. Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrim Microcosmus*, sig. G1^r.
29. Haring, *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies*, pp. 34–35.
30. Hamilton, *American Treasure*, p. 25.
31. Quilligan, “On the Renaissance Epic: Spenser and Slavery,” pp. 19–24, and Kasey Evans, “How Temperance Becomes ‘Blood Guiltie’ in *The Faerie Queene*,” p. 58, regard Guyon as a traveler if not an explorer. Read’s influential article “Hunger for Gold,” p. 230, takes him to be an anti-conquistador, resistant to Spanish greed.
32. Quinn, *Set Fair for Roanoke*, pp. 3–19.
33. Kitch, *Political Economy and the States of Literature in Early Modern England*, p. 19.
34. Stevenson, *Praise and Paradox*, p. 108.
35. Consult Read, Quilligan, Kasey Evans, and Kitch. See also Vitkus, “The New Globalism,” who contends that Guyon, motivated by the code of honour, tries to resist the historical necessity of the global system of capitalism.
36. Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, pp. 25–26.
37. Kitch, pp. 27–28.
38. Brown, *The Merchant’s Avizo*, sig. A2^r.
39. *Ibid.*, sig. B3^v.
40. *Ibid.*, sig. B2^v.
41. Bender, *Spenser and Literary Pictorialism*, pp. 142–43; Maurice Evans, *Spenser’s Anatomy of Heroism*, p. 81. Helfer, *Spenser’s Ruins*, p. 195, makes a similar claim but realizes that the cave promotes forgetting too.
42. Cicero? *Rhetorica*, 3.19.31.
43. *Ibid.*, 3.19.32.
44. Read, p. 212.
45. Kitch, p. 30; Landreth, p. 60.
46. Aristotle, “On Memory and Recollection,” 450a32–450b1.
47. La Primaudaye, sig. K6^v.
48. Rossky, p. 57.
49. Landreth, p. 60.
50. Challis, *The Tudor Coinage*, p. 10. Challis provides a good overview of the 16th-century manufacture of coin. *Ibid.*, pp. 10–20.
51. Kitch, p. 29.
52. Babb, p. 12, p. 60.
53. Bamborough, *The Little World of Man*, p. 36.

54. Rogers, *A Philosophical Discourse*, sig. C5^r.
55. Cicero? *Rhetorica*, 3.16.37.
56. Landreth, pp. 54–58, interrogates at length the hylomorphic implications of coins and money in the Mammon episode, without considering for once its cognitive implications even though he purports to examine memory.
57. Helfer, p. 195.
58. Hamilton, pp. 14–15.
59. The House of Trade eventually delivered the treasure to its owners. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
60. The faculty was thought to have a short-term capacity to store images, since it retained phantasms longer than the common sense did. Boughner, p. 93.
61. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, p. 85; Cicero, *On the Orator*, 1.18; Cicero? *Rhetorica*, 3.16.28. In Renaissance England, it was a commonplace too. As an example, see Wilson, *Art of Rhetoric*, p. 233.
62. Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, 11.2.1.
63. Rosky, p. 53.

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Seeing God Through Spectacles: Donne's “Engines” of the Imagination

Pavneet Aulakh

[God] does all by Instruments; even in the infusing of faith, he works by the Ministry of the Gospel.—John Donne¹

These philosophers say [...] “a man who wants to understand a thing must form images in his imagination,” and such images are the spectacles of the intellect.—Girolamo Savonarola²

However technically intended the phrasing, T.S. Eliot's reference to John Donne's “telescoping of images” draws on a conceit that stretches back to the earliest definitions of metaphysical poetry.³ Albeit less admiringly, Samuel Johnson had himself likened the mechanics of Donne's verse to Newtonian experiments in optics when he compared his “analytick” method to the “dissect[ing]” of “a sun beam with a prism.”⁴ Whether appreciative or critical, appraisals of Donne's poetry have mined the same philosophical vein that enriched his thought. The *Anniversaries* are a

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M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_10

familiar touchstone for scholars examining his engagement with contemporary science; but his verse epistle, “To Mr Tilman after he had Taken Orders,” evidences the extent to which the field of optics, in particular, animated his thought as a poet and representative of the Anglican church.⁵

The poem begins with a dizzying series of similitudes probing how Tilman’s entry into the ministry has altered him. Does his “mind” like “steel / Touched with a lodestone [...] new motions feel”?⁶ Or is he composed of “the same materials as before,” and “[o]nly the stamp is changèd,” just “as new-crownèd kings alter the face / But not the money’s substance” (13–16)? As in Donne’s casting of the imagination’s anticipation of seeing God face to face as “so undeterminable” if it “should goe about to thinke now, what I shall be there” (9.89), the poem’s initiating, scattered imaginings index a cognitive constraint in trying to conceive an alteration that “surmount[s] expression” (25). Its concluding lines, however, transition to a clear-sighted apprehension of the attributes Tilman now enjoys. Just as Mary bore Christ, “preachers,” the speaker affirms:

convey him, for they do
As angels out of clouds from pulpits speak,
And bless the poor beneath, the lame, the weak.
If then th’astronomers, whenas they spy
A new-found star, their optics magnify,
How brave are those who with their engines can
Bring man to Heav’n, and Heav’n again to man! (42–48)

Literalizing his figuring of the “Ministry of the Gospel,” in the above-quoted 1628 Easter-day sermon, as an “Instrumen[t]” revealing “Gods picture,” these lines accord preachers the power to “enabl[e] proximity rather than”—as Donne’s pun at line 45 suggests—the “mere magnification” generated by Galileo’s “spyglass.”⁷

Even, however, if these “engines” excel contemporary astronomical devices, they nonetheless similarly equip the ministry with a corrective prosthesis that remedies the limitations of, and errors endemic to, human perception. Just as the “optics” of “th’astronomers” supersede human vision, Donne’s “engines” offer an enhanced analog to rhetoric. Like the latter, they “make absent and remote things present” to the “understanding” (4.87); and as instruments simulating the experience of flight, they offer a supernatural advancement upon the “Figure of Transport,” George Puttenham’s Anglicization of metaphor.⁸ Whereas the speaker’s

imagination cannot initially achieve the success of even astronomers' "optics" (concerning agriculture, vinting, mercantilism, coining, magnetics, and painting, its imaginings are decidedly sublunary), the spectacles lent by God's ministry collapse the distance between heaven and earth. While the former expresses itself with all the uncertainty of the interrogative mood and the imprecision of mere similitudes, which according to Robert Hooke only afford a "grop[ing] [...] in the dark," the movement into metaphor at "engines" resolves the speaker's "undeterminable [...] imaginings" (9.89).⁹ In other words, if the poem's images begin in the manner elucidated by Amy Cooper's chapter in this volume, that is by frustrating comprehension, its optics finally click into focus as the speaker's instruments are subsumed by Tilman's divinely powered "engines." As the speaker finally recognizes, the preacher's vision corrects and enlarges his own.

When Donne himself stood in the pulpit, an office he assumed at least three years prior to his writing of this poem, he too fashioned himself as a prosthetic "bringing God," as he puts it in a 1622 sermon, "into the eyes of man" (4.164). Noralyn Masselink has argued that the "striking images" he employed in his ministry afforded his audiences "a 'looking glass of creation'"; while she has a mirror in mind, Thomas Carew's "An Elegie upon the Death of the Deane of Pauls, Dr. John Donne" suggests that he worked less like a reflective lens than one capable of extending their understanding beyond its natural limits.¹⁰ Celebrating Donne's "open[ing]" of a "Mine / Of rich and pregnant phansie," he eulogizes "the flame" of his "brave Soule," which

shot such heat and light,
As burnt our earth, and made our darknesse bright,
Committed holy Rapes upon our Will,
Did through the eye the melting heart distill;
And the deepe knowledge of darke truths so teach,
As sense might judge, what phansie could not reach.¹¹

Through his visceral and violent figures, Carew attributes to Donne the very "verball violence" the latter identified in a 1619 sermon as "The way of Rhetorique": having "melted" the understanding's "former apprehensions and opinions," Donne "stamp[s] and imprint[s] new formes, new images, new opinions" (2.282) within the minds of his audiences. But, as in "To Mr Tilman," Carew does not attend to the words spoken in the

pulpit; instead, he translates Donne's imaginative faculty into a phantasmatic prosthesis that forces itself upon the "Will" to cultivate "deepe knowledge."

Easily lost within Carew's metaphorical fireworks is that in his preaching Donne's "brave Soule" functioned like a telescope of such power that its concentrated light could liquify viewers' hearts. Illuminating "darknesse," it supplants the audience's eyes. Rather than working on the latter, it reduces them to a mere conduit through which it travels to advance the audience's understanding. If, according to Ofer Gal and Raz Chen-Morris, Galileo understood the telescope to be an "Eye of the Mind," an "extension of reason" instead of an ocular prosthetic "bound to the external world," then Carew figures Donne's "Giant Phansie" as a surrogate faculty, one that bypasses the visual organ to serve, in Girolamo Savonarola's words, as "spectacles of the intellect."¹² Where the "phansie" of his audience falls short, Donne's displaces, and extends, their inner sight.

With their complementary focus on a sermon's affordance of transportive vision beyond natural, perceptual boundaries, both poems invite a more expansive conception of Donne's "Engines." The latter do not only refer to the rhetorical devices of metaphor, a "presencing machine," as Kimberly Johnson evocatively frames his usage of this figure, or catachresis, "the conceit that activates the eye of the mind," according to Katrin Ettenhuber, to carry one "to places that the artful mimesis of nature simply cannot reach."¹³ His "Engines," that is, are not simply artificial instruments he commands. Rather, the complex of associations and meanings generated by the early modern usage of the word's Latin etymon, *ingenium*, which include innate disposition as well as mental operations dependent on the imagination and memory, suggests that the preacher is himself an "engine."¹⁴ "Bring[ing] man to Heav'n, and Heav'n again to man," he uses his divinely refashioned "wit" to "convey" Christ to his audiences, not only by communicating God's "Word" but also by serving as the medium for its transmission.¹⁵ Simultaneously instrument and instrumentalist, he embodies the Keplerian optics underwriting Galileo's theorization of the telescope to become, according to the metaphor concluding "To Mr Tilman," "a bless'd hermaphrodite" (54). Just as Galileo framed the telescope as a superior, surrogate eye, a medium *and* maker of images free of the distortion produced by its human counterpart, he is simultaneously both an eye-piece, or lens, through which audiences see, and substitute inner eye generating representations to stock their memory and to stimulate their understanding.¹⁶

Both "An Elegie" and "To Mr Tilman" thus imagine Donne and his pulpit peers as performing the role traditionally assigned to the imagination in pre-modern faculty psychology, according to which it was not only "indispensable to human perception and cognition" but surpassed in importance only by the intellect.¹⁷ To requote Savonarola: "a man who wants to understand a thing must form images in his imagination,' and such images are the spectacles of the intellect." Such mental representations in worship, however, would become increasingly problematic after the Reformation: it was not just, as Savonarola himself acknowledged, that the imagination's vulnerability to the effects of the passions rendered it unreliable, but the risk of mental idolatry it posed. According to Stuart Clark, concerns over the latter even surpassed for English reformers the threat prompted by the abuse of material images: where "[m]ental imagining—and the *phantasia* in general—had to be relied on in every other context," its use "in religious worship [...] became not just imperfect but highly dangerous."¹⁸

It is precisely this context that makes all the more striking Donne's privileging of the inner senses of memory and imagination over the intellect. Beginning with an examination of his 1619 "Sermon of Valediction," in which he reimagines Bernard of Clairvaux's figuring of the memory as "the stomach of the soul" (2.236) as, instead, a "Gallery [...] hang'd with so many, and so lively pictures" of God's mercies (2.237), the sections that follow attend to Donne's cultivation of a corrective imagination that collaborates with memory to rectify the understanding and will. Beyond locating the source of devotional errancy in the higher faculties, Donne's sermons, I argue, exercise his audience's sensitive souls by populating their memories with images that both foster their understanding and facilitate a seeing of God.

DONNE'S GALLERY OF THE SOUL

For all their considerable attention to the mechanics of vision, visual representation, and seeing God both darkly and face-to-face, Donne's sermons do not dwell on the imaginative faculty. More often, he focuses on the Augustinian "rational trinity" joining memory, will, and the understanding.¹⁹ He does, nonetheless, frequently acknowledge—albeit in passing—the imagination's centrality to knowledge making, as well as its propensity for perversion.

Targeting, for example, the Roman Church in a 1616 sermon delivered at Paul's Cross, he asserts its having "imagin'd (rather dream't of)" a spiritual purity whereby "the soul is abstracted [...] from the ordinary way of coming to know any thing." Believing in "an immediate revelation from God," its understanding does not rely on "having any thing presented by the fantasie to the senses, and so to the understanding" (1.186). Similarly, in a sermon delivered 13 years later on Paul's conversion, he reintroduces the same argument against a Roman faith in unmediated knowledge. It "dreaemes," he urges, of "such an identification with God in this life," that it "understands all things, not by benefit of the senses, and impressions in the fancy and imagination, or by discourse and racioncination, as we poore soules doe" (9.169).

While the Roman Church, for Donne, suffers from a peculiarly disruptive imagination, a dreaming, that dispels with the cognitive necessity of this faculty, everyone is still susceptible to the manipulations of an errant fancy. Those "Imaginations" related to "sinnefull desires," derive from "tentations presented" to the "fancy or senses" and are then "come to be a formall and debated thought"; and "all these imaginations they are evill" (2.153). Even in more innocent circumstances, the imagination can distort reality. In his "Sermon of Valediction," delivered just before he left for Germany as a member of the Doncaster Mission, Donne goes even further than Shakespeare's Theseus in figuring the imagination as a visual echo-chamber where misperceptions multiply in a chain reaction through the figure of gradatio: "To him that travails by night a bush seems a tree, and a tree seems a man, and a man a spirit; nothing hath the true shape to him" (2.239).

In those moments, that is, that he directly names the imaginative faculty, he rehearses familiar arguments within the tradition of faculty psychology concerning both its role in "the ordinary way of coming to know any thing" and also its proclivity for delusion. Moreover, he associates the latter, observes Paul Harland, with non-conformists both within and outside the Anglican establishment: "heretics, papists, and separatists—those who have not allowed the imagination to be governed by anything more worthy than narrow beliefs or personal feelings."²⁰

When, however, Donne engages with this faculty's more recuperative potential, as in the same Lincoln's Inn sermon where he glances at its capacity for perceptual error, he does so indirectly and in ways that challenge our conventional understanding of the Reformation's privileging of words over images by charging memory and imagination with the power to remedy the frailties of human will and understanding. If not exactly a

telescope, Donne nonetheless emerges in this "Sermon of Valediction" as much a forger of images as their curator, guiding his audience through a gallery of his own ingenious imagining. Though chiefly addressing memory in its meditation on Ecclesiastes 12.1, "Remember now thy creator in the dayes of thy youth," the sermon's visual focus nonetheless underscores Donne's conception of remembering as a process that exercises the eye of the mind.²¹

Initiating the sermon with a claim for memory's instrumentality in providing "the holy-Ghost [...] the neerest way to bring a man to God" (2.235), Donne proceeds to cite Bernard of Clairvaux in his delineation of this faculty and its effects:

The memory, sayes St. *Bernard*, is the stomach of the soul, it receives and digests, and turns into good blood, all the benefits formerly exhibited to us in particular, and exhibited to the whole Church of God. (2.236)

Donne is referring here to Bernard's 36th sermon on the *Song of Songs*, which concerns the necessity of both self-knowledge and book learning to salvation. In explaining how to pursue the latter profitably—with the intention of charity and spiritual improvement rather than personal ambition as the aim—Bernard likens the stomach to the memory to caution against the disorderly pursuit of knowledge:

Food that is badly cooked and indigestible induces physical disorders and damages the body instead of nourishing it. In the same way if a glut of knowledge stuffed in the memory, that stomach of the mind, has not been cooked on the fire of love, and transfused and digested by certain skills of the soul [...] will not that knowledge be reckoned sinful, like the food that produces irregular and harmful humors?²²

Paul's "knowledge puffs up" becomes here a physical bloating that can only be avoided by first directing learning away from one's own appetites and toward "the welfare of oneself or one's neighbor."²³ Of greater importance, therefore, and indeed preliminary to all else is a knowledge of the self. It is this understanding, generated by an unflinching, self-examination of one's fallen nature and utter dependence on God, that will make him "visible to you[.] [...] And you, gazing confidently on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, will be transformed into that same image with ever increasing brightness, by the work of the Spirit of the Lord."²⁴

With its extended (might we say “metaphysical”?) development of its analogy, in addition to its figuring of learning as an embodied process, Bernard’s stomach-as-memory is precisely the kind of comparison we might expect Donne to mine for all its potential. Yet, within 39 lines of having introduced it, he offers his audience a “bold” recasting of his borrowed conceit. Instead of a stomach, Donne redesignates the memory as

the Gallery of the soul, hang’d with so many, and so lively pictures of the goodness and mercies of thy God to thee, as that every one of them shall be a catachism to thee, to instruct thee in all thy duties to him for those mercies: And as a well made, and well plac’d picture, looks alwayes upon him that looks upon it; so shall thy God look upon thee, whose memory is thus contemplating him, and shine upon thine understanding, and rectifie thy will too. (2.237)

Even as the passage echoes Bernard in its imagined exchange of glances between deity and worshiper, Donne radically alters his source.

Flirting with mental idolatry, he likens God to “a well made, and well plac’d picture” that produces the optical illusion of looking upon a viewer regardless of their positioning.²⁵ Moreover, he relocates and refigures Bernard’s memory. From an active stomach digesting one’s studies, it has become a static gallery “present[ed]” (2.237) by the imagination with iconic representations of national significance. These include the Reformation of the Church, England’s victory against the Spanish Armada, and the prevention of the Gunpowder Plot, as well as objects smaller and more intimate in nature. If the former “be too large pictures for thy gallery, for thy memory,” Donne counsels, then everyone can avail themselves of more personal mementos: for “every man hath a pocket picture about him, a manuall, a bosome book, and if he will turn over but one leaf” he can “remember what God hath done for him even since yesterday” (2.238). Even as the passage echoes Bernard in its imagined exchange of glances between deity and worshiper, Donne radically alters his source.

In reimaging Bernard’s “stomach of the soul,” Donne rejects a conceit he consistently gravitates toward in his devotional writings (“of all bodily operations,” John Carey notes, “digestion [...] seems to have fascinated him the most”).²⁶ His redefining of the memory as a gallery nonetheless reassigns digestion to the imagination, which Pierre de La Primaudaye termed “the mouth of the vessel of memorie” that “digests” what the senses transmit.²⁷ It also aligns with classical treatments of this faculty. Plato, for example, likens the imagination to “an artist” drawing

"pictures of objects perceived in the soul." Similarly, Aristotle, in *On Memory and Reminiscence*, compares the mental representation generated by one's sensory experience to a "picture painted on a panel [which] is at once a picture and a likeness."²⁸ Beyond conforming to this tradition, his revision also channels his own material and intellectual investment in the visual arts, including devotional representations, such as the Titian portrait he owned of the Virgin Mary, Christ, and St. John.²⁹

Donne's interest extended, however, beyond his remarkable—particularly given his status—collection of paintings. As his sermons witness, he had a connoisseur's eye attentive not only to aesthetics but tricks of perspective.³⁰ In a sermon on the penitential psalms, for example, he returns to the conceit he employs in his Valediction sermon. Figuring "Gods whole Ordinance in his Church" as "Gods face," Donne urges: "The whole Congregation sees God face to face, in the Service, in the Sermon, in the Sacrament," and there is "an eye in that face, an eye in that Service, an eye in that Sermon, an eye in that Sacrament" that as in a "well made Picture doth alwaies looke upon him, that lookes upon it" (9.367–68). Similarly, in his first sermon delivered at Paul's Cross, on Proverbs 22.11 ("He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips, the King shall be his friend"), he invokes the craft of anamorphic representation in likening this verse to "one of those Tables [pictures], in which, by changing the station, and the line, you use to see two pictures" (1.183).

If the optical tricks generated by perspectival play in contemporary visual art ultimately undermined the reliability of the eye by highlighting its vulnerability to "radical visual uncertainty," this did not diminish Donne's embrace of imaginative representation as a mnemonic aid.³¹ It was precisely the latter quality, in fact, that governed his defense of its use within not only domestic spaces but also the Church. Counterintuitively marshaling Calvin's *Institutes* and the 1559 Elizabethan *Injunctions* (taking, as Ernest Gilman and Patterson note, some "astonishing liberties" with his sources)³² to defend painting in a 1627 sermon on Hosea 3.4, he concedes, "that where there is a frequent preaching, there is *no necessity* of pictures," before adding:

as Remembrancers of that which hath been taught in the Pulpit, they may be retained[.] [...] being taught the right use of these pictures [...] no man amongst us, is any more [...] endangered to worship a picture in a Wall or Window of the Church, then if he saw it in a Gallery. (7.432)

Lincoln's Inn's chapel was since the Reformation of course devoid of images, at least those associated with Roman practice.³³ There was also "frequent preaching." That said, Donne's sermon on the verse "Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth" suggests an alternative reading of his paraphrase of Calvin's *Institutes*. There is "no necessity of pictures" because the preacher supplies them, and not just in crucifying Christ "before" the "eyes" of an audience "by the true preaching of the Gospel," as Calvin argued in his dismissal of visual "images" as "the books of the unlearned."³⁴ Rather, he does so by exercising the imaginations and memory of his congregation. In their service as "*Remembrancers*," such hypothetical "pictures" invite a welcome return to Donne's own "lively" images, those gathered within "the Gallery of the Soul."

Even as Donne insists in his Valediction sermon that he will not take the subject of "remembering so largely" but restrict himself to "that one faculty, the memory" (2.236), the sermon as a whole nonetheless indicates his simultaneous cultivation of, and reliance on, the faculty of the imagination. This is of course not surprising given the interrelation of these inner senses within the period. Of the three varieties of imagination itemized by Bacon in the tenth book of the *Sylva Sylvarum*, which largely concerns this mental operation, "the second" is "joined with memory of that which is past."³⁵ Drawing upon its application "in the art of memory," where "images visible work better than other conceits," he suggests that one might apply this observation in the form of an experiment. Because "the more lustrous the imagination is, it filleth and fixith the better," one could test whether one might more effectively "bin[d]" the "thoughts," or imagination (he uses the two interchangeably), of another.³⁶ Likewise, in the field of rhetoric, Thomas Wilson advises that "images [...] must be made of things notable, such as may cause earnest impression of things in our mind," and points to the efficacy of vision in strengthening the memory to explain the practice of portraying "saints" to serve as "laymen's books": "sight printeth things in a man's memory," he writes, "as a seal doth print a man's name in wax."³⁷

Donne may not seek to experiment on his audience's imaginations; he does nevertheless work upon them to more firmly bind their faith. And though not necessarily directly witnessed by his auditors, as Wilson encourages, and more like block prints than "lustrous" depictions, the "things notable" and "images visible" with which he curates their memories—the Reformation of the Church, the English victory against Spain's

Armada, the foiling of the Gunpowder Plot—ground his treatment of this faculty in contemporary accounts of its dependence on the imagination, whose “workings,” Clark reminds us, “were conceived of primarily as visual processes[.] [...] It was, indeed, the ‘eye’ of the mind.”³⁸

If Donne’s integration of these two inner senses is conventional, his reorientation of these faculties vis-à-vis the intellect is nonetheless surprising, particularly in terms of his citation of Bernard. Recall that Donne, in refiguring the memory as a gallery transforms it into a repository not of one’s studies but of one’s experiences on both national and personal levels. Where reading feeds memory for Bernard and is distinguished from the private meditations that induce self-knowledge and, ultimately, a “gazing confidently on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face,” Donne transforms the memory-as-gallery into a dynamic medium facilitating an exchange of glances between God and worshipper. Even more importantly, while Bernard’s treatment of memory not only highlights the benefits of its role as an assimilating organ but also warns against its vulnerability to mismanagement, Donne forgoes the opportunity to rehearse standard arguments leveled against the imagination. Instead, he partners both faculties in framing them as cognitive safeguards against mental indigestion. The understanding and will, not the imagination, occasion error and require correction.

Like Bernard, Donne begins his Valediction sermon with books; but whereas the former insists that the knowledge resulting from properly digested reading is “necessary for your salvation, that you cannot be saved if you lack” it, Donne severely circumscribes the utility of such textual assimilation.³⁹ Unfolding his likening of the two virtues of “Thankfulness” and “Repentance” to “Silver and Gold,” Donne clarifies:

Of Silver (of the virtue of thankfulness) there are whole Mines, books written by Philosophers, and a man may grow rich in that mettle, in that virtue, by digging in that Mine, in the Precepts of moral men; of this Gold (this virtue of Repentance) there is no Mine in the Earth; in the books of Philosophers, no doctrine of Repentance. (2.235)

It is thus in place of a non-existent philosophy of repentance that he presents the inner senses as a remedial instrument. It is not just, however, that there are no books by which Christians may “grow rich” in “this virtue of Repentance”; rather, memory is “the nearest way” to “bring a man to God” because the “understanding, that requires long and clear

instruction” (2.235) is “often perplexed” (2.237) and “the will requires an instructed understanding before, and is in it self the blindest and boldest faculty” (2.235).

Even more strikingly, Donne locates ill-digestion not within the reading of philosophy, that mine of silver, but scripture. “[P]resent any of the prophecies made in the captivity,” he counsels,

and a Jews understanding takes them for deliverances from *Babylon*, and a Christians understanding takes them for deliverances from sin and death [...] present but the name of Bishop or of elder, out of the Acts of the Apostle[s], or their Epistles, and other men will take it for a name of equality, and parity, and we for a name and office of distinction in the Hierarchy of Gods Church. Thus it is in the understanding that’s often perplexed. (2. 236–37)

Just as the intellect is “often perplexed” in interpreting God’s Word, debates over the nature of grace’s force on the will between “Jesuits and the Dominicans,” on the one hand, and the Anglican Church and “persons neerer to us,” on the other, evince for Donne the equally “untractable, and untameable” quality of that other faculty, “the wil of man” (2.237). Immediately following his citation of Bernard’s figuration of the memory as “*Stomachus animæ*” and just before his “bold” revision, Donne’s copious litany of confessional disputes underscores the rational soul’s vulnerability to the distortions produced by what Bacon classifies as the “idols of the cave” and “marketplace,” the institutional (including confessional) lenses and linguistic ambiguities that render the “intellect” an “uneven mirror.”⁴⁰

Where Bacon advances his *Novum Organum* as a prophylactic against the mind’s propensity for errancy within the “woods of experience,” Donne proffers the salvific potential of the memory and imagination.⁴¹ Shifting from interpretation to observation, or from “matter of law” to “matter of fact” (2.237), he elevates these faculties as remedies for disentangling the understanding and taming the will. In addition to facilitating repentance, they perform a double-duty in also generating the thankfulness promised by the books of philosophy:

present the history of Gods protection of his children, from the beginning, in the ark, in both captivities, in infinite dangers; present this to the memory, and howsoever the understanding be beclouded, or the will perverted, yet

both Jew and Christian, Papist and Protestant, Puritan and Protestant, are affected with a thankfull acknowledgement of his former mercies and benefits. (2.237)

Not just Sidney's "speaking *Picture[s]*," and more than the "*imagines rerum*" designed, in the medieval memory arts tradition, "to cue and trigger recollection of textual material that the reader already knows," scriptural events "*present[ed]*" by the imaginative faculty to the memory provide a gallery of catechizing images that afford a stop gap against the failures of the higher faculties.⁴² Like Savonarola's "spectacles of the intellect," Donne conjures for the members of his congregation "sensible object[s]" that, in enforcing their wills and instructing their understandings (to paraphrase Carew), "draw [them] to goodness."⁴³ Precisely for this reason, he stresses the importance of remembering God "in the days of thy youth." Whereas Savonarola counsels using the imagination to cultivate images of death so that one will not put off repenting, "because tomorrow I could die," Donne directs his audience to construct a gallery of God's mercies because there is still the opportunity for correcting the will, "the blindest and boldest faculty."⁴⁴ "[W]hen age hath made a man impotent to sin," he implores, "it is not a day of choice; but remember God now, when thou hast [...] a power to advance thyself" (2.245). Armed by Donne's regenerative imagination, the memory can substitute for the understanding to rectify the will and orient it toward God.

THE GALLERY OF THE SERMON

Discussing Christ's calling of worshipers into the Church during a 1626 sermon, Donne specifies that "this *calling*, implies a voice, as well as a Word." Christ does call men and women to him "by the Word; but not by the Word read at home, though that be a pious exercise; nor by the word submitted to private interpretation; but *by the Word preached*" (7.157). His privileging of an understanding of scripture mediated through the Church certainly responds to the real, contemporary threat of "private interpretation"; but, as Arnold Hunt documents, the view was not entirely unconventional among Protestant, especially Puritan, authors, some of whom similarly stressed that "powerfull preaching" was of greater efficacy than "the bare reading of the Word."⁴⁵ Nonetheless, I want to suggest that the greater efficacy of "*the Word Preached*," for Donne at least, equally derives from his simultaneous recognition of the understanding's

frailty and his conception of preaching as an engine activating not just an audience's inner senses and ears but also their eyes.

In his 1628 sermon on Paul's "For now we see through a glasse darkly," Donne exhorts: "At home, the holy Ghost is with thee [...] as a Remembrancer." What he recalls each audience member to is what they learned in church, what they heard and saw: "First learne at Church," he advises, "and then meditate at home, Receive the seed by hearing the Scriptures interpreted here, and water it by returning to those places at home" (8.227). "[P]laces" refers in part to the scriptural passages, or commonplaces, Donne takes as his text in his sermons.⁴⁶ As textual blocks reiterated throughout a pulpit performance, they attain a "substantiality" that, for Judith Anderson, extends their individual members beyond a simply indexical function until they become, in Terence Cave's phrasing, "word-things" perfect for lodging within the designated places of a memory theater.⁴⁷ And just as in the memory arts tradition, anchoring and illuminating such verbal objects were the "lively pictures" Donne supplied his audience with.

Extending our understanding of those "places" beyond the lodgings of the mnemonic images Donne transmitted and the textual objects crafted through his preaching, we might also consider the spaces of the latter's impressive performance: Lincoln's Inn, St. Paul's Cathedral, Whitehall, Paul's Cross. While the "Gallery of the soul," with its historical representations, invites us into chambers designated for "well made, and well plac'd" works of visual art that reveal a "picture of God [...] in great" or "litle" (4.177), a "gallery" also applies to more dynamic sites, such as those used for early modern sermons, where bodies themselves were equally on display and available as "*Remembrancers*."⁴⁸

Deaths Duell, Donne's final sermon, in which he nominates himself "the *Master peece* of the greatest *Master*" (10.232), stages the dramatic and memorable presentation of his own failing body's visual spectacle as a devotional aid. But members of his audience could also pose for "pocket picture[s]" worthy of preservation.⁴⁹ In, for example, his first Paul's Cross sermon, commemorating the anniversary of Elizabeth's passing and James's ascension to the throne and delivered before "the Lords of the Council and other Honorable Persons" (1.183), one particular attendee offered a visual memento embodying the veracity of the scriptural passage Donne took as his text: "He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips, the King shall be his friend." This verse, Donne declares, is easier to "interpret and apply [...] because we have seen these things performed

by those Princes [Elizabeth and James] whom God hath set over us" (1.216). The presence of Francis Bacon, who had been appointed Lord Keeper on March 7th, not even three weeks prior to this sermon's delivery, would have provided Donne's audience with as "lively" a "picture" as one could desire of the King's friendship rewarding the conjoining of "pureness of heart" and "grace" of "lips."

As briefly noted in the previous section, Donne begins by likening the scriptural passage he examines to an anamorphic painting; this conceit, however, equally applies to his sermon's composition. Nowhere does he mention Bacon by name. Indeed, he primarily reads Proverbs 22.11 as portraying "two pictures, [...] a good picture of a good King, and of a good subject" (1.183). The likenesses of the former are fully realized in a diptych portraying Elizabeth and James; the "picture [...] of a good subject," however, remains a faceless model applicable to anyone who joins "pureness of heart," or religious devotion, to "grace of lips," a commitment to serving the state. Indeed, he uses the occasion to encourage his audience to achieve this very ideal. Those in attendance would nonetheless have had little difficulty in seeing the new Lord Keeper in Donne's words. In addition to occasionally deploying a Baconian aphoristic flourish, he also reminds his audience of the distinction Bacon just achieved in observing that "God never called any man friend, but him to whom he gave a *change of name*, and honorable additions" (1.212).⁵⁰ R.C. Bald reasonably conjectures that when Donne expresses his gratefulness to God for "raising Ministers of State, so qualified, and so endowed; and such Princes have fastned their friendships, and conferred their favors upon such persons" (1.217), many in the audience would have turned their eyes toward Bacon to acknowledge the fact.⁵¹ Certainly, earlier in the sermon, when Donne warns his audience that "[t]he Fathers former labors shall not excuse their Sons future idleness; as the Father hath, so the Son must glorifie God, and contribute to the world, in some settled course" (1.208), they would have been reminded that Bacon indeed had so perfectly followed his father's "settled course" as to be awarded the same office Nicholas Bacon held under Elizabeth.

Beyond displaying the rhetorical mastery of taking full advantage of his audience and occasion, this early sermon's magnification of Bacon's visibility illustrates simply but also suggestively how effectively Donne could instrumentalize the experience of sermon going to make the "darknesse" of entangled understandings "bright." In transforming him into a "pocket picture" to "bring," not Bacon but God's Word "more lively" to his

attendees' "memories," Donne's anamorphic sermon furbishes the galleries of their souls with a "Remembrancer" that can better guide their wills. In its wedding of scriptural text and image, it also suggests an alternative, more figurative gloss on Donne's defense of the "the right use" of visual art. This sermon might, that is, be read as a "manuall" on the proper use of the pictures drawn by the imagination. Applying what "we have seen" (the new Lord Keeper's achievement) to the interpretation of scripture, it models how to convert the images generated by the imagination's processing of sensory experience into emblematic representations of God's Word so that it can display them within "the Gallery of the soul." By means of these faculties, one can see the divine, as he put it in a 1622 sermon on Job 36.25 ("Every man may see it, man may behold it afar off"), "at any distance" regardless of where one or God is (4.175).

NOTES

1. Donne, *The Sermons of John Donne*, 8.233. All further references to this edition will be cited parenthetically by volume and page number.
2. Savonarola, "The Art of Dying Well," p. 43.
3. Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets," p. 193.
4. Johnson, *Lives of the English Poets*, p. 21.
5. Arguing that "glass" serves as "the quintessential medium" in Donne's writings, Trina Hyun concentrates on the importance of optics to his theology and poetic imagination. Hyun, "Donne's Media Theology," p. 822. For more on Donne and astronomical instruments, see Bonác's "Observing the World through Donne's Telescope."
6. Donne, "To Mr Tilman," lines 5, 7–8. All further references to this poem will be cited parenthetically by line number.
7. Hyun, p. 831.
8. Pattenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, p. 263.
9. Hooke, *Micrographia*, p. 114.
10. Masselink, "Donne's Epistemology and the Appeal to Memory," p. 63.
11. Carew, "An Elegie," lines 37–38, lines 14–20.
12. Gal and Chen-Morris, *Baroque Science*, p. 96, p. 95, p. 94; Carew, "An Elegie," line 52.
13. Johnson, *Made Flesh*, p. 90; Etenhuber, "Comparisons are Odious?" p. 412.
14. On the meanings of *ingenium* in the Humanist tradition and its repurposing in Bacon's philosophy, see Lewis's "Francis Bacon and Ingenuity."
15. *Oxford English Dictionary*, "engine, n.," 3a; *Ibid.*, "convey, v.1," 9d, 8.
16. Gal and Chen-Morris, pp. 79–101.

17. Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 44.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
19. Harland, "Imaginations and Affections," p. 33. Perhaps for this reason, scholars have tended to focus, as Harland suggests, on the understanding, will, and memory rather than the imagination.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
21. Even as they were believed to occupy different parts of the brain, the imagination and memory were recognized as functionally contiguous. For example, Robert Burton attributes the capacity of recollection to the imagination, which "examine[s] the species [...] of things present or absent, and keeps them longer, *recalling* them to mind again, or making new of his own" (emphasis added). Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 159.
22. Bernard, *On the Song of Songs*, pp. 176–77.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 176.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
25. Responding to this passage, Annabel Patterson asks: "How can this be, in an iconoclastic church?" Patterson, "Donne in Shadows," p. 15.
26. Carey, *John Donne*, p. 254. For an example, see Anton Bergstrom's discussion of "concoction" in this volume.
27. La Primaudaye, qtd. in Roychoudhury, *Phantasmatic Shakespeare*, p. 11. In a sermon delivered a month prior to leaving on the Doncaster Mission, Donne similarly associates inner reflection with digestion in instructing that "good digestion brings alwaies assimilation, certainly, if I come to a true meditation upon Christ, I come to a conformity with Christ." (2.212).
28. Clark, p. 46; Aristotle, qtd. in Clark, p. 15.
29. Stirling, "Dr. Donne's Art Gallery," p. 67.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 68–74. For further examinations of Donne's collection of paintings and the medium's importance to his writings, see Patterson, "Donne in Shadows," and Gilman, *Iconoclasm and Poetry in the English Reformation*, pp. 120–21.
31. Clark, p. 109. Thinking through, and with, Rosalie Colie's *Paradoxia epidemica* (1966), Clark acknowledges that experimenting with "visual illusion [...] did not simply cause anxiety," but could also, as Donne's sermons demonstrate, be devotionally generative. *Ibid.*
32. Patterson, p. 24; Gilman, p. 119.
33. Ettenhuber, *Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne*, p. xxiii.
34. Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.11.7.
35. Bacon, *The Works of Francis Bacon*, p. 654.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 659. Frances Yates quotes this passage to highlight the persistence of a belief, even within the emergent "new philosophy," in the power of the mnemonic image to work upon the imagination. Yates, *The Art of Memory*, p. 359.

37. Wilson, *The Art of Rhetoric*, p. 237, p. 240.
38. Clark, p. 46.
39. Bernard, p. 179.
40. Bacon, *The Instauration Magna*, p. 81.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
42. Sidney, *The Prose Works of Philip Sidney*, vol. 3, p. 9; Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, p. 285.
43. Savonarola, p. 45, p. 44.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
45. Charles Richardson, *A Workeman, that Needeth not to be Ashamed: or the Faithfull Steward of Gods House* (1615), qtd. in Hunt, *The Art of Hearing*, p. 27.
46. *Oxford English Dictionary*, “commonplace, n.2 and adj.,” 3b.
47. Anderson, *Words That Matter*, p. 222, p. 211; Cave, *Cornucopian Text*, p. 21.
48. *Oxford English Dictionary*, “gallery, n.” 3b.
49. On Donne’s incorporation of his audience into his sermon performances, see Gifford’s “Time and Place in Donne’s Sermons.”
50. Donne’s “It is a degree of wisdom to seem wise. To be able to hold the world in opinion that one is great with the King, is a degree of greatness” (1.213) would feel right at home in Bacon’s *Essays*, as would the exemplum he draws from natural history: “We know, that in Nature, and in Art, the strongest bodies are compact of the least particles, because they shut best, and lie closest together” (1.196).
51. Bald, *John Donne: A Life*, p. 323.

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“A Work of Fancy”: World-Making Imagination as an Art of Memory in Margaret Cavendish’s *Blazing World*

Rebecca Helfer

In her introductory epistle “To the Reader,” Margaret Cavendish explains why she published the fictional *Blazing World* with her scientific *Observations on Natural Philosophy*, as if “joined [...] as two Worlds at the ends of their poles.” She defends her unorthodox coupling of science and fiction: “You might wonder, that I join a work of Fancy to my serious Philosophical Contemplations,” as though it “were but a Fiction of the Mind” or indeed “merely Fiction” (59–60).¹ The term “fancy”—a contraction of “fantasy” that is often used synonymously with imagination—figures centrally here, and it would seem to describe *Blazing World* perfectly. This fanciful work tells the story of a “Lady” of the romance genre, first kidnapped and then shipwrecked on the shores of the Blazing World, who quickly becomes the “Empress” of this brave new world inhabited by strange animal men, over whom she rules; more importantly,

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Switzerland AG 2024

M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_11

it tells the story of the fantastical friendship between the “Empress” and the “Duchess” of Newcastle, who shares Cavendish’s name and occupation, and whose homeland mirrors Cavendish’s own. Yet the phrase “work of Fancy” itself complicates how we see *Blazing World*: it can refer both to a process of faculty psychology and to a fictional product, both the activity of Cavendish’s mind-at-work and the completed work before us. Beyond the confluence of “Fancy” as form and faculty, Cavendish further complicates how readers should understand her fiction. “Whereas philosophy pursues the truth of nature,” she explains, “*Fictions* are an issue of mans Fancy, framed in his own Mind [...] whether – or not – the thing, he fancies, be really existent without his mind or not” (59). Although she first asserts a fundamental difference—“the end of Reason, is Truth; the end of Fancy, is Fiction”—she quickly overturns her own sharp distinction: “But mistake me not, when I distinguish *Fancy* from *Reason*,” for “*Fancy* is a voluntary creation or production of the Mind” joined to the “rational part of Matter” (59). Cavendish thus reasons that reason itself depends upon fancy, for the “more laborious and difficult” pursuit of “*Reason*” also “requires sometimes the help of Fancy, to recreate the Mind, and withdraw it from its more serious contemplations,” citing her need to “divert” herself from “studious thoughts” (59–60).

For Cavendish, reason is not separate from fancy, nor does her use of the word “fancy” itself fully capture what “imagination” means in her complex fiction, a word that she uses most frequently to describe her world-making mind-in-action. This chapter builds upon Cavendish’s initial intertwining of reason and fancy to argue that *Blazing World* works to “recreate the Mind” not in the sense of a restorative diversion from serious thought but rather as a fictional recreation, representation, or—perhaps most importantly—a *recollection* of Cavendish’s imaginative faculty at work. Such imaginative recreation, I will argue, depends extensively on memory, specifically Cavendish’s complex engagement with the art of memory tradition.² Cavendish makes use of the art of memory to create *Blazing World* in two interlocking ways: first, she uses the model of mnemonic architecture to build locations and images, constructing the work itself as a kind of memory theater; and second, she uses the art of memory as a poetics of ruin and recollection as dramatized in the art’s origin story; as an art of storytelling grounded in the remembrance of the dead; and as the recreation of the past for new purposes. The *matter* of *Blazing World*’s recollection, I suggest, is the ruins of the English Civil Wars; the *method* of its recollection is a fusion of fact and fiction, history and story, found

throughout the art of memory tradition. Indeed, the framing fiction of *Blazing World* is that it is a memorial, a recreation of past events. Cavendish demonstrates her different uses of the art of memory in metatheatrical fashion: she dramatizes the creation of *Blazing World* as a memory theater through her multiple dramatic personae as "Empress," "Duchess," and "Authoress," remembering and recreating the "work" of their world-building imaginations. *Blazing World* may thus be understood as both an imaginary location and the location of the imagination: readers encounter both a fictional world and the real cognitive process whereby Cavendish creates it.

In *Blazing World*, Cavendish demonstrates how her "literary imagination is [...] embodied," as Deanna Smid describes it in her important study of the early modern imagination.³ Cavendish does so through her three authorial personae, each of whom is and is not equivalent to the author. In the interrelation of these three avatars, reason and fancy—order and fiction, history and stories about it—work with memory in complex ways to embody her imaginative world-building. In the epistle, she first suggests how her imaginary world is joined to the real world that she recreates:

I am not Covetous, but as Ambitious as every any of my Sex was, is, or can be; which makes, though I cannot be *Henry* the Fifth, or *Charles* the Second, yet I endeavour to be *Margaret* the *First*; and although I have neither power, time nor occasion to conquer the world [...] I have made a World of my own. (60)

In naming herself "Margaret the First" on the model of male conquerors and princes, Cavendish playfully looks to history to recreate it in her own image. Her selection of "*Henry* the Fifth" and "*Charles* the Second" as her analogues—the first famous as both a historical hero and a dramatic character, the second a living contemporary associated with the restoration of aristocratic power—illustrates that the history she recreates is both personal and political, both fictional and factual. No simple fantasy world, *Blazing World* presents a fictional reconstruction and recuperation of the past, one that answers her "desire [...] to repair [her] Noble Lord and Husband's Losses" during the English Civil Wars, a historical restoration reflecting the historical era of the Restoration (60). Cavendish echoes this conceit in her epilogue, giving the work a fictional frame as that of true story, suggesting that *Blazing World* is a memorial recreation of the past.

Here the “Authoress” affirms, “By this Poetical Description, you may perceive, that my ambition is not only to be Empress, but Authoress of a whole World” (163). Yet she also elides the work’s fictionality by describing herself as an Empress of a “Philosophical world” distinct from the Blazing World, which is ruled “with great wisdom and conduct” by its Empress, whom she calls “my dear Platonick Friend” (163–64). The Authoress at once aligns herself with and distinguishes herself from “the figure of Honest *Margaret Newcastle*”: the figure that she “chose” to represent her, and who, within the framing fiction of the novella, both recreates the Blazing World as work of art for the Empress *and* creates her own “Imaginary World” of philosophy, over which she also rules as Empress (163). The Authoress and the Duchess thus share in the creation and recreation of the Blazing World in *Blazing World*, which in the end Cavendish represents as though it were a real world rather than a world apart from reality. Calling these three personae “the Rational figures of my Mind,” and asserting that “both the *Blazing* – and the other *Philosophical World*” are “framed and composed of [...] the rational parts of Matter, which are parts of my Mind,” Cavendish makes them figments of her imagination who enact her art of memory and the creation of a world of her own (163).

BUILDING A MEMORY THEATER

As I have suggested, Cavendish’s embodied imagination stands in relation to memory—the unnamed third term that connects reason with fancy in *Blazing World*, as it does in faculty psychology from the premodern to the early modern eras—and specifically to “the art of memory”: the ancient method of locational or place-based mnemonics most often associated with Roman rhetoric. As Frances Yates and Mary Carruthers have shown in their groundbreaking studies, the art of memory depends on imagination, most technically in the narrow sense of the mind’s image-making capacity.⁴ In order to build a “memory theater,” orators would imagine a location for memory (buildings and books, cities and constellations, etc.) and then fill it with striking, memorable images (*imagines agentes*, active and “acting” images); such images would then serve as memorial prompts for the speaker, who would need to imaginatively recreate and review this memorial structure in order to remember his speech.⁵ As the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* explains, “artificial memory includes backgrounds and images [...] such scenes as are naturally or artificially set off [...] so that we can grasp and embrace them easily by the natural memory – for example, a

house, an intercolumnar space, a recess, an arch, or the like"; into each location goes "a figure, mark, or portrait of the object we wish to remember; for example, if we wish to recall a horse, a lion, or an eagle, we must place its image in a definite background."⁶ Yet beyond the memorial buildings of the Roman rhetorical tradition lies a deeper relationship between mnemonics and imagination that goes back to Greek faculty psychology. Aristotle's work *On the Soul*, which declares that "the soul never thinks without an image," describes imagination in mnemonic terms, as connected through the mind's image-making capacity, which Aristotle compares to viewing a picture.⁷ Relatedly, in the appended tract *On Memory and Reminiscence*, Aristotle describes recollection—distinct from simple remembrance, which he also compares to conjuring images as though viewing a painting—as an art or technique: a conscious, methodical search for things past, the hunt for images by moving through space which he describes as mnemonic *loci*.⁸ In this way, the art of memory might be described as an art of the imagination, an artificial recreation or rehearsal of a natural cognitive process.

Although Cavendish never refers directly to the art of memory, her use of the rhetorical art of memory is illustrated indirectly by an episode toward the end of *Blazing World*, in which the idea of a memory theater emerges in the context of remembering an earlier conversation about theater.⁹ The Empress and the Duchess return to the Blazing World from a version of England and arrive at the "Imperial Palace," where they reunite with the Emperor and have a strange conversation about horse stables and theater (158). This moment reminds readers that the real Duke of Newcastle was an avid equestrian and the Duchess of Newcastle a prolific playwright, albeit of plays never performed; Cavendish thus concludes *Blazing World* with a symbolic return to reality and the present. The Emperor shows off his "magnificent" stable, built of implausibly opulent materials: a "Building was of Gold [...] paved with Amber, the Mangers with Mother of Pearl [...] lined with Sapphires, Topases and the like" (158–59). This description is reminiscent of not only the New Jerusalem but also the Romanesque architecture of Blazing World's capital city: "The city itself was built of Gold, and their Architectures were noble, stately, and magnificent, not like our Modern, but like those in the *Romans* time" (68). The discussion then turns from this building to the question of building a theater, as the Emperor tells the Duchess that he "desir'd her advice how to set up a Theatre for Plays" (159). Demurring, she tells him that "she knew nothing of erecting Theatres or Scenes" but what she had

seen “by an Immaterial Observation when she was with the Empress’s Soul in the chief City of *E*, entering into one of their Theatres” (159). The Duchess thus recalls her visit to a thinly veiled London theater of an earlier time and place: the Renaissance stage. As with Cavendish’s own “closet” drama, the Duchess explains that her “Playes” were never performed because she refused to follow the expected “Rules of Art” or “Artificial Rules” (160). When the Emperor asserts his preference for the “Natural, not Artificial,” the Duchess promises that “my Playes may be acted in your Blazing-World [...] the next time I come to visit your Majesty, [and] I shall endeavor to order your Majesties Theatre” (160). The Empress adds that “she loved a foolish farce added to a wise Play,” to which the Duchess replies that she need look no further: “No World in Nature had fitter Creatures for it then the Blazing-World; for, said she, the [...] Fox-men, the Ape-men and Satyrs appear in a Farce extraordinary pleasant” (160). In the end, the Duchess promises this future recreation by creating a play about the Blazing World for the Emperor’s theater—a promise clearly realized in *Blazing World* itself.

This conversation indirectly turns upon memory and evokes the architectural mnemonic. Their encounter makes clear how the buildings and inhabitants of the Blazing World match the directions found in the *Ad Herennium*. While the Emperor’s palace and the capital city evoke the Roman architecture of clearly demarcated spaces that a memory theater requires, the strange animal “inhabitants of that World” recall the *Ad Herennium*’s examples of active, enacting images—“if we wish to recall a horse, a lion, or an eagle,” etc.—and its advice for creating memorable images by making them surprising and striking: erotic, violent, comic, absurd, etc., or a combination therein, a composite allegorical image.¹⁰ The Duchess’s vow to build a theater in which to perform a play about the Blazing World is thus at once retrospective and prospective, both a reminder of the completed work of art and a reframing of it as a memory theater to come. And yet the Duchess’s stated rejection of the “Artificial Rules” of theater also suggests that *Blazing World* is not simply built upon the established rules of the art of memory; rather, Cavendish is renovating an old form, remaking it for her new world. Anita Gilman Sherman, in her brilliant analysis of the art of memory in *Blazing World*, sees Cavendish as “reoccupying memory palaces” as an expression of her skeptical fancies, “assert[ing] the power of her identity over the memory of the future by adapting memorial *loci*

and *imagines agentes*, using them to preserve her own legacy," an argument that my essay builds upon.¹¹

In fashioning *Blazing World* as a memory theater in which her dramatic personae embody and enact her world-making imagination, Cavendish also remembers the past of the art of memory itself, an intellectual tradition centered in Cicero's *De Oratore* but reaching back to Plato's dialogues and forward to Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*. Through her engagement with these interlocutors, Cavendish's imaginative recollection of the ruins of the past, blending history and fiction, becomes legible as a crucial part of her project to "recreate the Mind." For Cavendish, as for these earlier authors, the art of memory functions as an art of storytelling, a poetics-in-practice grounded in the remembrance of the dead—as illustrated by the origin story of the art of memory: the ancient poet Simonides's discovery of the architectural mnemonic in a ruined banquet hall. Although enshrined in the Roman rhetorical tradition as a teaching tale, the story of Simonides's discovery relates more to poetics than to rhetoric, for it demonstrates how his art of poetry becomes the art of memory, dramatizing their shared methods and the intimate relationship between art and memory. Through her own recrafting of the tale of Simonides, Cavendish rewrites the art of memory and makes it her own, adopting its methods yet insisting on her prerogative to fashion them to her own purposes.

THE ART OF MEMORY AS THE ART OF STORYTELLING

At the heart of the art of memory tradition is the myth of its origin: the discovery of locational memory by the ancient Greek poet Simonides. As the story is told in Cicero's *De Oratore*, Simonides had "recited a poem ... composed [in] praise" of his stingy patron which literally brought down the house. Because of his patron's impiety, the banquet hall collapsed and everyone was "buried in the ruins" save Simonides, who had been called out of the hall by a mysterious message immediately before; afterward, "Simonides is said, from his recollection of the place in which each had sat, to have given satisfactory directions for their interment."¹² By memorially reconstructing this ruined location and recollecting the dead within it, Simonides discovers the principles of the art of memory: he recreates the poet's performance space and audience, constructing a "memory theater" according to the use of places and images. That a poet discovers the art of memory is no surprise, for the origin story of the art of memory

dramatizes how and what the poet-in-performance remembers, and the role of imagination in his reenactment of the past. Simonides is also credited with formulating the analogy between the verbal and the visual arts, specifically the saying that “painting is silent poetry, poetry a speaking picture.” The lesson that the tale of Simonides teaches is still more complex, however, for it represents the relationship between art and memory built into the architectural mnemonic: the story of Simonides is a story about storytelling, a metafiction that portrays the poet’s art in performance. Most significantly, the tale of Simonides tells a story about history that remembers the dead and recreates the past anew. The full significance of this story to *De Oratore* becomes clear in the framing narrative, which rewrites the tale of Simonides as that of Rome’s ruin and memorial reconstruction. Cicero introduces the final day of the dialogue by lamenting the deaths of these orators amid the violence of Rome’s civil wars, which leaves them buried “in the ruins of your country.”¹³ Such “bitter remembrance” inspires Cicero’s memorial to them, complicating what it means when he writes that history is the “light of truth” and “the life of memory.”¹⁴ Acknowledging that he “was not present” for this final dialogue (ostensibly set a generation earlier), Cicero declares that he will reconstruct it from the fragments of its *loci*, which another participant has communicated to him. Cicero thus casts himself as a new Simonides, recollecting both the lost dialogue as a memorial to the dead orators and more broadly from the ruins of Rome’s history.

With this rewriting of the tale of Simonides for Roman history, Cicero also recollects two dialogues of Plato, the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*, the double model for Cicero’s engagements with memory and imagination. *De Oratore* begins with an explicit citation of the *Phaedrus*: “why should not we, Crassus, imitate Socrates in the *Phaedrus* of Plato? For this plane-tree of yours has put me in mind of it.”¹⁵ The *Phaedrus* is perhaps best known for the tale of Theuth and Socrates’s rejection of writing as a form of artificial memory that will “implant forgetfulness”—that will be a mere “reminder” rather than a true expression of memory (a deliberately ironic statement, given Plato’s memorializing of Socrates in writing).¹⁶ Here too, Socrates mocks “mnemonic verse,” but he reforms the poet’s art of memory and makes it central to the origin story of philosophy therein: an allegorical love story about wisdom and the soul’s journey from *amnesias* to *anamnesis*, from forgetfulness to remembrance, when reminded by the love of another soul.¹⁷ Structurally *De Oratore* follows most closely on the example of the *Symposium*, in which Plato rewrites the

tale of Simonides as an origin story about philosophy, memorially reconstructing a storied banquet hall from the ruins of the past, remembering the dead therein, Socrates above all. In this metafictional work of storytelling with multiple frames of remembrance, Plato redefines the philosopher as a poet, through Socrates's remembrance of his education in the philosophy of love from the prophetess Diotima, who teaches him that "every kind of artistic creation is poetry, and every artist is a poet."¹⁸ Diotima's lesson teaches that love is a desire for "immortality," a story about edification achieved by the lover of wisdom who ascends the "heavenly ladder" from physical to spiritual beauty, from bodies to souls, toward an ideal virtue.¹⁹ Memories of the Peloponnesian war (and Socrates's role therein) provide the larger frame of Athens's ruin and remembrance, and beyond this frame, Plato's memorial to Socrates symbolically recollects the ruins of the past by reconstructing this banquet hall and remembering the dead therein.

Indirectly, Cicero's reenactment of these dialogues suggests Plato's treatment of the art of memory as performance art, pointing to how he reforms the poet's art of memory for philosophy.²⁰ One important commonality between Cicero's and Plato's dialogues is the way they blend truth and fiction, or reason and fancy, in their recollection of the past. The story of the *Symposium* is narrated by someone who is retelling his earlier discussion of someone else's imperfect memory of the event; thus Diotima's love lesson, the core of the entire dialogue, is framed by multiple stages of imaginative recreation, beginning with Socrates's recollection. In similar fashion, Cicero presents the fictional dialogue of *De Oratore* as an actual event that occurred a generation before which he was not present for—as noted above—and pretends that he must reconstruct it from the words of another. The same is true of the most important Renaissance contribution to this tradition: Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, a fictional memorial to the Court of Urbino, in which lords and ladies debate the requirements of the perfect courtier in a dialogue derived both from Cicero's description of the ideal orator and from Plato's love stories about ideal wisdom. As in Cicero's and Plato's dialogues, the larger frame for Castiglione's work is war and ruin: attempting to remember what was "destroy[ed]" and "as it were, bur[ied] alive" by the "war and upheaval in Italy, of language [and] buildings," Castiglione draws an analogy to his own book-as-building of memory, a mnemonic metaphor at the heart of the *ars memorativa* tradition.²¹ Castiglione unearths the raw materials for his memorial reconstruction of the Court of Urbino and

symbolic return of the dead in memory. Placing himself in the “company of Plato [...] and Cicero” for both his matter and method, Castiglione rewrites the tale of Simonides in order to remember the dead, dedicating the work to the “memory” of the courtiers and above all, “the Duchess herself.”²² Although Castiglione never refers directly to the art of memory in *The Book of the Courtier*, it nevertheless obliquely frames his memorial for the Court of Urbino, an indirection by which Castiglione enacts the ideal courtier’s art of concealing art. Suggestive of Simonides’s saying that “painting is silent poetry, poetry a speaking picture,” Castiglione highlights the relationship between art and memory by framing his “book as a portrait of the Court of Urbino” and himself as a “painter” of it.²³ At the same time, the role of fiction in this memorial is playfully made clear by the interlocutors’ references to Castiglione himself who, absent from the Court of Urbino on an errand to the court of England, who presumably reconstructs their conversation from second-hand report. As in Cicero’s and Plato’s dialogues, the conceit that Castiglione remembers rather than invents for this story frames *The Book of the Courtier* as an historical fiction and an art of memory.

EMBODYING AND ENACTING MEMORY THEATER

The art of memory tradition as I describe it here is foundational to the architecture of *Blazing World*. Cavendish offers both simple and complex ways of seeing the art of memory at play in her work: most simply, as a method of building the architecture of *Blazing World*, as illustrated by my earlier discussion of the architectural mnemonic; and more complexly, as a story about how she constructs *Blazing World* as a memory theater in which to enact her world-making art. Within this brave new world, Cavendish embodies her imagination to create this “work of fancy,” as both psychological faculty and performative fiction. Like Cicero and Castiglione, Cavendish renders herself a character, adopting a persona—indeed, multiple personae—to dramatize the building of her memory theater in a metatheatrical fashion: as a location for memory fabricated through locational memory. *The Book of the Courtier*, a work that represents the culmination of the art of memory tradition in the Renaissance, particularly matters to how Cavendish imagines herself within *Blazing World*: she would seem to answer Castiglione, at once emulating him and his emulation of Cicero and Plato, by placing herself in the roles of both idealized conqueror and ideal courtier—as both the “Empress” and the

"Duchess," who serves as her courtier and who memorializes her court. Cavendish's third persona, the "Authoress," recollects the Duchess's memorializing, albeit imperfectly. As the Authoress first describes the Blazing World, she interrupts the story (as she does throughout) to admit her only partial memory of events: "all of which I cannot all remember" (71). This metafictional confession of forgetfulness echoes the deliberate artificiality of *ars memorativa* tradition, and it highlights the framing fiction of *Blazing World* as a true history that is being remembered. Cavendish thus employs the art of memory as an art of storytelling, in the tradition of Simonides, but she goes beyond her male forebears in important ways. Cicero and Castiglione both assert that they are remembering the past rather than reinventing it, only to puncture their assertions with ironic gestures toward the role of art in the stories they tell. Cavendish, by contrast, presents her expressly fanciful world as if it were purely a recollected reality. If Cicero and Castiglione wryly hint at the artificiality of their truths—employing the *ars celarem artem* proper to the ideal orator or courtier—Cavendish wittily invites her readers to accept the "work of fancy" as its own truth, rebuilding the ruins of the past not merely as historical fiction but rather as what might be called speculative fiction, unbounded in its ability to reimagine the world. She represents her method of imaginative world-building within *Blazing World*.

In her new tale of Simonides, Cavendish rewrites the origin story of the art of memory as a story about England's history, the ruin of its "Renaissance" and its eventual "Restoration," though a renovation rather than simple reconstruction of the past. As Cavendish's personae traverse this memory theater, they dramatize the art of memory as a process of recollecting the ruins of the past. Together they travel through time and space, visiting the Duchess's past world: their "Souls" go to the "Theatres" and the "Court," and to the Duchess's homeland, where she laments the effects of the "long Civil War" and her "dear Lord and Husband's" losses—"Houses, Lands [...] Goods [...] Gold"—and despairs of being able to "repair his ruins" (129, 131–32). In an allegorical trial between "Fortune and the Duke," the Duchess accusing "Fortune" of having "ruined his Estate"—that is, "until the God of Justice [...] pull'd him out of those ruines she had cast upon him" (137–38). The civil wars of the Duchess's home world find a parallel universe in the Empress's homeland, which she discovers has been thrust into a war that threatens its "ruin" (143). The Empress intervenes to save her native country from "Ruine and Destruction" in what amounts to a counterfactual history of England's

civil war (150). The Authoress again interrupts the story to remind readers that she is telling one that she cannot fully recall and recount. “After this Discourse they had many other Conferences, which for brevities sake I’ll forebear to rehearse,” she interjects, in yet another reminder of the framing fiction of *Blazing World* as a memorial-of-a-memorial, a frame tale which represents Cavendish’s art of memory (157). Cavendish represents this “recreation” as historical fiction, the work of her imagination. Specifically, Cavendish revives the “Renaissance” in memory—significantly, modeling her imperial persona partly on that of Queen Elizabeth—and enacts a symbolic “Restoration” that defines the historical era.²⁴

Memory and theater define the Empress and Duchess’s relationship, in metatheatrical ways. The discussion of theater at the end of *Blazing World* reminds readers of their earlier visit to the “Chief city of *E*” and to the theater of an earlier time: the London stage of the Renaissance. After the Empress “orders” the *Blazing World*, as though building a memory theater, she asks the “Immaterial Spirits”—disembodied souls that she summons at will—to tell her what has occurred in her homeland in her absence.²⁵ The spirits’ answer centers on the memory of theater: they remember Ben Jonson’s play *The Alchemist*, which the Spirits also admit to having forgotten in part. To the Empress’s incredulity that “Immaterial Spirits” can forget, they reply that “what is past, is onely kept in memory, if it be recorded” (104). This acts as a playful reminder of Plato’s *Phaedrus* and Socrates’s rejection of writing as an aid to memory. It also reflects another kind of memory theater related to hermetic memory arts, one which Cavendish satirizes (and also takes seriously) through the manufacturing of a “poetical [...] cabbala” (121). The “Spirits” ask the Empress if she would like a “scribe” to create a “cabbala” for her (118): a structure for universal, arcane, even divine knowledge associated with the hermetic memory arts in the form of a quasi-magical memory theater, which promised universal knowledge of the world and beyond, an occult *ars memorativa*.²⁶ Though the Empress would like to have a cabbala modeled on those of great male writers from Plato to the present, the spirits warn her that they “would scorn to be Scribes to a Woman,” but they recommend “the *Duchess of Newcastle*,” as “not one of the most learned” but “a plain and rational Writer,” who will willingly offer her “service” (118). The Duchess performs a role like that of the courtier Castiglione, who memorializes the female ruler of Urbino and her court by serving as her “scribe.” Cavendish imagines herself as both subject and ruler, audience and author.

Rather than a mnemonic location for secret, arcane knowledge, the Duchess tells the Empress that she will make "a Poetical or Romancical Cabbala, wherein you can use Metaphors, Allegories, Similitudes, etc., and interpret them as you please," a metafictional recreation of *Blazing World* itself: "by this means the Duchess came to know and give this Relation of all that had passed in that rich, populous and happy world" (121). Clearly this "Poetical" world is no simple "work of fancy," as Cavendish first portrays *Blazing World* in the Epistle, nor a product of "Romancical" or later Romantic ideas about what imagination might mean: a divinely inspired originality that rejects the past to create new worlds as if *ex nihilo*. The Duchess constructs a world built upon memory, a memorial to the Empress's *Blazing World* and her court, and she instructs the Empress in world-making of her own: in creating worlds within worlds, at once within and without, as psychological faculty and as fiction, a process akin to her creation of a "Poetical [...] Cabbala" of *Blazing World*. At the urging of the Empress, the Duchess, who shares in the "ambition" to be "an Empress of a World," is likewise "move[d] to the Creation of the Imaginary World" of her own (122, 126). Cavendish here represents her imaginative world-building in metatheatrical terms, dramatizing the creation of *Blazing World* as a memory theater. The mutual inspiration and instruction in world-making of the Empress and the Duchess—the "framing" and "dissolving," ruining and recollecting of new worlds from the ruins of old ones—portray Cavendish's imagination or "fancy" at work (125–26). The Duchess's "poetical [...] cabbala" of *Blazing World* is a mirror for Cavendish's, and a teaching tale about the making of this "work of fancy." The promise of "recreation" thus serves as a reminder of the Duchess's role in remembering in art, a remembering that enacts world-building for the Empress.

CAVENDISH'S IDEAL COURTIER

Once the Empress accepts the Spirits' recommendation of the Duchess for her scribe, her disembodied soul is summoned and the two women become "Platonick Lovers," as "the Empress imbraced and saluted her with a spirituall kiss" (119). This moment recalls the end of *The Book of the Courtier*, which concludes with a courtly performance of *The Symposium*'s love story about the disembodied soul's ascent up the "ladder of love"; as Pietro Bembo explains, "a kiss is a union of souls; and thus when inspired to love Plato said that in kissing the soul comes to the lips in order to leave

the body” to ascend to the heavens.²⁷ Told by another interlocutor that “the road that leads to happiness” would be “impossible for women,” Bembo replies, “Socrates himself confessed that all the mysteries of love that he knew had been revealed to him by a woman, the famous Diotima.”²⁸ The question as “to whether women are as capable of divine love as men” remains unanswered in *The Book of the Courtier*, but it is clearly central to *Blazing World*: Cavendish answers with herself—or rather, her *selves*—cutting out the middleman (344). Ideally, the right lover (of wisdom) serves as a reminder that leads the beloved to remember herself, self-knowledge achieved through *anamnesis*: the recollection of a soul’s prior lives, as in the story of the soul that Socrates tells in the *Phaedrus*. Cavendish’s two authorial personae play both parts, ascending the “ladder” of love through their relationship with each other, their disembodied souls remembering their former lives-as-history. For the ideal courtier, though, such Platonic love is both an art of memory and an art of performance—political theater that enacts the art of concealing art. For Cavendish, as for Castiglione and Cicero before him, the political matters as much as the personal in this history, and the effect of Platonic love on the soul stands in for the social world it represents.

This disembodied union of the Empress and the Duchess might well figure the interrelations of reason and fancy in Cavendish’s imagination. In that regard, the “Authoress” might stand for memory, the unspoken third term: the Authoress remembers their “Platonick love.” And although Cavendish depicts theirs as a union of disembodied souls, she nevertheless interrupts the text as Authoress to embody them. To the question of how souls move through space and time, the Authoress finds an answer not in Platonic love but in her own words:

But one thing I forgot all this while, which is, That although thoughts are the natural language of souls, yet by reason souls cannot travel without Vehicles, they use such language as the nature and propriety of their Vehicles require, and the Vehicles of those two souls being made of the purest and finest sort of air, and of a humane shape, this purity and fineness was the cause that they could neither be seen nor heard by any humane Creature [...] And now to return to my former Story. (130)

The Authoress, a figure for Cavendish-as-author, embodies the Duchess’s and Empress’s souls in words and on the page, as writing becomes the crucial reminder that leads to recollection, here the

reader's—yet another ironic reminder Plato's *Phaedrus*. Even if "thought" is the primary "language of souls," they "cannot travel without Vehicles," even though the Platonic purity of their souls and love render them invisible and undetectable to the human ear and eye, despite being "of a humane shape." Writing about *Blazing World*—within and as the work—serves as a crucial reminder for both Cavendish's characters and readers alike: writing is the "vehicle" by which these "two souls" take "humane shape" on the page, where they can be both "seen" and "heard by any humane Creature" (130). In the most important sense, these two seemingly "disembodied" souls are in fact bodied forth in Cavendish's writing, where she gives them (as they give one another) a name and a local habitation in *Blazing World*. The Authoress's allusion to her own remembrance—"And now to return to my former Story"—acts as a reminder of the work's fictional memorial framing.

Together, the Duchess and Empress construct the memory theater that stands for *Blazing World*, a "cabbala" both fictional and metafictional: they teach each other, and readers, about world-building and creating "work[s] of fancy." They are architects of a memory theater within-a-memory-theater in which they enact, embody, and dramatize a lesson in architectural mnemonics. At the end of *Blazing World*, Cavendish begins constructing the work as a memory theater and as a reenactment of itself. The Duchess returns home to the Duke and begins to deliver on her promise to "order a theater" for, and play about, *Blazing World*: "She entertained her Lord [...] [and] told him all what had past," as "if [it] had been painted by art," recalling the Empress's victorious war in her "homeland," the symbolic remembrance and the restoration of the Duke and Duchess's ruined fortune caused by civil war (160–61). Her recreation of *Blazing World* is cast as a form of play, as pleasurable "Pastimes and Recreations Her Majesty did most delight in," but also as historical fiction, a work of art and memory (161). *Blazing World* concludes with the Duchess in the process of remembering the past, telling a tale that is itself constructed through multiple, intersecting narratives: the Authoress remembers the Duchess, who remembers the Empress and acts as her "scribe"—a combination of cabbala-maker, court reporter, and authorized biographer—each of whom embody and enact Cavendish's world-making imagination. *Blazing World* ends at the beginning and as memory theater: as a play that will be reenacted in the minds and memories of the audience.

In the “Epilogue to The Reader,” the Authoress addresses the audience directly, inviting readers either to be her “Subjects” of *Blazing World* or to “Govern themselves” by creating a world of their own:

If any should like the World I have made, and be willing to be my Subjects, they may imagine themselves such, and they are such; I mean, in their Minds, Fancies or Imaginations; but if they cannot endure to be subjects, they may create Worlds of their own, and Govern themselves as they please: But yet let them have a care, not to prove unjust Usurpers, and to rob me of mine [...] but rather chuse to create another World for another Friend. (163–64)

Through the Authoress, Cavendish reminds readers that she has already shown them precisely how to “create Worlds of their own” in their own “Minds, Fancies or Imaginations,” for she has demonstrated her *poesis* as an art of memory that doubles as an art of imagination. Future readers may also double as writers, whom she wittily warns against being “Usurpers” who would incite a civil war of the kind that she remembers. Yet this allusion to the English Civil War and the Restoration also implies that readers-cum-writers can build new worlds from the ruins and remains of old ones, including her own, “for another Friend” as well as for themselves. Such imaginative world-building thus works in two directions: just as the author rebuilds lost worlds in the reader’s mind, so the reader rebuilds the author’s world anew in memory, not once but *ad infinitum*, within infinite worlds of the imagination.²⁹ With this metafictional conclusion, Cavendish remains with the fictional frame of her world: as in the *ars memorativa* tradition, she uses art both to conceal and to reveal her art, representing her “work of fancy” as truth rather than fiction, and ironically underscoring the necessary relationship between memory and imagination in the “recreation” of the past for the present. With *Blazing World*, Cavendish creates not just a room of her own but a theater of the world: a performance space in which she recreates herself and teaches others to do the same.

NOTES

1. Margaret Cavendish, *The Description of a New World, Called the Blazing World*. All citations are taken from this edition. “Fancy” is a defining term for Cavendish’s work throughout her career, from her earliest works,

Philosophical Fancies and *Poems and Fancies*, published only a few weeks apart in 1653, to the *Blazing World* and *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy*, published together in 1666. On Cavendish and imagination, see Sylvia Bowerbank's "The Spider's Delight"; Yaakov Mascetti's "A 'World of Nothing, but Pure Wit'"; and Tessie Prakas's "'A World of Her Own Invention'."

2. I explore the art of memory as a poetics-in-practice from pre-to-early modern eras in *Spenser's Ruins and the Art of Recollection* and more recently in "The Art of Poetry and the Art of Memory: Philip Sidney's Mnemonic Poetics."
3. Deanna Smid's superb study has shaped my thinking on the relationship between imagination and embodiment. Smid, *The Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*, p. 4.
4. On the art of memory and the role of imagination therein, see Frances Yates's *The Art of Memory*; Mary Carruthers's *The Book of Memory*; Paolo Rossi's *Logic and the Art of Memory*; and Lina Bolzoni's *The Gallery of Memory*. Important collections on the early modern memory arts include *Memory and Mortality in Renaissance England*, edited by William E. Engel, Rory Loughnane, and Grant Williams as well as *Ars Reminiscendi: Mind and Memory in Renaissance Culture*, edited by Donald Beecher and Grant Williams.
5. Yates, *Art of Memory*, pp. 1–26.
6. Anonymous, *Rhetorica*, 3.16.209.
7. In *On the Soul*, Aristotle defines imagination and thinking as mnemonic in nature. Aristotle, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, 3.3.427b.18–25.
8. In *Memory and Reminiscence*, appended to *On the Soul*, Aristotle describes recollection as the imaginative capacity to recreate the past. *Ibid.*, 2.453a.10–24, 2.452a.14.
9. "My fancy set up a stage in my brain," Cavendish writes in her *Sociable Letter CXCIV*, and thus "sets up in her mind a memory theatre." Engel, Loughnane, and Williams, *The Memory Arts in Renaissance England*, p. 315. On the "'theatre of the mind' trope" in Cavendish's writing as it relates to "fancy" and imagination, see Jay Stevenson, "Imagining the Mind," p. 145. Relatedly, Sara Mendelson explores Cavendish's "autobiographical self-fashioning" in the context of theater. Mendelson, "Playing Games with Gender and Genre," p. 201.
10. The Empress's outlandish animal court of *Blazing World* satirizes the patriarchal Royal Society and the Baconian new science upon which it was built, which Yates connects to the art of memory through the "growth of the scientific method." Yates, *Art of Memory*, p. 369. See Rossi as well. Rossi, *Logic and the Art of Memory*, pp. 97–129.
11. Sherman, *Skepticism in Early Modern English Literature*, p. 149, p. 154.

12. Cicero, *De Oratore*, p. 186.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 192.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
16. Plato, *The Phaedrus*, in *The Collected Dialogues*, 275a.
17. *Ibid.*, 267a.
18. Plato, *The Symposium*, in *The Collected Dialogues*, 205b–205c.
19. *Ibid.*, 211c–212a.
20. On Plato's critique of mnemonic culture, see Eric Havelock's seminal work, *Preface to Plato*.
21. Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, pp. 35–36.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 32–33.
24. Queen Elizabeth provides an important model for Cavendish's once and future Empress, as Claire Jowitt demonstrates in "Margaret Cavendish and the Cult of Elizabeth."
25. The "immaterial spirits" speak to Cavendish's complex philosophical materialism, particularly as it stands in relationship to imagination. Stephen Hequembourg argues that Cavendish develops a "poetics of materialism" for the purpose of "reconciling [her] ideas of imaginative creation with [her] beliefs about the material structure of the cosmos." Hequembourg, "Poetics of Materialism," p. 174. On Cavendish's materialism in the context of the art of memory, see Engel, Loughnane, and Williams, *The Memory Arts in Renaissance England*, pp. 266–269.
26. On the early modern hermetic memory arts, see Yates's *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Memory Tradition* and *The Art of Memory* as well as Rossi's *Logic and the Art of Memory*.
27. Castiglione, p. 342.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 343.
29. Giordano Bruno's theory of infinite worlds seems particularly resonant in the context of Cavendish's depiction of infinite worlds of imagination; see Yates's *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Memory Tradition*.

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PART IV

Higher Imaginings



Fantasy and the Imagined Music of the Spheres in *Pericles*

Deanna Smid

Gower begins Shakespeare's *Pericles* with three variations on the same word: "To sing a song that old was sung" (1.Chorus.1).¹ Indeed, "song" features strongly in the play, from Pericles's comparison of Antiochus's daughter to a "fair viol" (1.1.83), to Cerimon curing Thaisa with music, and to Marina singing to her father to purge his melancholy. Yet, in spite of repeatedly invoking music, *Pericles* contains only one song performed on stage, and the lyrics of that song are omitted.² However, Gower's reference to music aligns well with his other oft-repeated words: "imagination" or "fancy." In his capacity as Chorus, Gower appeals to a singular imagination shared by plural audience members, made possible by the "forcible imagination" or "fascination" described by early modern English theorists such as Thomas Wright, Robert Burton, and Francis Bacon. Such theorists and others also describe the brain and the faculty of imagination in musical terms, for as Linda Phyllis Austern notes, "Sound and music, as ephemeral

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M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_12

and penetrating as any airy spirit, were closely tied by numerous thinkers of the early modern era to the imaginative faculties.”³ Act 5, scene 1 of *Pericles* demonstrates that close tie between music and the imagination, particularly when it depicts Marina’s mastery over the imagination’s persuasive powers and emphasizes Pericles’s successful struggle to control his imagination as well. The alignment of music and imagination in the play culminates in the “heavenly music” that I argue Pericles and the audience can hear because their imaginations have been trained to unite the spiritual and the corporeal. Indeed, Pericles has a special kinship with the audience at this moment. Up until now the audience has been cajoled by Gower for five acts to “imagine.” When Pericles hears heavenly music and tells the audience to “hark” and “list,” the audience has grown accustomed to the imperative mood from Gower’s discourse. They have learned, by this point, to listen and to imagine. Pericles’s imagination, too, has been healed by Marina’s music and story and particularly by his own willingness to hear and believe her. In other words, he has trained his imagination to perform the role of the audience: to hear, to believe, and to create. How appropriate then, for the performative exemplar of “the music of the spheres,” to belong to the musical genre of the “fantasy,” using Marina’s song as its theme. The performed music indicates that Pericles and the audience have a divine “reward” for using their imaginations as they should.

Before Pericles and the audience can hear the “fantasy” of Act 5, they must be trained by Gower, whose role as Chorus functions didactically. He speaks in imperatives as he directs the audience to see, to think, to pay attention, and most of all, to imagine. “Be attent,” he commands the audience in his introduction to Act 3, “And that time that is so briefly spent / With your fine fancies quaintly eche” (3.Chorus.11–13). The audience is directed to use their “fine fancies”—in other words, their intricate imaginations—to “eche” the scene in front of them. “Eche” resonates with another Shakespearean chorus, that of *Henry V*, which similarly adjures the audience to imagine: “Still be kind, / And eke out our performance with your mind” (3.Chorus.36–37). Throughout the latter three Acts of *Pericles*, Gower, with imperatives such as “imagine” (4.Chorus.1), “think” (4.3.18), and “suppose” (5.Chorus.21), repeatedly calls on the audience to use their imaginations. Clearly, Gower (and perhaps Shakespeare) cannot presume that spectators will enter the theater with receptive imaginations. Moreover, the very repetition of the command to “imagine” keeps the faculty in constant focus for audience members, making the musical fantasy at the end of the play both a clever pun and a

pointed reminder that using the imagination leads to “higher”—even divine—rewards.

Remarkably, Gower speaks of the audience’s imagination in the singular; in other words, the plural audience has one imagination. For instance, Gower tells the audience, “in your imagination hold / This stage the ship” (3.Chorus.58). The second person plural, “your,” is followed by the singular “imagination,” implying that the audience (made up of individual viewers) has one imagination. A modern reader of the play may understand Gower as simply referring to a “communal” imagination, but such a “shared” imagination was not a common notion in the early modern period. In *Henry V*, for instance, the Chorus asks the audience to “Let us [...] / On your imaginary forces work” (Prologue.18–19). In that play, the plural members of the audience have “forces” of imagination, unlike the singular imagination of the plural audience of *Pericles*. Most thinkers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries located the faculty as a physical organ in the individual brain. Robert Burton, for instance, names imagination or “phantasy” as one of the “inner senses [...] so called because they be within the brain-pan.”⁴ The three inner senses, writes Burton, are “organs” with “seats” in the brain.⁵ In other words, each person has a material imagination located inside of—and bound by—their individual body. A singular imagination belonging to multiple audience members complicates the embodiment of the imagination, suggesting that the imagination may somehow transcend the body in which it resides.

Early modern English theorists describe the ways in which one person’s singular, embodied imagination influences or changes the body and imagination of another. Francis Bacon calls “the power and act of imagination intensive upon other bodies than the body of the imaginant” “fascination” or “impression.”⁶ Burton too speaks of the “impression” left by perturbations caused by the imagination or fantasy.⁷ He explains, “the forcible imagination of the one party moves and alters the spirits of the other.”⁸ While Bacon identifies “other bodies” being fascinated by the imagination, Burton’s examples seem to imply that a person’s imagination affects the body and mind of another person: “Why doth one man’s yawning make another yawn,” he asks, and “one man’s pissing provoke a second many times to do the like?”⁹ Michel de Montaigne argues, “When the imagination is vehemently shaken it sends forth darts which may strike an outside object.”¹⁰ He also makes the general statement that “[i]t is likely that the credit given to miracles, visions, enchantments and such extraordinary events chiefly derives from the power of the imagination acting

mainly on the more impressionable souls of the common people. Their capacity to believe has been so powerfully ravished that they think they see what they do not see.”¹¹ I find Montaigne’s scathing summation of the “impressionable souls of the common people” particularly challenged by *Pericles*. Gower, certainly, does not assume that his audience is impressionable. Rather, he continuously “ravishes” the audience’s capacity to believe (to use Montaigne’s terminology), adjuring them to have faith in what they see and to create truth in their shared imagination. If Gower views his audience as “common people,” he certainly does not share Montaigne’s assumption that “common people” possess “impressionable souls.” Perhaps Gower fears the audience may be sluggish, passive, or uncritical; regardless, his audiences must be prodded, encouraged, cajoled, rewarded, and continually reminded to “imagine.”

But how does “fascination” or “the forcible imagination” work, and how can the audience’s corporeal imaginations be shared as one? Montaigne, Burton, and Bacon believe that one imagination affects another, but they are less confident when they try to explain—if they even make the attempt—how exactly the imagination makes a literal impression on another’s brain. Bacon tentatively wonders, for instance, if fascination is akin to a bodily contagion, but “from spirit to spirit without the mediation of the senses.”¹² Thomas Wright expounds on those “spirits” when he asks (and cannot answer) “how a corporall imagination concurre[s] to a spiritual conceit.”¹³ Indeed, for Wright, the “problem” with the imagination is how it can be a bodily organ that creates incorporeal conceits or thoughts. He even worries that the devil, “being a spirite,” can enter into the imagination to “chop and change” it.¹⁴ Wright seems to view the imagination as a corporeal organ that can be accessed by corporeal and incorporeal spirits “by a secret meanes.”¹⁵ Imagination marries the spiritual to the physical, allowing it leave to one body, to travel incorporeally to another body, and then to enter into that body to change it for good or evil. Thus, Gower’s appeal to the audience’s imagination must be possible because the imagination is not just a physical entity in the physical brain; it can create immaterial thoughts and images, and can also be changed by spiritual means.¹⁶

Indeed, Gower’s repetition of “sing” and “imagine” in *Pericles* suits an early modern understanding of the inextricable relationship between, on the one hand, the imagination, the body, the spirit, and, on the other hand, music. I quote again from Wright, who identifies “a certaine sympathie, correspondence, or proportion betwixt our soules and musick.”¹⁷

When he attempts to explain how and why music affects the physical body, Wright turns to divine providence to explain that music influences the body just as the imagination translates the material into the spiritual. I quote the passage at length to demonstrate how Wright defines the working of music by equating it to the operation of the imagination:

The second manner of this miracle in nature, some assign and ascribe to Gods generall prouidence, who when these sounds affect the eare, produceth a certaine spirituall qualitie in the soule, the which stirreth vp one or other passion, according to the varietie of voices, or consorts of instruments. Neither this is to be meruailed at, for the very same vpon necessitie we must put in the imagination, the which not being able to dart the formes of fancies, which are materiall; into the vnderstanding, which is spirituall, therefore where nature wanteth, Gods prouidence supplieth.¹⁸

That intermingling of spirit and body, by means of music and imagination, is on heightened display when Marina sings to her catatonic father at the beginning of Act 5. When Pericles arrives in Mytilene, sunk into a melancholic stupor over the news of his daughter's supposed death, Lysimachus summons Marina to cure him, for he says her "sweet harmony" (5.1.44) is a "sacred physic" (5.1.74). Her music, both incorporeal and physical, can cure Pericles's melancholy because music works like the imagination, which translates the spiritual to the material.

Marina's musical accomplishments (as well as her successful defense of her virtue) reveal her immense powers of persuasion, particularly through her imagination and her reason. For instance, when appeals to reason and rationality are ineffective, seventeenth-century theorist Edward Reynolds posits that the imagination can persuade by "secretly instilling" its "eloquence" into the listener.¹⁹ Marina's song and then her story achieve her goal because they "allure" by their sweetness, using "the ministrie [...] of the Fancie" to "secretly" reach Pericles.²⁰ Marina had already sagaciously dealt with Lysimachus when he attempted to buy her virginity in the brothel. Her first arguments appeal to his reason; she asks him, "Do you know this house to be a place of such / Resort, and will come into 't?" This question reminds him of his "honourable parts" as "the governor of this place" (4.6.81–83). She uses logic again when she tells him, "If you were born to honor, show it now; / If put upon you, make the judgment good / That thought you worthy of it" (4.6.94–96). Lysimachus is struck by her words, or perhaps by her poetry, and says, "Some more. Be sage"

(4.6.97). Marina's final and successful appeal reaches Lysimachus's imagination, for she expresses her desire for freedom in what Reynolds calls a "poeticall [...] perswasion,"²¹ asking the gods to "change [her] to the meanest bird / That flies i' the purer air!" (4.6.104–5). It is no wonder, then, that Lysimachus proposes that Marina cure Pericles; after all, she knows how to "best affect the Imagination."

It is tempting to read Lysimachus's description of Marina's abilities and Pericles's problems as a particular invocation of the imagination. When he hears of Pericles's afflictions, Lysimachus tells Helicanus about Marina:

She, questionless, with her sweet harmony
And other chosen attractions, would allure
And make batt'ry through his defended ports,
Which now are midway stopped. (5.1.49–52)

Lysimachus's description of Marina's power again mirrors Reynolds's characterization of the imagination, for that theorist calls the working of the imagination "the sweetnesse of Eloquence" working through "Musically, Poetically, and Mythologically" means.²² Marina's "sweet harmony" must both "allure" and "batt[er]" Pericles's melancholy mind, which Lysimachus compares to a seaside city surrounded by walls. The "ports" of his city are defended, and Marina will be able to break through them with her sweet harmony. "Midway stopped," however, seems an uneasy fit with the metaphor of a besieged city. I argue that "midway" gestures toward the physical location of the imagination in the middle of the brain. Indeed, "midway" reminds the audience of the imagination's corporeal positionality, for Pericles's disorder resides in this faculty. His "midway"—his imagination—is "stopped," so Marina must unblock or unstop it.

Pericles, too, has agency over his imagination, particularly after he hears Marina's music and begins to listen to her story. He encourages Marina to continue the story of her parentage by assuring her, "I will believe thee / And make my senses credit thy relation / To points that seem impossible" (5.1.139–41). "I *will* believe" and "*make* my senses" demonstrate that he works to control his senses and his understanding, a control only possible by means of the imagination. Francis Bacon, for instance, writes about the imagination's mediatory role between the sense and reason: "Sense sendeth over to imagination before reason have judged: and reason sendeth over to imagination before the decree can be acted. For imagination ever

precedeth voluntary motion.”²³ In essence, Pericles is receiving Marina’s story with his internal senses, and forcing his imagination to send the story to his reason to be “judged,” and to be “believe[d].” Remarkably, Pericles can “make” his sense and imagination operate as he wills, which is particularly significant in a play in which the Chorus figure has been cajoling the audience to use its imagination. If Pericles can force his imagination to do his will, certainly the audience can do the same. Pericles, at this moment, is modeling Gower’s commands to the audience to “[i]magine,” for Pericles forces himself to credit “points that seem impossible,” and the audience is to do the same. Seeing and hearing Pericles control his imagination in turn works as “fascination” or “forcible imagination” upon the audience, as their senses recognize and “[send] over to imagination” what they are seeing on stage.

While he works to control his imagination, Pericles acknowledges a commonly held fear: that his imagination will control him. For instance, after Marina recounts her mother’s death at sea, Pericles is overcome and asks her to “stop there a little” (5.1.190). In an aside to himself and the audience, he compares her story to a dream: “This is the rarest dream that e’er dull sleep / Did mock sad fools withal” (5.1.191–92). Dreams, as Reynolds, Burton, and Wright (among others) contend, are the particular domain of the imagination. Reynolds, for instance, writes that the faculty of the imagination is “the principall worker” of “continuall varietie of Dreams and other Fancies.”²⁴ While making his senses credit Marina’s story, Pericles fears that his imagination has run away with him, mocking him with a dream. Yet he continues to force his senses and imagination to contend with Marina, telling her again, “I’ll hear you more, to the bottom of your story” (5.1.195). In spite of his fears, Pericles continues to exert control over his fancy, again modeling for the audience the necessity and reward of imagination.

Pericles’s discipline is rewarded immediately after he believes and accepts Marina as his lost daughter. After he calls for fresh garments and invokes a heavenly blessing upon Marina, he asks, “But hark, what music?” (5.1.260). When Helicanus immediately replies, “My lord, I hear none” (5.1.261), Pericles calls out, “The music of the spheres!” He then commands, “List, my Marina” (5.1.262). Lysimachus cannot hear the music either, and it appears that Marina similarly cannot. Pericles is eventually lulled to sleep by the “Most heavenly music,” which “nips [him] unto list’ning” (5.1.266–67). Pericles is no Lorenzo from *The Merchant of Venice*, who can philosophize about the music of the spheres, but can only

conclude that “such harmony is in immortal souls, / But whilst this muddy vesture of decay / Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it” (5.1.71–73).²⁵ To Pericles, heavenly music is no question of philosophy, but an audible sound that “nips” him into responding. The music that Pericles hears should sound in the theater so that the audience can hear it as well, I argue. Whether or not the audience should hear music has been a matter of much debate, particularly because the play includes no stage directions for music at this point.²⁶ Moreover, according to Renaissance music theory, the music of the spheres cannot be heard by human ears, so Pericles likewise should not be able to hear it.²⁷ Yet Pericles hears heavenly music in the theater—what he and the audience hear is necessarily framed by the theatrical. Just as the goddess Diana who appears to him in a dream is a *representation* of the mythological goddess, so the music he hears is a *representation* of the music of the spheres. What the audience hears along with him is a human approximation of the divine. The audience sees his vision of Diana, moreover, which means that the audience can see what Pericles sees, and it follows that they can hear what he hears. The audience members and Pericles can hear audible music because their imaginations have been trained to do so.²⁸ The imagination is necessary to hear the music because the imagination could unite (even if briefly and uneasily) the spiritual and the physical, allowing the physical ears to hear heavenly music. Only the audience and Pericles hear the music of the spheres because only they have had their imaginations trained.

If Pericles and the audience can and should hear the heavenly music, what sounds might they have heard during the first performance of the play? Attempting to recover the “sound” of Act 5 reveals nuances and layers and emphasizes, once again, the imagination-music link that Shakespeare is playing with in *Pericles*. I propose a musical form with a particularly evocative name: “fantasy.” Even before knowing anything about the definition or sound of the genre in the early seventeenth century, the name “fantasy” is not only appropriate but also revelatory for the music of the scene. Hearing a fantasy reminds the audience of Gower’s repeated imperatives, particularly because “imagination” and “fantasy” were generally synonymous in early modern English thought.²⁹ Because Pericles and the audience have been exercising their (potentially) insufficient imaginations, they can now hear the sound of “fantasy,” representing the music of the spheres. The reward for Pericles is divine approbation, but the audience’s reward is both sensory and intellectual: they finally hear a complex, lengthy piece of music, and they understand the multi-sensory

pun Shakespeare is presenting; that is, to hear the musical fantasy they must use their cognitive fantasy.

To help guide my argument about *Pericles*, I want to recruit Thomas Morley's helpful definition of "fantasie" from his 1596 *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practical Music*. When the treatise lists types of music without lyrics, it begins with the fantasy:

The most principall and chieftest kind of musicke which is made without a dittie is the fantasie, that is, when a musician taketh a point at his pleasure, and wresteth and turneth it as he list, making either much or little of it according as shall seeme best in his own conceit. In this may more art be showne than in any other musicke, because the composer is tide to nothing but that he may adde, deminish, or alter at his pleasure. And this kind will beare any allowances whatsoever tolerable in other musick, except changing the ayre & leaving the key, which in fantasie may never bee suffered. Other things you may use at your pleasure, as bindings with discordes, quicke motions, slow motions, proportions, and what you list. Likewise, this kind of musick is with them who practise instruments of parts in greatest use, but for voices it is but sildome used.³⁰

Morley's definition emphasizes a few key features of fantasies: they were instrumental rather than vocal, they allowed the musician to take a singular musical element and explore it in great detail, and they freed the musician from many musical "rules." Each key feature relates musical fantasies to the faculty of the imagination and the music of the spheres in the play. The instrumental nature of fantasies makes them particularly appropriate for representing the music of the spheres to *Pericles* and the audience. In his work on music and *The Winter's Tale*, for example, Yan Brailowsky explains why the nature of heavenly music is relevant to *Pericles*. He assumes that viols are appropriate instruments to represent the music of the spheres, which he calls "heavenly, disembodied," and "only instrumental."³¹ Yet technically, the music of the spheres, which Boethius calls *musica mundana*, lives in arithmetic more than in performance. Austern, summarizing early modern theorists who defined the music of the spheres, notes that its "musical sound" was confined to "the act of creation by which God set the world into harmonious motion."³² To humanity, Austern notes, theorists believed that "only the sublime purity of mathematical contemplation could elevate consciousness beyond the sensible world and its base animal desires."³³ *Pericles*, however, is clearly hearing music rather than engaging in "mathematical contemplation," so

Shakespeare makes the “music” in *musica mundana* performative rather than speculative. If the music of the spheres were to be approximated on stage, Brailowsky correctly identifies musical instruments as the most likely representation of heavenly music, for instruments were often used as symbols of universal, cosmic, or heavenly harmony, as Fig. 12.1 depicts, with Fig. 12.2 offering a closer view of Fig. 12.1’s angelic figures, whose music and instruments ultimately guide this harmony.³⁴

When Morley defines the fantasy, he uses terms that sound remarkably akin to seventeenth-century characterizations of the imagination. The musician, Morley writes, plays “as shall seeme best in his own conceit,” using a word that appears often in conjunction with the imagination. “Conceit” and “phantasy” are synonymous in Timothy Bright’s treatise on melancholy, for example.³⁵ Of course, Morley’s “imaginative” language should come as no surprise given the association of music with the imagination that I have already noted in Wright’s and Burton’s treatises. At the risk of stating the obvious, a musical fantasy relies on the faculty for which it is named, as Austern also explains extensively.³⁶ How important the musical genre was during the early modern period seems to be of some debate, with Austern calling it “one of the most important instrumental genres of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,”³⁷ but Matthew Spring naming it a “very cerebral style” that, for lutes at least, “does not feature prominently.”³⁸ Regardless of its popularity, importance, or prominence, a “fantasy” sounding in the theater would have been a significant performative and theoretical choice for *Pericles*.

When Pericles and the audience hear a fantasy that represents heavenly music, they can be assured of the recovery of Pericles’s imagination and the restoration of his mind. His healed imagination allows him to see and understand the goddess Diana when she appears to him, but he also needs this faculty to fill in his lost time with Marina. Brailowsky argues that *The Winter’s Tale*, like other plays such as *Pericles*, “link[s] music and restorative sleep to the passing of time, notably the time taken by the performance, as the ‘restorations’ and ‘visions’ always occur towards the end of the play.”³⁹ Music, which must be played *in time*, marks the passage of *time*, especially as it heals grief, melancholy, or misunderstanding. Pericles last saw Marina when she was newborn, so his imagination must provide him with what his memory cannot. Such a recovery of lost time will take time, and the music of the spheres, played audibly in the theater, can mark that time. In fact, a musical fantasy that is particularly long and complex would well suit Pericles’s situation at this moment in the play. He needs



Fig. 12.1 Frontispiece to George Wither, *A Preparation to the Psalter* (London, 1619). Generously provided by the Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin, Pforz 1086 PFZ



Fig. 12.2 Closer view of Fig. 12.1's upper half. See Fig. 12.1 for details on source and supplier

time to imagine, for his imagination must “wrest” and “turn” to fill in the missing years over which Marina grew and developed into a young woman.

A musical fantasy revolves around “a point of [the musician’s] pleasure,” which begs the question: what “point” would best inform a fantasy that could represent heavenly music in *Pericles*? Music from earlier in the scene could serve the purpose particularly well. To be clear, I am arguing that Marina’s song is the point of the fantasy that Pericles and the audience later hear, not the fantasy itself. (In modern terms, the fantasy is an “improvisation” upon a musical theme.) Marina had sung to her father with the express purpose of healing his melancholy. Marina, with her curative and sweet harmony, Lysimachus believes, can lift her father’s ailing spirits into health again. Marina demands privacy, and with only herself, her maid, and Pericles onstage, she sings to him. Lysimachus returns to ask, “Mark’d he your music?” (5.1.79). The unexpected answer: “No, nor look’d on us” (5.1.79). The answer is unexpected not only because of the extended build-up to Marina’s cure in Act 5, but also because of

Shakespeare's general attitude toward music and its therapeutic properties. Paulina, in *The Winter's Tale*, for example, resurrects the statue of Hermione by calling out, "Music; awake her; strike!" (5.3.98). The Doctor in charge of Lear's recovery commands "Louder the music there!" (4.6.23) as he leads Cordelia to her father's bedside. Queen Katherine, in *Henry VIII*, directs, "Take thy lute, wench. My soul grows sad with troubles. / Sing, and disperse 'em if thou canst" (3.1.1–2). Clearly, Marina's botched cure is the exception rather than the rule in Shakespeare's general use of music as a therapeutic device in his plays.⁴⁰ Marina's attempted cure of Pericles only begins to work when she speaks to him, but even then Pericles still needs restorative, heavenly music, followed by reassurance and information from the goddess Diana.

The heavenly music that Pericles and the audience hear, then, takes Marina's music and perfects it by making it the subject of the musical fantasy. Writing about the nature of Marina's song, Wilfrid Mellers suggests that "[i]n *Pericles* Marina restores her father to life by singing to him, but we are not told what she sings. This is a case in which the healing power of music derives from its relation to cosmic order; the words don't matter, only the celestial serenity of her song, which should be simple and incantatory: a snatch of a folk-song, perhaps, unaccompanied."⁴¹ If Mellers is correct, then clearly the simplicity of Marina's song is insufficient. A similar movement from human-sung music to heavenly sound occurs in *Henry VIII*, another of Shakespeare's late plays. On her deathbed, Queen Katherine calls for music, then falls asleep and sees a celestial vision. During the vision, the music continues, and Katherine commands the musicians to cease when she awakens. Erin Minear asks about the scene, "Does [the music] represent only the playing of the Queen's musicians, or does it also, for a moment, represent the music of heaven?"⁴² She then answers her own question: "In *Henry VIII* [...] the music cannot simply symbolize heavenly music, because it starts out as an imitation of what it actually *is*: music performed by a group of musicians."⁴³ Of course, the scene in *Henry VIII* diverges significantly from Act 5 of *Pericles*. And yet, the uneasy conflation of audible and heavenly music could be at play in *Pericles* as well, particularly if the "point" of the fantasy is Marina's song. When her song is followed and even completed by a *musical fantasy*, however, the implications of the scene may be suggestive. First, Marina herself is approaching the divine, although she has not reached it yet. Moreover, her music may have inspired the imagination in particular (indeed, as I have demonstrated earlier), leading heaven itself to break forth in a celebration

of the faculty. Her music, too, may be an indication of the task that still remains for the much-beleaguered Pericles. He still must imagine the life that she has led in his absence.

Yet Marina's inability to hear the music of the spheres stands out at this moment in the play. After all, her imagination and its power of persuasion have been remarkable throughout Act 4. So, why cannot Marina hear the musical fantasy? She might, of course, but there seems to be no indication in her dialogue, or lack thereof, that she hears it. I argue that she does not hear it because she does not need to hear it at this point in the play. Pericles, not Marina, needs time to imagine the parts of his daughter's life that he has missed. Pericles, not Marina, has also had to struggle to control his imagination, so the reward for that work belongs to him and not to her. In other words, the play's focus has changed at this point from Marina's musical and imaginative prowess to Pericles's response to that music, a response performed by his imagination.

The music of the spheres also highlights key differences between *Pericles* the play and *The Painfull Adventures of Pericles*, the earlier prose narrative published by George Wilkins in 1608. *The Painfull Adventures of Pericles* is particularly significant considering that Wilkins co-authored *Pericles* (first published in 1609), and because the prose narrative contains lyrics for Marina's quasi-curative song for her father. Marina's song in Wilkins's text recounts the story of her life, and it ends with her assurance that God will rescue her from her current state. Her song concludes:

In time the heauens may mend my state,
And send a better day.
For sorrow addes vnto our griefes,
But helps not any way:
Shew gladnesse in your countenance,
Cast vp your cheerefull eies,
That God remains, that once of nought
Created Earth and Skies.⁴⁴

After her song, Marina chides Pericles for his behavior, telling him that it is "vnfytte for him to repine."⁴⁵ In anger, Pericles strikes her and she swoons, calling out to God in her sorrow and distress. Pericles then realizes her identity and repents his brutal blow, and after their happy reunion he falls asleep and hears a message from Diana. In Wilkins's version, no heavenly music sounds, either for Marina or Pericles. In contrast, the play

does not include the father's violent strike of his daughter, and it also shifts the heavenly invocation and blessing from Marina to Pericles. Divine encouragement in the prose narrative is primarily for Marina, but the play shifts that encouragement to Pericles, who must use his imagination to believe Marina and recover what he has lost. In the play, Pericles receives that blessing in the form of music, the music of the spheres.

The final key element of Morley's definition of a musical fantasy, that the musician is "tied to nothing but that he may adde, deminish, or alter at his pleasure," applies not only to music and imagination in *Pericles*, but to the nature of the play as well. By now it is a critical commonplace to speak of the "experimental" nature of *Pericles*, which uses archaic language, frequent dumb shows, an episodic structure, a *dea ex machina* to resolve the romance, and meta-theatrical devices.⁴⁶ I posit that if a musical fantasy is performed near the end of the play, it not only represents the well-trained imagination of Pericles and of the audience, but may also signify the experimental and "fantastical" nature of the play itself. Indeed, Penelope Gouk describes the "fantasia suite" as one of "the most innovative forms of musical production at the early Stuart court," marked by its "intrinsically collaborative and experimental nature."⁴⁷ A fantasy in *Pericles*, therefore, could be considered conventional in its experimentation, and would fit well with innovations in Jacobean theater. Gower may say at the beginning of the play, "To sing a song that old was sung," but if a fantasy is performed in the theater at the end of the play, *Pericles* has been anything but an old song; rather, the playwrights have evocatively intertwined music and imagination, the spiritual and the corporeal, through the form that unites them: the fantasy.

The imagination, then, is an essential and celebrated faculty in *Pericles*. The audience, according to Gower, must "imagine" if they are to appreciate and understand the play. Moreover, the play demonstrates that the embodied imagination is not tied solely to the body; rather, as Clark states, it is the "mediator between the incorporeal soul and corporeal human body," and "this new-found importance is clearly reflected in the very many positive evaluations of the imagination that one finds in early modern writing."⁴⁸ In *Pericles*, the imagination is rewarded with divine blessing through ephemeral music—the disappearing breath of sound—played on material musical instruments and heard by embodied ears. If it belongs to the genre "fantasy," the music of Act 5 is a witty pun invoking the mental faculty that has inspired the music, but that pun carries weighty significance: music and the imagination are both operating as mediators between

the corporeal and incorporeal, allowing Pericles and the audience to use their ears and imaginations to hear the music of heaven.

NOTES

1. Shakespeare, *Pericles*. All quotations of Shakespeare's plays are taken from *Folger Shakespeare* editions.
2. William A. McIntosh notes, "[T]here is scarcely any significant action in the play that is not directly related to music, and in spite of what seems to be missing at a glance, a closer look reveals *Pericles* to be among the most musical plays in the Shakespeare canon." McIntosh, "Musical Design in *Pericles*," p. 101. For more on music as a structural element in the play, see Moseley and Scott. Moseley, "The Literary and Dramatic Contexts of the Last Plays," p. 49; Scott, "Another 'Heroical Devise' in *Pericles*," pp. 91–95.
3. Austern, *Both from Ears and Mind*, p. 210.
4. Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 159.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, p. 123, p. 149.
7. Burton, p. 257.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. Montaigne, *The Complete Essays*, p. 118.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 111–112.
12. Bacon, p. 123.
13. Wright, *The Passions of the Minde in General*, sig. V8^r.
14. *Ibid.*, sig. Y5^v.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Of course, "spirits" may refer to "animal spirits," but even those were not wholly material, as both Anna Corrias and Justin E.H. Smith have argued. See Corrias, "Imagination and Memory," pp. 89–99, and Smith, "Spirit as Intermediary," p. 270.
17. Wright, sig. M4^r.
18. *Ibid.*, sig. M4^r–M4^v.
19. Reynolds, *A Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soule of Man. With the severall Dignities and Corruptions thereunto belonging*, sig. D2^v–D3^r.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*
23. Bacon, p. 124.

24. Reynolds, sig. D4^r. See also Burton, who writes that sleepers, “by reason of humours and concourse of vapours troubling the phantasy, imagine many times absurd and prodigious things.” Burton, p. 253.
25. “Heavenly music” and “the music of the spheres” had both a Christian and pagan association. The music of the spheres, as Carla Zecher neatly defines it, arose from “a complex network of myths, with many variants.” “According to the Platonic tradition,” Zecher notes, “the music of the spheres derives from the creative tone emitted by the *logos*.” Zecher, “Spirituality and Christian Passion,” p. 298. Christian tradition, of course, interpreted that *logos* as the Word of God. The music of the spheres is well-suited to a play such as *Pericles*, then, for the myth suits both the pagan background of the play and also the Christian sensibilities of the audience.
26. Seth Lerer, for instance, writes baldly about the music of the spheres in *Pericles*: “No one else can hear it.” Lerer, *Shakespeare’s Lyric Stage*, p. 195. Wilson and Calore cautiously suggest, “It is not clear whether music would have actually been played at this moment in the original performances of the play.” They add, however, that “[t]he absence of musical cues in this part of the scene does not mean that music ‘sounded’ only in Pericles’s imagination, since his words could have been intended to work as implicit stage directions.” Wilson and Calore, *Music in Shakespeare*, p. 302. See also Lindley, Davies, Barker, McIntosh, Cutts, and Ortiz. Lindley, *Shakespeare and Music*, p. 140; Davies, *The Idea of Woman in Renaissance Literature*, p. 150; Barker, “Themes and Variations in Shakespeare’s *Pericles*,” p. 414; McIntosh, p. 106; Cutts, “*Pericles*’ ‘Most Heavenly Musicke’,” p. 174; Ortiz, *Broken Harmony: Shakespeare and the Politics of Music*, p. 163.
27. Early sources on this human inability include both Boethius and Ficino. Boethius, *Fundamentals of Music*, p. 9; Ficino, *Meditations on the Soul*, p. 67. See Ammann for more on Ficino’s writings on music, the soul, and the planets. Ammann, “Music and Melancholy.” For early scholarship on the topic, see both Marsh and Fludd. Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, p. 43; Fludd, *The Temple of Music*, p. 41. For recent publications on Shakespeare and the music of the spheres, see Minear’s *Reverberating Song in Shakespeare and Milton* and Ortiz’s *Broken Harmony*, especially chapter 6.
28. Writing about who hears what at this moment in *Pericles*, F.W. Sternfeld states, “Theatrical tradition posited that the heavenly strains were audible only to those for whom the gods had a message.” Sternfeld, *Music in Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 245. Sternfeld does not spell out that divine message, perhaps assuming that his readers will understand it to be the oracle from Diana.

29. In *Vanities of the Eye*, Stuart Clark highlights a distinction between “imagination” and “phantasy” as it appeared in some medieval and early modern texts. “Imagination” and “fancy” were used interchangeably, he notes, but “fantasies” were “the sensible forms [...] of external things which [the imagination] retained and manipulated.” Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 42. I follow the lead of Robert Burton when I equate “fantasy” and “imagination,” since his definition of the faculty begins with “*Phantasie*, or Imagination,” and his marginal note identifying the subject of the paragraphs on the imagination is simply “*phantasie*.” Burton, p. 159.
30. Morley, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music*, pp. 180–181.
31. Brailowsky, *The Spider and the Statue*, p. 179.
32. Austern, p. 107.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
34. Austern writes extensively about such metaphors. *Ibid.*, pp. 120–127.
35. Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholie*, p. 102.
36. Austern, p. 212.
37. *Ibid.*
38. Spring, “The English lute ‘fantasia-style’ and the music of Cuthbert Hely,” pp. 65–66.
39. Brailowsky, p. 86.
40. For more on the therapeutic nature of music in Shakespeare’s plays, see Hoener. Hoener, *Musical Cures of Melancholy and Mania in Shakespeare*, pp. 55–67.
41. Mellers, *Harmonious Meeting*, p. 140.
42. Minear, p. 20.
43. *Ibid.*
44. Wilkins, *The Painfull Aduentures of Pericles*, sig. I4^r.
45. *Ibid.*, sig. I4^v.
46. Many critics have noted the meta-dramatic nature of *Pericles*. Eggers, Jr., “Shakespeare’s Gower and the Role of the Authorial Presenter,” pp. 434–443. Fabiny, “The Ear as a Metaphor: Aural Imagery in Shakespeare’s Great Tragedies and its Relation to Music and Time in *Cymbeline* and *Pericles*,” pp. 189–201; Flower, “Disguise and Identity in *Pericles*, Prince of Tyre,” pp. 30–41; Hoener, “Gower and Shakespeare in *Pericles*,” pp. 461–479.
47. Gouk, *Music, Science and Natural Magic in Seventeenth-Century England*, p. 31.
48. Clark, p. 43.

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Reconciliation and Recreation at the Meeting Place for Opposites: Revisiting Donne's Imagined Corners

Anton E. Bergstrom

That the imagination makes things that are absent to the senses present to the mind was a widely held assumption in the early modern period.¹ There was debate, however, about whether the imagination truly created novel images, or if it merely replicated and recombined the sensible forms of sensory perception.² I claim that this debate inspired John Donne's imaginative recreation—through his poetry—of things not visible to the present senses, such as, for example, the immortal human soul, the Four Last Things, or the operations of God's grace. Imaginative recreation features prominently in Donne's Holy Sonnet beginning "At the round Earths imagind corners," which includes his only use of the adjective "imagined" in his poetry.³ Conjuring the paradoxical image of the corners of the globe, Donne's use of "imagined" lays bare the poem's unreal scenario, which acts out an anticipated future event described in scripture and taken on

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Switzerland AG 2024
M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_13

faith: the resurrection of the dead on the Day of Judgment. Within the framework of Renaissance faculty psychology, the sonnet's opening literary image would be understood to stimulate the reader's imagination, prompting the production of a mental image, in this case, one with no direct correspondence to perceived external reality.⁴ Donne thus self-reflexively calls attention to the cognitive activity his poem immediately demands of his reader.

My argument is in part influenced by the previous work of John Carey, particularly his seminal though admittedly controversial study, *John Donne: Life, Mind and Art*.⁵ Although the subtitle—*Life, Mind and Art*—gestures toward the relationship between embodiment and imagination that this volume explores, Carey does not take an explicitly cognitive approach. Nevertheless, Carey's concluding chapter, "Imagined Corners" (which takes its cue from Donne's Holy Sonnet noted above), analyzes the gravitation of Donne's imagination toward "meeting places for opposites."⁶ Carey points, for instance, to Donne's "Extasie," from *The Songs and Sonets*, saying the poem "reconciles body with soul."⁷ Borrowing Carey's apt use of "imagined corners" to characterize Donne's poetic imagination, we could say that Donne is preoccupied with making imagined corners in his writings. This chapter thus revisits the imagined corners of two Donne poems—the secular love poem, "Extasie," and the Holy Sonnet, "At the round Earths imagind corners"—as each work foregrounds its imagined scenario, thereby inviting the reader to reflect on the mental images that each poem prompts the imagination to create. Likewise, each poem hinges on the imagination's role as one of the internal senses, which, as Katharine Park posits, "bridge the gap" between the particular, external sensations of embodiment and the highest cognitive operations of the intellectual soul.⁸ Analyzing the two poems alongside Donne's own comments on the imagination and cognition—both direct and implicit, taken from his verse and prose letters, sermons, and devotional writings—helps to reframe the subject of Donne's imagination as, more specifically, Donne's relationship to the imagination as a cognitive faculty.

Donne's imagined corners beckon the reader's own imagination to reconcile oppositional concepts and recreate scenarios that have no direct parallel in sensory experience.⁹ At the same time, Donne's poems insist on the embodiment of the imagination, but within a bodily reality that is also the means to approach and comprehend the spiritual, the eternal, and God, who is understood within Donne's Christian framework as the basis of reality. The pronounced stimulation and extension of the reader's

imagination in the process of reading Donne's poems testify to the imagination's nature as both embodied and ensouled. Donne understood the imagination as the brain's meeting place for opposites: of reader and author, body and soul, humanity and divinity. The imagination emerges as a necessary yet imperfect faculty. It is essential for his reader's understanding of things that cannot be experienced through the senses, and it can aid devotion, yet its activities are bound within the corrupted framework of fallen humanity, and so remain unreliable.

COGNITION AND DONNE

Donne's many critics provide evidence that his poetry activates, exercises, and sometimes frustrates his readers' cognition. Samuel Johnson, one of Donne's sharpest readers, recognized the powerful, even violent nature of the metaphysical "combination of dissimilar images."¹⁰ In the mid-twentieth century, the New Critics were, for similar reasons, drawn to Donne rather than repulsed; his paradoxical poetry challenged these critics in their efforts to discover hidden aesthetic unities.¹¹ Both examples indicate the cognitive labor Donne invites through the reconciliation of seeming opposites in language, imagery, and themes. A cognitive approach to Donne's understanding of the imagination provides further context to aspects of his style that have generated immense critical activity.¹²

The imagination and its role among the faculties informed how Donne conceived of the human being—body, mind, and soul. As Stuart Clark notes, "The imagination was positioned at a crucial borderline, being required to complete both a sequence and a hierarchy; before and below it came sense, after and above it, intellect."¹³ In the seventeenth century, the imagination played an increasingly important mediating role in cognitive processes.¹⁴ As Deanna Smid observes, "most early modern theorists agree that the imagination receives information from the outward, physical senses and creates—or recreates—images that eventually reach the understanding."¹⁵ In his sermons, Donne draws upon the categories and structures of faculty psychology to explain the operations of the mind as well as sin, vision, and poetry. For instance, in an early sermon preached at Whitehall, April 21, 1616, Donne outlines a fairly conventional, if streamlined, understanding of faculty psychology to contrast outward temptation through the senses with a heart set on wickedness through habitual sin: "a man receives figures and images of sin, into his Fancie and Imagination, and leads them on to his Understanding and Discourse, to

his Will, to his Consent, to his Heart.”¹⁶ The passage emphasizes the imagination’s medial position for Donne: the place in the brain where incoming images are processed and passed on, upward and inward, to the higher faculties of the understanding, judgment, and will. Donne’s mention of the heart, signifying the site of a person’s deepest thoughts and affections, also shows how Donne applies faculty psychology to his devotional concerns.

Donne’s use of the verb “imagine” in Meditation 10 of *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* (initially composed during an illness in late 1623 and published 1624) helps to further position Donne’s conception of the imagination. Donne writes: “only that place, or garment rather, which we can *imagine*, but not *demonstrate*, That light, which is the very emanation of the light of *God*, [...] only that bends not to this *Center*, to *Ruine*; that which was not made of *Nothing*, is not threatned with this annihilation.”¹⁷ Anthony Raspa notes that “Donne uses *demonstrate* in the archaic sense of outward exhibition (counterbalancing his use of ‘imagine’), rather than in the still current scientific sense of showing by proposition.”¹⁸ Donne, in associating the imagination with God’s creative principle (which, in the orthodox view, made the universe from nothing), contrasts that which cannot be openly exhibited with that which can be imagined. He thus suggests that the imagination can conceive of things that are invisible to sensory perception.

VIRTUAL COMMUNICATIONS

Donne’s presuppositions about the imagination’s creative powers and its mediating role in cognition undergird much of his poetry. “Extasie” encourages the reader to imagine the invisible union of two disembodied souls. In his note on the title, Theodore Redpath identifies the cognitive and communicative situation of the poem: “The predominant meaning of the title is pretty certainly the mystical state in which a soul, liberated from the body, contemplates divine truths. The souls of the lovers, which, during the poem, coalesce through love [...] communicate their thoughts in this state to the understanding listener.”¹⁹ How does one imagine and communicate spiritual thoughts so that they can be apprehended by the understanding of another person?

Before I begin my reading of “Extasie,” I want to turn to a few of Donne’s prose and verse letters to better situate the poem within its cognitive and communicative frameworks, as Donne’s letters establish his

interest in the imagination's role in mediating written, and perhaps spiritual, communication between two people. Surprisingly, only a few scholars connect "Extasie" to another of Donne's accounts of ecstasy between souls, his prose letter to his close friend Henry Goodyer, dated October 9, (1607 or 1610).²⁰ Embedded in a larger discussion of the nature of souls, the passage develops the image of writing letters as an experience of dis-embodiment and re-embodiment:

Sir, I make account that this writing of letters, when it is with any seriousness, is a kind of ecstasy, and a departure and secession and suspension of the soul, which doth then communicate itself to two bodies. And as I would every day provide for my soul's last convoy, though I know not when I shall die, and perchance I shall never die, so for these ecstasies in letters, I oftentimes deliver myself over in writing when I know not when those letters shall be sent to you.²¹

Donne describes letter writing as the communication of a soul between two bodies, that of the writer and that of the addressee. Like the ecstatic soul Donne imagines, the mental process of reading this very passage conveys the literary image of the soul from the mind of the author to that of the reader. In a verse letter to Henry Wotton, Donne writes that "More then kisses, Letters mingle Soules: / For thus, frinds absent speake," further adding, "But for these / I could Ideate nothing which could please" (1–4). For Donne, the interaction of writer and reader through letter writing stimulates his imagination to generate the ideas he wishes to communicate. Comments about "these ecstasies in letters" or that "Letters mingle Soules" remind his reader that written communication takes place between embodied—and ensouled—human faculties: the writer thinks and composes the piece of writing, which is then physically passed on in some form to another body, who takes the written information in through the eyes and eventually, through the imagination, into the higher faculties of the rational soul.

Other verse letters describe the written text as a living being created by the writer that functions as a go-between. For example, one of Donne's verse letters titled "To Mr. T. W." begins:

Haste thee harsh Verse as fast as thy lame measure
Will giue thee leaue, to him my payne and pleasure.
I haue giuen thee, and yet thou art to weake,
Feete, and a reasoning Soule and tong to speake. (1–4)²²

The speaker portrays his poetic creature as a body that should move “fast” with its “Feete” and use its “tong to speake,” but that also possesses “a reasoning Soule.” The embodied “Verse” functions as an agent of reconciliation: “Plead for me and so by thyne and my labor, / I ame thy Creator, thou my Sauior” (5–6). As with any poet, Donne’s cognitive labor creates, but it is the labor the poem activates in the imagination of the reader that saves, or recreates, Donne’s speaker by communicating his thoughts and feelings to the addressee. Donne’s verse letter thus suggests that it is that reader’s imagination which repairs deficiencies in the poetic creature, and which activates the work’s potential to speak and convey thought.

SEEING AND KNOWING THE INVISIBLE IN “EXTASIE”

The imagination takes on a similar role in “Extasie,” which beckons the reader’s imagination to reconcile and recreate the disparate elements perceived in the text as it forms a mental picture of them. The first five quatrains of “Extasie” stimulate and strain the imagination, constantly prompting the creation of new or changing mental images to convey the invisible coalescing of the two souls. The poem opens with a beautiful, layered account of objects in parallel states of leisure:

Where like a pillowe on a bed
 A pregnant banck swell’d vp to rest
 The violets reclyning head
 Sate wee twoe, one anothers best. (1–4)

The opening lines are particular and vivid yet difficult to precisely understand. The relative adverb “Where” appears first, at some distance from its verb, “Sate,” which only arrives in the fourth line. In between, Donne nests a simile and at least two metaphors, with each image being an implicit similitude for “wee twoe,” the primary subjects and speakers of the poem, who are sitting on the bank. It seems the sloping ground is compared to “a pillowe on a bed” for the metaphoric “head” of a flower, a violet. Although the images come readily to the mind’s eye, the syntax complicates points of comparison, and the visuals begin to entangle. Redpath rightly notes that when the speaker describes how “Our eyebeames twisted; and did thred / Our eyes vpon one double stringe” (7–8), the image is meant to be conjured but then passed over, for if the image

of threading eyeballs is “fully apprehended” it becomes horrific.²³ The initial quatrains activate, extend, and frustrate the reader’s imagination with their figurative manipulations and multiplications.

The image of the pregnant bank, for instance, shapes the reader’s initial apprehension of the lovers’ “meanes to make vs one” (10), but that understanding is soon frustrated when the speaker says that “pictures on our eyes to gett / Was all our propagation” (11–12). A “single violet transplant [...] Redoubles still, and multiplies” (37, 40), combining both the earlier flower and propagation imagery. The lovers’ bodies, “firmly Cimented” at the hand (5), will, later, “like sepulchrall statues lay” (18). Some of these conceits extend the image in the mind, while others arrest, modify, or multiply, prompting the reader’s imagination to wrestle with formulating a mental image. This process mirrors the out-of-body encounter of the speakers: “Our soules which to aduance their state / Were gone out, honge twixt her, and mee” (15–16). With access to firm understanding suspended, reading the poem becomes an experience of imaginative ecstasy, elevating the reader and the speakers toward higher cognition. Prolonging the activity of imagining heightens attention and, perhaps, forestalls judgment, with the intellect able to ascertain circumstances only to a limited extent. Instead, the images seem to hang and meld like the suspended souls of the lovers.

The suspension of mental images facilitates the intellect’s reflection upon that which cannot be perceived externally, or even fully apprehended within the mind. As Donne’s letter to Goodyer, introduced earlier, considers the relationship between ecstasy, writing, and thought, the letter clarifies the importance of reflection in Donne’s understanding of higher cognition. The passage addresses the faculties of the human body, mind, and soul, with the soul imagined in tripartite form: vegetive, sensible, and rational or intellective. Donne writes:

For as the greatest advantage which man’s soul is thought to have beyond others, is that which they call *Actum reflexum*, and *iteratum* (for beasts do the same things as we do, but they do not consider nor remember the circumstances and inducements; and by what power and faculty it is that they do them), so of those that they call *Actum reflexum* the noblest is that which reflects upon the soul itself, and considers and meditates it.²⁴

Donne believes that the higher faculties of the mind, particularly reflection and repeated reflection, which are embedded in the intellective soul,

set human beings apart from animals. The noblest form of reflection is a form of self-reflexivity, that is, reflection on “the soul itself.” The imagination recreates that upon which the intellect reflects. To contemplate one’s soul would thus involve forming an image or idea of one’s soul, in a way mentally distancing oneself as an object upon which to reflect. The imagination plays an essential role in this highest of cognitive functions, facilitating inward sight which leads to self-awareness.

Donne foregrounds the creation of images in “Extasie” through the hyper-visualization of the first twenty lines, inviting the reader to reflect on the images being suspended in the mind. The speakers recount that “[a]ll day the same our Postures were / And wee said nothing all the day” (19–20). Silence and immobility suggest two visual arts—sculpture and portraiture—as well as Sidney’s conception of poetry as “a speaking picture.”²⁵ The many metaphors of the poem—condensed, doubled, difficult, and sometimes unrepresentable—achieve a meaning that goes beyond the sense of any one word or image.²⁶ This propagation of mental images generates a multiplicity of meanings, which, the poem suggests, approximates the spiritual language perceivable through love and mindfulness:

If any soe by Loue refin’d
That hee soules language vnderstood,
And by good Loue, were growne all minde
Within convenient distance stood

Hee (though hee knewe not which soule spake,
Because both meant, both spake the same)
Might thence a newe concoction take,
And part farre purer than hee came. (21–28)

In the sixth and seventh quatrains, the poem hypothesizes the introduction of a third person, a witness to the union of the lovers that too many critics of the poem seem to pass over.²⁷ The subjunctive imagining of “any” person watching marks a textual cue from Donne for readers to imagine themselves as this “any” and thus reflect upon “soules language” to gain understanding through “Loue.” The speakers (“both”) envision an observer, a poetic voyeur, yet not one leering at their intimacy but rather one who learns higher truths from their example and departs having obtained “a newe concoction.” According to Renaissance physiology, there were three processes of concoction, involving the digestion of food,

the formation of blood, and the refinement of the animal spirits.²⁸ The *OED* cites Donne's use of the word in a sermon to mean, "[r]ipening, maturing, or bringing to a state of perfection,"²⁹ so the use here likely accords with Donne's widespread fascination with processes of refinement and purification, including bodily processes. The "newe concoction" suggests the witness has been so refined by love that he now understands and is "farre purer then hee came." Donne's poem is attempting to direct the reader's imagination and teach the intellect to comprehend the immaterial union of love.

As "Extasie" imagines the revitalizing effects of new understanding on a mindful reader, Donne's verse letters that imagine the receiving end of the communicative exchange shed further light on Donne's expectations about possible effects on the reader. In another poem exchanged with "To Mr. T. W." (beginning with "Pregnant againe"), the speaker tells his friend: "And now thyne alms is given, thy letter's red / The body risen againe, the which was ded" (7–8). Although the "body" could be interpreted to be that of the letter, I agree with Ramie Targoff's interpretation that Donne's speaker is being resurrected.³⁰ I would add that the speaker in this poem is also a reader, one raised up through written communication mediated by the imagination. "To Mr. R.W.," likely written to Rowland Woodward (the brother of Thomas), also concludes with a resurrection effected by a go-between literary creation: "Oh I was dead: but since thy song new life did give / I recreated even by thy Creature live" (13–14). The religious language ensures the double meaning of "recreated," both as refreshing leisure and a renewed creation. In "Extasie," we see that recreation characterizes both the ecstatic union and the imagined witness to it.

Much of "Extasie" should be read as the lovers' indirect instructions to this imagined observer, revealing their knowledge to him: "Wee then who are this newe soule knowe / Of what wee are compos'd and made" (45–46). Although at first the speakers describe their "soules" (15), thus aligning their selves with their bodies, they later describe their "bodies" (50), distinguishing them from the newfound "wee" that constitutes their unified soul:

But oh, Alass, soe long, soe farre
 Our bodies why doe wee forbear?
 They're ours, though they're not wee, wee are
 Th' Intelligences, they the Spheare. (49–52)

These lines might seem to indicate a Neoplatonic denigration of the body, but the lovers subsequently express gratitude for their bodies, which enabled their communication with and knowledge of the other: “Wee owe them thanks, because they thus / Did vs, to vs at first convey” (53–54).³¹ Later, the image of the body signifying the soul transforms into the codex and with it the meaning it conveys: “Loues mysteries in soules doe growe / But yet the Bodie is his Booke” (71–72). This reciprocal body-soul relationship recalls lines from Donne’s letters that describe the text as a mediator between author and reader. The language here also accords with other *Songs and Sonets* that describe love as a transcendent mystery. At the close of “The Relique,” for instance, the speaker says, “All measure, and all language I should passe / Should I tell what a Miracle shee was” (32–33). In “Valediction of the Booke,” Donne’s speaker claims “all Deuinitye / Is loue or wonder” (28–29).

“Extasie” directs the intellect to apprehend love as a form of enlightenment, but the literary images it deploys are often of material objects, like a book, showing that Donne understood that sense perception led to the imagination, which, through recombination, could point to higher realities beyond the five senses. Faculty psychology undergirds Donne’s account of how the corporeal and spiritual interact:

As our bloud labours to begett
 Spiritts as like soules as it can
 Because such fingers need to knitt
 That subtile knott which makes vs man

Soe must pure Louers soules descend
 T’affections, and to faculties
 Which sence may reach, and apprehend
 Else a great Prince in prison lyes. (61–68)

With the soul being described as “a great Prince in prison” if cut off from the faculties and senses, the hierarchized ladder of components that make up the human being is shown to operate both ways. The higher functions are reliant on the lower operations, even if they are viewed as superior.

Donne’s view that the corporeal supports the spiritual is evident in “Extasie” in the way that Donne needs “fingers” for his “[s]piritts”; Targoff notes that “Donne has difficulty imagining disembodied agents.”³²

Donne provides corporeal metaphors to aid the interpreter in visualizing that which is immaterial, such as the spirits concocted from the blood that were believed to work the nerves and were sometimes “regarded as a medium for the operation of the rational soul.”³³ Like the imagination, the spirits occupied a liminal position within the ensouled and embodied person.³⁴ How does one convey the interactions of souls in a way that feels as real as interactions between bodies? In “Extasie,” Donne suggests that the soul is not merely some abstract idea; rather, it is a particular living thing, as is the love that “[i]nter-inanimates” (42) the two souls.

At the poem’s conclusion, the two lovers turn back to the imagined witness and by extension the reader:

And if some Louer, such as wee
 Haue heard this Dialogue of one
 Let him still marke vs, hee shall see
 Small change, when wee’are to bodies gone. (73–76)

The poem anticipates a reader whose imagination has been animated to reconcile the figurative variations as well as conceptualizations of the body and soul. The poem’s self-portrayal as a “[d]ialogue of one” suggests silent speaking, but the reader is also invited by the speakers to “marke vs” and to “see”—but to mark and see a non-visible change. In other words, the poem invites perception of that which cannot be perceived by the senses. The paradoxical dialogue of one also describes the interactions of the body and soul within the unified yet doubled, rather than dualistic, person Donne believes in.

AT THE LIMITS OF THE IMAGINATION

“Extasie” would seem to applaud the embodied imagination’s ability to access understanding of the transcendent union of love. Although we have seen how Donne’s works testify to the imagination’s creative power, Donne never celebrates the imagination in and of itself. In fact, at times Donne argues for the limits of the imagination. In his sermon peached at St. Paul’s on January 29, 1626, Donne suggests that human creativity copies God’s original actions, for God created the world based on his “eternall pre-conception, an eternall Idea, in himself before.”³⁵ While the imagination facilitates higher cognitive engagement with abstracts and universals, the imagination cannot fully access the eternal, which is beyond

human understanding.³⁶ Able to transcend, at times, sense experience yet still bound within time, the imagination, for Donne, can only simulate divine creation.

In other sermons, Donne, in keeping with the dominant habit of thought, expresses outright suspicion concerning the imagination, noting its illusory nature, susceptibility to temptation, and potential to escape the rational soul's control. In a Whitsunday sermon, for example, Donne describes the Spirit of the Lord assisting him: "With me in my sleep, to keep out the Tempter from the fancy, and imagination, which is his proper Scene, and Spheare."³⁷ Elsewhere, Donne criticizes the imagination for being the upper limit of too much thinking: "they onely imagine, fancy a vain thing, which is but a waking dream."³⁸

Donne's religious poems, particularly the Holy Sonnets, are likewise less enthusiastic about the imagination's ability to facilitate understanding of the transcendent. Replete with references to melancholy and dejection, the Holy Sonnets portray a speaker whose psychological faculties are disordered. Of greater significance than the effects of melancholy, however, is the common predicament of a fallen humanity, which is emphasized throughout the sequence. As the speaker mourns in Holy Sonnet "Batter my hart," "Reason your viceroy in me, me should defend, / But is captiv'd and proves weake or vntrew" (7–8). Of course, this does not mean that Donne's Holy Sonnets do not attempt to stir higher cognition. David Marno argues that Donne's devotional poems highlight the "cognitive aspects of affective devotion," the key to which is attention. Marno claims that Donne's Holy Sonnets "represent the process of seeking faith by making the reader experience what it feels like to think a thought."³⁹ And where does the experience of thinking a thought take place when reading a poem? It's in the imagination.

Desire for self-awareness informs Donne's complaint in his letter to Goodyer (discussed above) that some religious doctrines have been arrived at by lack of inquiry and debate: "And so many doctrines have grown to be the ordinary diet and food of our spirits, [...] accepted in a lazy weariness, when men, so they might have something to rely upon, and to excuse themselves from more painful inquisition, never examined what that was."⁴⁰ The intellect should judge as true only those beliefs that have been consciously reflected upon, and the intellect requires the imagination to hold up the objects for judgment. The letter demonstrates that Donne sees the communication of writing as an opportunity for both inquiry and self-reflection. Donne's concern for reflection and conscious thinking,

enabled by the imagination, would seem to be at the heart of the self-reflexivity noted in so many of his poems. This includes Holy Sonnet “At the round Earths imagind corners,” which, as I noted in my introduction, calls attention to its activation of the imagination.

IMAGINING THE SPACE FOR GRACE

“At the round Earths imagind corners” pivots from commands to requests—from the speaker’s flurry of directions to the imagination through the octave’s sweeping depiction of the general resurrection, to his supplications to God to activate his understanding of his own limitations and wrongdoing. Through the sonnet’s turn, the speaker’s instruction ultimately directs the reader’s cognition toward cultivating a properly receptive mental state, rather than demanding or attempting to seize access to the divine. Given the theological understanding of grace as an unearned gift from God, Donne trains the mind through restraining the imagination to patiently wait for God’s potential grace. Imagining the divine, Donne suggests, might not be the best means to know it.

The exaggerated mental image-making of the sonnet’s octave cannot access higher understanding. It is worth considering why. The opening depicts what is, for Christians, an anticipated future event, the Day of Judgment, when the bodies of all humankind will be resurrected and each person, body and soul, will be judged by the Son of God. The poem begins with the speaker’s imperative:

At the round Earths imagind corners blow
Your trumpets Angels, and Arise Arise
From Death you numberles infinities
Of Soules and to your scattered bodyes go[.] (1–4)

The octave is one of Donne’s most elaborate depictions of a specific event described in the New Testament. Revelation 7:1 begins: “And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth.”⁴¹ Revelation 8 assigns trumpets to seven angels, to signal a set of tribulations. Commanding angels and souls, the speaker’s imperative inserts him into the biblical narrative, exaggerating his creative power.

Despite this self-aggrandizement, the octave bumps up against the limits of visualization. In her chapter from this volume, “The Iconoclastic Imagination,” Amy Cooper points to this poem as an example of Donne’s

fondness for the square circle image as an image that cannot be visualized. Donne's redundant expression, "numberles infinities," doubly emphasizes the difficulty of conceiving of these events. If a resurrection of the dead were to take place, the total amount of human beings would be a definite number, albeit an enormous one. Donne instead describes the total as beyond conception, like the squared circle. Cooper also puts forward the idea of cognitive overload, an effect we could ascribe to this Holy Sonnet, particularly its multitudinous list of different deaths:

All whom the Flood did and fyre shall overthrow
 All whom Warr, dearth, age, agues, tyrannyes,
 Dispayre, Law, Chance, hath slayne, and you whose eyes
 Shall behold God, and never tast deaths wo. (5–8)

Donne cycles through different ways of dying in rapid succession, straining the imaginative faculty while also bypassing particularity for universal categories of death, such as war, age, law, and chance, etc. The rushing variety of abstracted deaths overloads the imagination, providing scant particularities to help the reader produce definite mental images. The octave's final image, "you whose eyes / Shall behold God," is another example that lies beyond visualization, for the "[s]hall" indicates another future event, specifically the time when those people will eventually perceive God directly and no longer have to imagine him, as the reader presently does.

The octave calls attention to the effort to imagine, which sets up the sestet's turn away from a sweeping view of grand subject matter and toward the specificity of the speaker's feelings. Marno describes how "the work of attention dissolves into the act of imagining the actors of the Last Judgment," until the speaker turns on the poem's *volta* from common to special grace.⁴² But which particular actors does Donne's speaker imagine? Commanding only common nouns, "Angels" and "Soules," and dividing those souls into general categories according to death, the speaker's imagination attempts to access the universal concepts of higher cognition. The mental process the octave stimulates contrasts with the training of the witness in "Extasie," who learns to perceive the soul as a particular living thing rather than some abstract idea.

The sestet favors still and present mental images, which encourage reflection, in contrast to the octave's aggressive stimulation of multiple images of an undetermined future. At the same time, the earlier imaginative recreation of the Day of Judgment has allowed the speaker's intellect

to judge that he is not ready to face that day, or God, directly. The reader can feel the effort to imagine in the first half and then the desire to set that activity aside:

But let them sleepe, Lord, and me mourne a space,
 For if above all these my Sins abound
 Tis late to aske abundance of thy grace
 When we are there: Here on this lowly ground
 Teach me how to repent, for that's as good
 As if thou hadst Seald my pardon with thy blood. (9–14)

Revelation 8:1 describes “the space of half an hour” that precedes the tribulations, which suggests that the poem’s turn away from the grand commotion remains, in part, a re-enactment of these apocalyptic chapters. The comment to “let them sleepe” associates the previous imagery with the fanciful, futile images of dreams.

Within the period’s cognitive frameworks, the phantasms of sleep were not considered to be under the intellect’s control. In Meditation 15 from *Devotions*, when considering his inability to sleep during his illness, Donne describes the effect on the imagination of altered states of bodily existence, such as illness and sleep. Donne associates the fancy with the involuntary cognitive activity of dreams: “hee may bee ashamed of his waking *dreames*, and of his *Melancholique* fancying out a horrid and an affrightfull figure of that *death* which is so like sleepe.”⁴³ Donne laments his inability to control the inward sight of the fancy: “And why, since I have lost my delight in all *objects*, cannot I discontinue the facultie of seeing them, by closing mine Eies in *sleepe*?”⁴⁴ The fancy is not wholly under the control of the intellect, and it responds to corporeal, emotional, and spiritual turmoil, such as illness and fear.⁴⁵ In the Holy Sonnet, the speaker’s embodied fancy and imagination are prey to the spiritual dread that pervades the octave and overloads the mental production of images, images which would engage the passions, producing only more fear in a kind of imaginative-affective feedback loop.

The speaker’s fear also motivates his forestalling of the final judgment upon which the sonnet turns. The request for “a space,” an expansion of time, contrasts the octave’s contraction of time, which had brought the future to the present, revealing the imagination as a central faculty for operating within time. Donne describes time in *Devotions* as an “*Imaginary halfe-nothing*,”⁴⁶ suggesting that time is something humans can assign a

mental concept to even if it is not something we can ever directly perceive through the senses. The imagination, for Donne, takes part in not only forming mental images of external sensible forms, but it also seems to facilitate the conception of abstract mental concepts, such as time.

Donne's *Devotions*, Kate Narveson has recently argued, deploy a framework for prayer which engages a human being's location in time: "The petitioner inhabited a space defined by the intersection between 'hope that,' requiring the use of the narrative imagination, and 'hope in,' requiring knowledge of God."⁴⁷ I see a similar structure in this Holy Sonnet. The speaker turns away from future anticipation, which necessarily involves imagination, to focus on knowledge of the present state of his soul, which will impact it for eternity. Imagining that future, however unsatisfying, facilitates his turn to self-reflection. He needs to focus on the here and now. The poem rejects the inconstant mind that jumps around in time, or that fixates on the future while ignoring present realities. Cultivating awareness of one's embodied and ensouled present is the best way to approach eternity. While repentance involves the activation of memory, recalling past mistakes and omissions, the poem noticeably does not recount those past objects of repentance. The speaker grows mindful, focusing on the still space of the present moment. "[T]his lowly ground" contracts the dynamic scope of the sonnet in the octave into one small tangible space. The physicality of the closing impression of the Lord's seal contrasts with the generalized mental impressions of the future vision. But, as Clark has noted, an impression in wax is one of the recurrent metaphors to describe visual cognition,⁴⁸ so the ending is not an outright rejection of images and the imaginative faculty. The final line relies on common metaphors for grace—sealing, blood—for the imagination still plays a role in the cognitive preparations for the encounter with God's grace.

CONCLUSION

A cognitive account of Donne's imagination and poetics would seem to confirm Carey's central argument in "Imagined Corners," but with the added explanation that this is also because the imagination was, in Donne's understanding, the brain's meeting place for divergent things: of body and soul, humanity and divinity, author and reader, future and present. But as Carey says about Donne, "though he liked joining things he also liked the joint to show."⁴⁹ Donne's poetry insists that the body and soul are both distinct and interdependent: the body giving form to the soul, and the

soul interpenetrating and undergirding the body. The embodied and ensouled imagination interacts in both directions, toward the material and immaterial. Donne's poetry indicates that the imagination is central to the soul's activities, and yet as fallen creatures, Donne considers the imagination something that must also be restrained and taught by the divine intellect. The recreations of the imagination can reconcile the reader to the author and perhaps direct, as some of Donne's Divine Poems aspire, human makers and readers toward the divine maker, God. Paying attention to the imagination that Donne's poetry stimulated and sustained gives form, in a way, to the invisible imprint on the reader that his imagined corners pressed.

NOTES

1. Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 42, p. 44.
2. Smid, *The Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*, pp. 149–151.
3. The observation is based on Combs and Sullens's *Concordance* and my own searches through digitized editions of Donne's poetry. All quotations from Donne's poems are from the corresponding volume of *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*. I use the Westmoreland Sequence's arrangement and texts for the Holy Sonnets, given its preferable use of "dearth" rather than "Death" in line six of "At the round Earths imagind corners." Headings for Donne's poems follow the *Variorum*.
4. On the mental processes, see Park and Clark. Park, "The Organic Soul," p. 471; Clark, pp. 10–11.
5. Carey's study is too often remembered as simply a biography emphasizing Donne's Catholic apostasy and ambition, but "Imagined Corners" should be recognized as one of the most perceptive, synthesizing accounts of Donne's mind and art.
6. Carey, *John Donne*, p. 247.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 255.
8. Park, p. 471.
9. I am grateful to Mark Kaethler and Grant Williams for their feedback, which helped reorient the argument and refine the language. For instance, my use of the word "beckon" here is indebted to them.
10. Johnson, "Johnson, Samuel, 1755–c.1785," p. 218.
11. For a notable example, see Cleanth Brooks's "The Language of Paradox: 'The Canonization'."
12. Despite Donne's formidable intellect, he appears less frequently in cognitive literary studies than might be expected. In "Feeling Thought: Donne and the Embodied Mind," A.S. Byatt relates features of Donne's poetry to

- modern neuroscience. Other studies have begun to situate the imagination in Donne within historical cognitive frameworks. For example, in *John Donne's Poetry and Early Modern Visual Culture*, Ann Hollinshead Hurley examines Donne, cognition, and the imagination within the context of the post-Reformation crisis of the image, and Daniel Derrin, in *Rhetoric and the Familiar in Francis Bacon and John Donne*, examines the two authors' rhetorical activations and exploitations of the familiar within the framework of faculty psychology.
13. Clark, p. 44.
 14. *Ibid.*, pp. 43–44. See also Park, “The Organic Soul.”
 15. Smid, p. 17.
 16. Donne, *Sermons*, vol. 1, sermon 2, p. 178. Donne frequently equates the fancy with the imagination, especially when the associations are meant to be negative.
 17. Donne, *Devotions*, p. 51.
 18. Raspa, *Devotions*, p. 150.
 19. Redpath, *The Songs and Sonets*, p. 221.
 20. Robbins notes the connection and dates the letter to 1610. Robbins, *The Complete Poems*, p. 169. Targoff explores the connection as well. Targoff, *John Donne, Body and Soul*, pp. 30–32.
 21. Donne, *The Major Works*, p. 144. Carey dates the letter to 1607. Carey, *The Major Works*, p. 448.
 22. This is one of four verse letters that Donne exchanged with Thomas Woodward when Donne was a young law student in London in the early 1590s.
 23. Redpath, p. 222. As Redpath notes, the poem engages Renaissance understandings of the operations of the eyes, which were variously said to either shoot out or receive beams from objects.
 24. Donne, *The Major Works*, p. 145.
 25. Sidney, “Defence of Poesy,” p. 217.
 26. See my dissertation “Holy Estrangement” for a brief discussion of the rhetorical understanding of the doubleness of metaphor in comparison with “Extasie.” Bergstrom, “Holy Estrangement,” pp. 83–84.
 27. Carey notes that “the poem is addressed to a third party.” Carey, *The Major Works*, p. 444.
 28. See *Oxford English Dictionary*, “concoction, *n.*,” 1.a, 1.b. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the word “concoction” was not yet used to signify a mixture, such as a drink or potion.
 29. *Ibid.*, 2.a.
 30. Targoff, p. 46.
 31. I concur with Targoff’s argument that Donne does not embrace “a Platonism that debases the flesh.” *Ibid.*, p. 57.

32. Ibid., p. 56.
33. Bono, "Medical Spirits and the Medieval Language of Life," p. 92, n. 4. See also *Oxford English Dictionary*, "spirit, n.," 21.a.
34. Carey writes that spirits "bridged divided worlds." Carey, *John Donne*, p. 253.
35. While Donne, in the sermon, links "the meanest artificer, through the wisest Philosopher, to God himself" via their pattern of acting and creating according to ideas—that is, "the pre-conceptions, fore-imaginings, designs, and patterns proposed to our selves beforehand"—the eternity of God's ideas sets them apart from human thoughts. Donne, *Sermons*, vol. 7, sermon 1, p. 60.
36. Park, p. 471. On cognition and universals, see Kessler, "The Intellectualive Soul," p. 491, pp. 508–509.
37. Donne, *Sermons*, vol. 7, sermon 18, p. 434.
38. Ibid., vol. 8, sermon 14, p. 327.
39. Marno, *Death Be not Proud*, p. 3.
40. Donne, *The Major Works*, p. 145.
41. *The Bible: Authorized King James Version*.
42. Marno, *Death Be not Proud*, pp. 155–156.
43. Donne, *Devotions*, p. 78.
44. Ibid.
45. Raspa, *Devotions*, p. 169.
46. Donne, *Devotions*, p. 71.
47. Narveson, "Imagining Prayer in Donne's *Devotions* and Herbert's Poems of Complaint," p. 140.
48. Clark, p. 2, pp. 14–15.
49. Carey, *John Donne*, p. 247.

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“I think h’as knocked his brains out”:
Unhealthy Imagination in *The Atheist’s*
Tragedy

Mark Kaethler

Cyril Tourneur’s *The Atheist’s Tragedy* has been regarded as a moral play, one that frames its “revenger,” Charlemont, atypically as someone who awaits providential justice rather than taking up this mantle himself.¹ The finale in which D’Amville, the titular villain, dashes out his own brains ostensibly exhibits God’s divine intervention by exacting His vengeance upon D’Amville for having had his friend Borachio murder Montferrers in the same manner earlier in the play. Rory Loughnane has recently examined the Calvinistic underpinnings of this sequence of events alongside Tourneur’s other writings to show that *The Atheist’s Tragedy* presents a more complex morality whereby “the play’s central opposition is found in the competing interpretations of D’Amville and Charlemont,” specifically through their differing “concepts of providence.”² The duality that Loughnane ascertains between the reprobate D’Amville who disregards the divine and the elect Charlemont who awaits God’s vengeance is apt,

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M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_14

especially given that the name of the former serves in part to direct the audience's attention to his final resting place. Like previous critics, however, Loughnane does not attend to the cognitive dimensions of this moral drama. Considering that the play focuses not only on the brain but also on the soul, senses, and other faculties to provide spiritual and mental assessments by and of Charlemont and D'Amville, this chapter posits that a cognitive approach to Tourneur's play is long overdue. By examining the imagination in Tourneur's play, I elucidate the overt contrast between the two characters, which is complicated by elaborate diagnoses of their mental habits, reflections upon their engagements with their environs, and quasi-scientific anatomizations of their cognitive faculties. The separation of D'Amville's brain from his body leaves only the "immortal soul," thereby stressing its central role in the "higher cognitive functions of imagination" that comprise the "intellect."³ This faculty remains operable after D'Amville's cognitive organ has been extirpated from his body and illuminates the immoral soul's neglect relative to his sensitive soul. A psychological paradigm thus informs Tourneur's dramatic action and is utilized to emphasize the Calvinistic psychology of the play, which juxtaposes damned D'Amville with elected Charlemont by way of their ability to exercise their intellect via divine guidance. Audience members ascertain models of the healthy and unhealthy imagination that rely upon Calvin's eschatological binary, and these contrasting habits of mind showcase the potential an audience member might have to discipline the unruly faculty, which moves fluidly within the faculties of the mind and outside the body through the senses as well as between the corporeal brain and ethereal soul. Although the imagination is essential to decode images derived from worldly experiences, it must be regulated by divine intellection if any hope of grace can be achieved.

This morally infused cognitive drama is not that different from Tourneur's first extant literary text *The Transformed Metamorphosis* (1600), in which he envisions his readers as theatergoers:

Marke, you spectators of this tragicke act,
 (If any rest vnmetamorphosed)
 O you whose soules with hel are not contract,
 Whose sacred light is not extinguished;
 Whose intellectuall tapers are not fed
 With Hells flame: marke the transformation,
 Wrought by the charmes of this rebellion.⁴

The mention of souls that are contracted with hell immediately evokes Calvin's concept of double predestination, but Tourneur also appeals to those whose intellect can be guided by divinity. The appeal to spectators' free will here—or at least their potential free will—corresponds with seventeenth-century drama's moderate attitudes toward Calvinism. These views are still influenced by Calvin's *Institutes* but are less staunch relative to those of theologians.⁵ Tourneur connects his spectators' limited spiritual liberty with their intellects, thereby giving free will a cognitive dimension. Tourneur acknowledges that his art may feed heavenly or hellish flames in which the intellect of his interpreter must be tempered by the divine, and his outlook corresponds with those of authors writing on the imagination and poetics. Both George Puttenham and Sir Philip Sidney perceive the imagination's equal ability to access divine truth and to dwell upon idolatrous pleasures. Sidney distinguishes between "*Eikastes*" and "*Phantastike*" to show that the former figures "foorth good things" and the latter "doth contrariwise, infect the fancie."⁶ Puttenham likewise portrays the human imagination as either the worldly equivalent to God's "diuine imagination" or "the euill and vicious disposition of the braine."⁷ Both late-Elizabethan authors suggest that mental health can be infected by an ill-disposed imagination, and Puttenham goes so far as to suggest that this not only has internal consequences for a person "but also in all his ordinarie actions and life which ensues."⁸ Tourneur's play extends Puttenham's theory by depicting D'Amville in this manner to dissuade spectators from emulating him. Hence, Tourneur is less concerned with his poetic process of creation and more with his work promoting "*Eikastes*" for his audience's edification through modeling a higher cognitive function of the imagination via his characters' deployment of their intellects.

The audience's minds are at greater liberty to harness the imagination for divine purposes than D'Amville's is. Hence, the elaborate diagnoses of D'Amville and Charlemont—either by quasi-scientific professionals or by their own reflections—serve to present spectators with unhealthy and healthy mental habits to emulate and avoid respectively. D'Amville is particularly emblematic of this attention to mental health, given that the play focuses on his brain and its eventual removal. Tourneur aligns unhealthy imagination with the figure of the reprobate to characterize an immoral person as mentally unhealthy and ultimately maladroit.⁹ Between Charlemont's conscientious self-diagnosis and the Doctor's summation of D'Amville's condition, Tourneur positions his spectators as interpreters of the spectrum of cognitive health. This ongoing interest in the play

illuminates what Susan Anderson's recent special issue on disability studies in early modern drama claims, namely that "the representation of cognitive impairment is still also linked to the body on stage."¹⁰ The providential conclusion in which God smites the atheist thus communicates the play's Calvinism, but its focus on the brain's departure from D'Amville's head coincides with the justice visited upon the religious reprobate, thereby establishing an anatomical correction that removes the fleshy organ and leaves only the immortal intellect of the imaginative soul. By extirpating the physical organ of cognition that D'Amville has used to manifest his schemes throughout the play, Tourneur demonstrates the necessity of the divinely inspired intellect to guide the imagination properly toward healthy action and higher cognition.

While Tourneur might appear to be disconnecting the body (brain) from the mind (soul), his characters' reliance upon their senses, material circumstances, and interactions to rectify their imaginations and ascertain the truth suggests instead that he presents the "fluid assemblage" Laurie Shannon, John Sutton, and Evelyn Tribble theorize in early modern literature, which "includes both a wealth of body-related parts and processes and a great diversity of psychological phenomena well beyond 'subjectivity' and 'mind,' 'self' and 'inwardness'."¹¹ *The Atheist's Tragedy* actually conveys the distinction between a healthy fluid cognitive assemblage and an unhealthy atheistic self-professed mastery through the underappreciated second pairing Tourneur establishes between the two brothers, D'Amville and Montferrers. D'Amville eventually meets the same end as his brother, as Borachio earlier declares "I knocked out's brains" when asked if Montferrers is dead (2.4.95).¹² The fact that Montferrers returns as a ghostly spirit, ostensibly from heaven, ought to remind D'Amville that the soul rather than the brain ought to be prioritized. However, unlike Charlemont, D'Amville is unable to make this connection. By the end of the play, God righteously exacts vengeance through the same act of violence D'Amville performed on his brother—knock for knock, brain for brain—and his spirit ostensibly descends to hell. D'Amville's Calvinistic tragedy is thus the atheist's cognitive inability to connect his brain via the imagination to a spiritual assemblage that includes his immortal soul.

Tourneur's Calvinistic psychology is clearly influenced by theologian William Perkins's *A Treatise of Mans Imaginations Shewing His natural euill thoughts: His want of good thoughts: The way to reforme them*, which was printed in 1607, five years after Perkins's death. Prior to this sermon, Perkins had written on the imagination in *A direction for the government*

of the tongue according to Gods word (1593), claiming that "imagination are no things but shadows of things. And as an image of man in a glasse hath no power in it, but only serves to resemble & represent the bodie of a man: so it is with the phantasie and conceit of the minde & no otherwise."¹³ His message changes considerably in his later sermon, for the imagination now holds immense power. Drawing upon Genesis 8:21, Perkins writes that "*the Imagination of mans heart is euill euen from his youth*" and causes "*illnesse of mans naturall cogitations.*"¹⁴ The change in Perkins's approach reflects Stuart Clark's observation that in the seventeenth century the "imagination was no longer one among many auxiliary powers of the soul, but one of the three or four dominant ones that made up its operations. More than that, it became the single mediator between the incorporeal soul and the corporeal human body."¹⁵ Perkins's sermon exhibits earlier anxieties at the close of the sixteenth century around this cognitive force, but it also expresses a desire to harness or "*reforme*" the faculty, as the full title indicates. He continues by counseling his readership that "the *remedie* of this euill thought" can be accomplished if they "seeke to rectifie the imagination."¹⁶ Even a polemicist like Perkins who is keen to demonize the imagination's "euill thought" recognizes the power and necessity of this mental faculty that must be "rectifie[d]" rather than purged.

The ability to exercise this cognitive restraint suggests that humanity possesses a free will that differs from common conceptions of Calvinism that would codify persons automatically into the categories of the damned and the elect. This binary opposition stems from Calvinism's doctrine of double predestination, namely the idea that God has already determined who are among the elect to be saved and who are damned eternally. Perkins as a Calvinist theologian clearly believed in the doctrine of double predestination, but how he presented this tenet in his treatises led some to believe he exhibited a milder understanding of predestination than the more typically puritanical Calvinist might express. William Bishop, who was Catholic, engages with Perkins's work at the outset of the seventeenth century, and Bishop's views on Perkins's tracts show that he favored Perkins for perceiving that God's grace was given freely.¹⁷ Bishop nevertheless acknowledges the dominant Protestant habits of thought in Perkins's work that are heavily influenced by double predestination. Fervent advocates of Calvin's doctrine do not share or even approximate Catholicism's view that grace can be readily achieved. Bishop regards Perkins as an exception to the staunch double-predestination norm, for he

perceives that Perkins suggests grace can be achieved and thus permits the notion of free will. By indicating that one may tame the imagination, Perkins seemingly entertains a limited form of free will, which may appear to detract from other dogmatic impositions of double predestination. In other words, Perkins's writings allow for literary authors to locate ways to conceive of limited free will within a Calvinist universe that theologians did not necessarily espouse.¹⁸ D'Amville cannot wield his imagination appropriately because Tourneur has destined him specifically for hell both by title (tragedy) and by name (damned). Tourneur's audience, however, may exact their—albeit limited—free will by emulating Charlemont instead. Between the cognitive models of the wretched and the elect, the audience becomes an unwritten yet implied third party in the equation who is instructed to perceive their potential to harness and utilize their imaginations for divine purposes.

The soul's role in directing cognition is essential to ensuring that one's free will can successfully harness the imagination. Following and adapting Aristotelian philosophy, the early modern era understood Aristotle's vegetative, sensible, and intellectual souls according to later theologians who adapted his philosophy for Christians. They were indebted to Aristotle's *On the Soul*, which states that "the soul discerns and has cognition of the things that exist,"¹⁹ and they did not necessarily dismiss the value of the imagination despite acknowledging its chaotic and unpredictable nature. In *Confessions*, Augustine distinguishes the imagination of the sensitive soul from that of the intellectual soul, positing that human imagination has the potential to achieve "expectation or 'prediction'."²⁰ Similar to Augustine, Aquinas exhibited doubt regarding the imagination's capacity to realize the divine fully, but he nevertheless admitted that the "imagination receives some form representing God," which suggests an ability for the faculty to work with the intellectual soul to obtain truth.²¹ Although there were criticisms of Aristotle for his seeming conglomeration of animal and human souls,²² Augustine and Aquinas provide a clearer sense of how the distinction between bestial and human imaginations was understood. Calvin, too, perceives the soul and the imagination as "tokens of the diuine nature in man,"²³ and Perkins utilizes this understanding to locate some means of limited free will in Calvinism whereby the imagination (tangentially connected to the soul) may either continue to emulate the divine or depart from it and conceive of evil thoughts. From a Calvinistic lens, then, the imagination is essential for directing cognition toward the divine apotheosis of God.

D'Amville's atheistic nature makes him the perfect example of someone who fails to exercise his imagination properly. At the outset of the play, D'Amville speaks with his philosopher friend Borachio and hypothesizes that there is no difference between humans and beasts, professing a devotion toward Nature above all else.²⁴ His obsession is detrimental, as shown later when Languebeau Snuff, who initially convinces D'Amville to pursue atheism, states that the spirit of Montferrers and all spirits are "mere imaginary fables" and there is "no such thing in *rerum natura*" (4.3.273–74).²⁵ D'Amville immediately moves away from God to imagine himself instead as the primary mover of his reality. Having almost immediately abandoned divine guidance, D'Amville is incapable of accessing God's truth via his embodiment because his soul is damned. Rather than serving as the means to access higher imaginings, Nature becomes D'Amville's dominion. His egotism repeatedly links him with "the highest degree of Atheisme" that Perkins contends the imagination can produce; this condition occurs "when a man doth avouch, hould, & maintaine that there is no God at all."²⁶ The absence of God leads to the atheist's unhealthy imagination, since the person loses access to the divine. The Doctor arrives at a similar conclusion. In Act 5, the Doctor first attends on D'Amville's sick son Rousard, who dies shortly thereafter, but then the Doctor diagnoses D'Amville's mental condition. He does so by considering his spiritual state—conflating mental health with spirituality as Perkins does in his Calvinist treatise on the imagination—and he is incredulous with respect to D'Amville's overwhelming pride: "A power above Nature? Doubt you that, my lord? [...] for Nature never did bring forth / A man without a man; nor could the first / Man, being but the passive subject, not / The active mover, be the maker of / Himself; so of necessity there must / Be a superior power to Nature" (5.1.104–5, 109–14). The Doctor's speech resembles John Dove's *Confutation of Atheism* (1605), wherein he stipulates that "no naturall bodye can move it selfe, therefore it hath motion frō some other."²⁷ The Aristotelian soul is understood to possess this ability to move,²⁸ and by displacing blame onto D'Amville's unhealthy imagination rather than the divine origins of the soul, the Doctor's diagnosis combines the medical and the spiritual to uphold God's infallibility in relation to D'Amville's atheistic corruption. Without the intellect and immortal soul guiding D'Amville's imagination, he falsely perceives himself as the center of Nature.

Tourneur thus adapts the spiritual and psychological thinking of his era to devise a cognitive Calvinistic drama that educates an audience about the imagination's integral yet chaotic nature in a fluid cognitive dynamic that must be harnessed via divine intellection. In this manner, Tourneur produces a novel Calvinistic approach to the imagination. As Suparna Roychoudhury asserts in her study of Shakespeare and the early modern imagination, "Shakespeare and his contemporaries, we now know, did not mindlessly absorb orthodoxies of their time; rather, they negotiated them in dynamic and ingenious ways."²⁹ I argue similarly that Tourneur's play communicates original thought about the imagination's embodiment while nevertheless gaining inspiration from Calvinism and the poetic treatises of his era. Unlike Puttenham and Sidney, Tourneur is interested in the health of his audience's imaginations rather than his own health as a poet. Unlike Calvin and Perkins, Tourneur guides spectators through the stage rather than via spiritual guidance. The physical space, interactions, and properties of the stage lead him to create an anatomical conception of the early modern imagination that seeks to explore the imagination's fluidity between the divine soul, the worldly body, and the mental faculties. This embodied cognitive theater guides spectators in how to achieve healthy, divine cognition instead of succumbing to idolatrous pleasure. As a reprobate, D'Amville serves as a hyperbolic example of this proclivity the audience must eschew, for even after he loses his brain, D'Amville still cannot comprehend God in his final dozen lines. D'Amville's concluding brainless speech absurdly reflects his most lucid and informed commentary on his tragedy, but Tourneur does so deliberately to stress that the immortal soul rather than the brain speaks.³⁰ At this moment, D'Amville's immortal soul is the only faculty left to speak, but it cannot name "yond power" (5.2.263), which ostensibly means he is destined for hell. With or without a brain and thus an imagination, D'Amville cannot fathom God's higher imaginings, and Tourneur thereby stresses the importance and interdependence of these faculties for audience members who might not be reprobates like D'Amville.

Although the drama's literal division of the brain from the soul may seem to espouse an early Cartesian division of mind and body, Tourneur is presenting a different philosophy that stresses the importance of the imagination's interconnection within a fluid and dynamic cognitive system while still establishing a hierarchy that privileges its bond with the intellect and immortal soul above other faculties. While Tourneur aims to identify D'Amville's brain as the source of his corruption that must be extirpated,³¹

he does not go so far as to establish what Charis Charalampous claims is an early form of Cartesian duality in the early modern era that stems from Ockham's work.³² The play does not separate mind from body, or soul from brain. Instead, it utilizes the body to communicate the dangers of the imagination to the audience by dramatizing the consequences that a rogue imagination—namely one that forsakes the divine and with it intellect and reason—has for both the brain and the soul. D'Amville is thus the person who loses his brain because as an atheist he has lost his religion and with it the spiritual guidance his soul would have afforded him to achieve a healthy imagination.

The interdependence of soul and body mirrors the paradoxical way in which the ethereal relies upon the material in Tourneur's drama. Tourneur emphasizes the hierarchy of the spiritual over the worldly, but he nevertheless stresses the importance of material circumstances to deduce divinity; moreover, although Calvinism disregards the physical representations of the divine that are embedded in Catholic practices (particularly the eucharist), it does not regard materiality in opposition to divinity.³³ For Tourneur, God ostensibly demonstrates His presence in the notorious finale through the action of the play, but he nevertheless remains absent. Likewise, the closest we arrive to a divine spirit is the Ghost of Montferrers, but Calvin distinguishes such figures from the divine: "God hymself abydeth always like hym selfe, and is no imagined Ghost or fantasy, that may be diuersly fashioned after euery mans lykyng."³⁴ Even when we ostensibly experience the spiritual through the material conditions of the world or the stage, there remains an important distinction between the divine and earthly spheres. The characters' readings of their material environs thus continually approximate rather than perfectly deduce divine truth, but the accuracy of these interpretations is reliant upon the spiritual and cognitive health of the interrelation between their embodied brains and immaterial souls. Charlemont remains skeptical of the material world until proven wrong whereas D'Amville enjoys its pleasures and perceives himself as the center of Nature. Whereas Charlemont's brain relies upon divine guidance and higher cognition to evaluate the world, D'Amville starts and ends with his fleshy brain under the belief that he masters his reality. Tourneur presents this contrast as defining healthy and unhealthy imagination in *The Atheist's Tragedy*.

As Loughnane asserts, Charlemont functions well as a spiritual contrast to D'Amville, and he serves as a cognitive model for the audience to instruct them in the effective use of the imagination. When Charlemont is

visited by the ghost of Montferrers, he maintains his skepticism toward the spirit until he confirms its divine origin, since he does not know that D'Amville has murdered Montferrers. Charlemont is skeptical of the ghost's nature, having just awoken from a rest while on guard duty, surmising that "[d]reams are but the raised / Impressions of premeditated things, / By serious apprehension left upon / Our minds, or else th'imaginary shapes / Of objects proper to th'complexion or / The disposition of our bodies" (2.6.25–30). To counsel himself, Charlemont turns to his "Genius" (2.6.38) or "guardian angel,"³⁵ and as a result, Charlemont dismisses his imagination in a lengthy quasi-scientific summary:

My actions daily conversant with war,
 The argument of blood and death, had left,
 Perhaps, th'imaginary presence of
 Some bloody accident upon my mind,
 Which, mixed confusedly with other thoughts,
 Whereof th'remembrance of my father might
 Be one, presented all together seem
 Incorporate, as if his body were
 The owner of that blood, the subject of
 That death, when he's at Paris and that blood
 Shed here. (2.6.50–60)

Charlemont's logic is sound. He has recently engaged with violence and death on the battlefield, so these impressions are repeatedly and freshly imprinted on his memory, which would feed the imagination.³⁶ However, a Musketeer arrives on the scene to join Charlemont. The Ghost then returns. This sequence of events allows Charlemont to confirm the spirit's legitimacy through the Musketeer also witnessing it. Charlemont is gradually led to comprehend the truth of his perception, and Tourneur directs his audience through Charlemont to recognize that a healthy imagination can comprehend divine truth. Unlike the ghost scene in *Hamlet*, Tourneur's decision to have the Ghost communicate to Charlemont that he must await God's vengeance emphasizes the spirit's divine intention. Tourneur removes the ambiguity of whether revengers should take justice into their own hands. This process nevertheless involves initial skepticism of the imagination. *The Atheist's Tragedy* does not therefore automatically dismiss the fantastical or supernatural, nor does it

present these occurrences unquestionably as God's direct interventions, for the Ghost cannot be automatically taken to have holy intentions or represent a divine form of imagination. Hence, Charlemont's ability to remain judicious about the nature of phantasms displays a healthy imagination and limited free will that is informed by divine reasoning. He allows God to direct his thoughts on the course of revenge once he confirms that the spirit aligns with Him.

Tourneur's play presents the imagination as an instrument to access the divine, and Charlemont's gradual redirection of his judgment and knowledge through rational deduction conforms to Sir Francis Bacon's thoughts on the imagination in his *Advancement of Learning* (1605). Following Bacon's logic, Charlemont's "cogitations, imaginations, opinions, and belefes" are restrained to "setteth vp a throne or chaire of Estate in" his spirit and soul, which symbolically reflects *higher* cognition through the metaphor of social stratification.³⁷ Charlemont's governance of his imagination with the soul and thus divinely directed cognition establishes the contrast between him and D'Amville. Whereas Charlemont gradually allows his imagination to ascertain the true spiritual nature of Montferrers's ghost, D'Amville's dream encounter with the Ghost is not as effective in stirring his conscience. After announcing, with overwhelming pride, what he regards as his central place in the universe, D'Amville falls asleep. During D'Amville's slumbers, the Ghost cautions him that "with all thy wisdom thou art a fool," and Montferrers's spirit continues to indicate how his projects shall fail and his fortunes fall (5.1.27). Unlike Charlemont, who uses rational deduction to question the nature of the Ghost, D'Amville instead takes pride in having "apprehended Charlemont, and him / This brain has made the happy instrument" to secure D'Amville's legacy (5.1.36–37). Whereas Charlemont recognizes that his brain is prone to failing him, D'Amville vaingloriously imagines his as empowering him fully as a master strategist.³⁸

Much like the Calvinistic spiritual contrast that Loughnane observes between these two characters, the cognitive elements of the play depend upon the distinction between Charlemont and D'Amville, but the psychological dimensions of this pairing illuminate how these characters differ with respect to their engagement with the material world of nature. Following Montferrers's death, Tourneur stresses this distinction further, given the division between life and afterlife that the Ghost's presence evokes. Tourneur stresses this division between the material and celestial shortly after Charlemont's encounter with his father's spirit. In this scene,

Charlemont witnesses his own burial as well as that of his father. The epigraph for Charlemont ironically states that “*His body lies interred within this mould,*” when a body is never actually recovered, causing those in attendance to believe that Charlemont is a ghost when he is spotted (3.1.27). When Charlemont reveals himself to his love Castabella, she is frightened at the sight of him. Charlemont insists that she use her proper judgment:

Reduce thy understanding to thine eye.
 Within this habit which thy misinformed
 Conceit takes only for a shape, live both
 The soul and body of thy Charlemont. (3.1.80–83)

It is both the “soul and body” that Charlemont exhibits. Tourneur thus points out that it is folly to rely entirely upon one over the other, which would establish a pre-Cartesian either/or binary. Previously the evidence of a scarf has led their imaginations to run wild and believe that Charlemont is dead, but here the “habit” means nothing. In this instance, Castabella’s senses of sight and touch are necessary to comprehend that Charlemont lives. She must depend upon her “eye,” but she also “feel[s] a substance warm and soft and moist, / Subject to the capacity of sense” when she touches him to confirm his existence (3.1.84–85). Here, Tourneur emphasizes the embodied necessity of cognition to allow the imagination to be guided toward truth rather than fear.³⁹ Castabella, like Charlemont, exercises skepticism before gradually arriving at the truth.⁴⁰

This process distinguishes Charlemont and Castabella from D’Amville. Whereas Charlemont and Castabella arrive at truth through first doubting their imagination and then gradually understanding its veracity through embodiment, D’Amville always begins from his brain and assumes a self-professed mastery over physical nature. When he is aware of and in control of the narrative, D’Amville encounters no problems with discerning material circumstances. An example of D’Amville’s ability to master his environment occurs when he knows that Charlemont could still be alive and “*counterfeits to take him for a ghost*” (3.2.17). At other instances where he loses control of his plots and environs, he is vulnerable and exposed as lacking the knowledge necessary to tame his wild imagination. A disguised Charlemont, donning a costume that apparently resembles Montferrers’s Ghost, causes D’Amville to abandon his efforts to assault Castabella sexually. Following this episode, the audience reencounters D’Amville, who expresses the most guilt and remorse in the play when he sees a skull and

then a cloud in the sky, both of which fleetingly remind him of the fact that he has had his own brother murdered. These are not only physical encounters D'Amville has with people, things, and the world; they are also all framed as fraudulent (Charlemont is in disguise; the skull is explicitly not that of Montferrers; and what he takes for the Ghost on a mountain is merely a cloud). Tourneur thus portrays D'Amville as relying upon his senses and imagination without questioning them.

The final scenes of the play analyze D'Amville onstage through diagnoses (both of him and of his flawed deductions of others) and anatomical lessons concerning his flawed faculty psychology. Tourneur does not only focus on D'Amville's unhealthy imagination; he also highlights the Doctor's healthy use of the imagination to determine the root of D'Amville's mental and spiritual condition. Tourneur's portrait of the Doctor differs from that of Montaigne, who asks, "wherefore doe Phisitians labour and practise before hand the conceit and credence of their patients, with so many false promises of their recoverie and health, vnlesse it be that the effect of imagination may supple and prepare the imposture of their decoction?"⁴¹ Whereas Montaigne perceives medical doctors' imaginations as a means of conning their patients, Tourneur's physician utilizes the imagination to diagnose D'Amville's cognitive and religious ailments. The spiritual problem the Doctor points to here thus speaks to D'Amville's inability to utilize his reason, for as Deanna Smid states, if "reason is unguarded, the imagination will seize its chance: such is not the fault of the imagination; rather of reason," which "can result in madness, depression, or even heresy."⁴² D'Amville's heretical atheism and reprobation thus frame him as evil, but Tourneur gradually adds another dimension to this villainy by presenting him as "mad." The Doctor leads the audience to deduce this Calvinistic psychological condition, even if D'Amville cannot as reprobate. Through the Doctor, then, Tourneur can attempt to guide his audience spiritually and cognitively toward what the era perceived to be a healthy imagination that is divinely infused and directed by the intellect, much as he delineated for his readers or imagined spectators a decade earlier in *The Transformed Metamorphosis*.

D'Amville instead continues to function as the antithesis of this idealized audience member, and his tragedy is augmented by his inability to heed the Doctor's counsel as well as his efforts to play doctor himself. As Catherine Reedy notes, D'Amville's plan to dissect Charlemont's body after his impending execution to determine "[w]hat thing there is in Nature more exact / Than in the constitution of myself" (5.2.145–46)

signals his continued faith in Nature as well as his ignorance of the divine and with it higher cognition, for he will not discover the soul via “anatomical dissection.”⁴³ The ironic juxtaposition of this scene with the previous one shows that the Doctor possesses humility and is able to comprehend the limitations of his position, whereas the amateur surgeon D’Amville continues to quest after a comprehensive and material knowledge and power that he will never attain in the Christian universe of the play. Embodiment plays an important role here in Tourneur’s stage rhetoric, particularly what cannot be materialized onstage. D’Amville’s impossible aim to anatomize the soul and locate it in Charlemont’s body or Nature contrasts with the previous holy physician’s ability to deduce the cause of D’Amville’s spiritual plight. In his final act, Tourneur provides this segment in which D’Amville seeks the embodied “cause” that differentiates him from Charlemont and contrasts it with the Doctor’s earlier spiritual diagnosis to prepare the audience for the finale in which they are led to infer that God’s immaterial hand performs his spiritual surgery of vengeance while highlighting the limitations of humanity to comprehend or enact such feats themselves.

Tourneur’s stage direction leading to D’Amville’s demise clearly indicates that he “*strikes out his own brains*,” and to compensate for the lack of early modern special effects or in case the audience has missed the action, the Executioner announces, “In lifting up the axe, I think h’as knocked / His brains out” (5.2.240–41). Having knocked his brains out, D’Amville then manages to deliver twenty-two lines of verse miraculously. These lines not only address the fact that D’Amville is no longer the primary mover of his reality, with D’Amville asking, “What murderer was he / That lifted up my hand against my head?” (5.2.241–42), the ostensible answer being God; they also reveal all his plots so that Charlemont may reclaim his title and fortune. Likewise, this final speech represents the closest we arrive in the text to D’Amville acknowledging his limitations. D’Amville declares that “Nature is a fool” and acknowledges that “There is a power / Above her that hath overthrown the pride / Of all my projects and posterity” (5.2.256–58), even though he never brings himself to name “yond power” as God (5.2.263). Tourneur is thus making a distinction here between the brain and soul, as the focus on D’Amville’s brain throughout the text culminates here in him losing it but then having his most lucid epiphany via what ostensibly remains for a limited time by God’s will, the reprobate’s soul. However, he is merely God’s instrument through being made to raise the ax so far back that he dashes his brains out

and then recounts his complots so that Charlemont can regain his birth-right. The brain here, then, has hosted the imagination as the "embodied organ" of the imagination that Smid suggests it is.⁴⁴ D'Amville's atheism and reprobation cause his brain and with it his imagination to neglect the divine. Hence, he can only loosely fathom the circumstances of events, for Tourneur has determined him to be damned the moment he named him. God's puppet now speaks truth from his soul, but he cannot perceive the divine since his cognitive faculties still do not recognize the identity of the "yond power" that pulls his strings.

Underlying Loughnane's complex Calvinistic binary of D'Amville and Charlemont, then, are several more nuanced tensions that focus on reprobates' inability to access higher cognition. Although the play's division of brain and soul may seem to indicate a stark contrast that offers a precursor of Cartesian dualism, the circumstances in fact portray a fluid understanding of the imagination that is reliant upon the divine (manifested in the soul) but also dependent upon sensory experience, material conditions, and cognitive anatomy. The soul and body are both essential to cognition, but the former's connection to divinity through intellection is essential to maintaining and managing a healthy imagination. The overt Calvinistic reprobate D'Amville thus serves as a model for the audience not to emulate in contrast to the divinely informed and guided Charlemont and Castabella. The audience therefore has limited free will in this Calvinistic universe to control their unruly imaginations within a fluid cognitive assemblage inside and outside the body that can be harnessed through allowing God to direct their actions, presuming that their intellects can fathom him through higher cognition. For Tourneur, grace can potentially be achieved—or at least secured—via enlightened cognition even though D'Amville is predetermined to hell, for the title indicates this is his tragedy. From his first written work *The Transformed Metamorphosis* to his only extant play *The Atheist's Tragedy*,⁴⁵ Tourneur consistently attends to his readers' or spectators' potential for grace with the hope that his art can guide their imaginations toward this Calvinistic salvation. His last surviving verses for the recently deceased Prince Henry continue in this vein. Having established the risk that his readers' "*Imaginations* will bee so possess't" with the memory of the young prince and will thus be overcome with grief, Tourneur encourages them to control their imaginations' proclivity to dwell upon this faded regal memory, for otherwise they will "*know not what they doe.*"⁴⁶ Tourneur therefore consistently recognized

that the unruly imagination was a force that needed to be tamed by divinely inspired intellection, which—for those who are not predetermined reprobates—can be achieved through literary guidance.

NOTES

1. The earliest source to identify a Calvinistic influence is Michael H. Higgins's article. Higgins, "The Influence of Calvinistic Thought in Tourneur's *Atheist's Tragedy*," p. 260.
2. Loughnane, "The Enigma of Divine Revelation in Tourneur's *The Atheist's Tragedy*," p. 139.
3. Park, "The Organic Soul," p. 464.
4. Tourneur, *The Transformed Metamorphosis*, sig. B4^v.
5. Christopher Haigh examines the proto-Arminian attitudes that emerge in late-Elizabethan and early-Stuart London with respect to free will and unpopular attitudes toward harsh Calvinist doctrine, including double predestination. He indicates that "Gifford, Perkins, Dent and Bayley had to devote much attention to meeting popular criticisms." Haigh, "The Taming of the Reformation," p. 577. A play exhibiting Calvinistic doctrine, then, does not necessarily fully endorse its strict and deterministic habits of thought.
6. Sidney, *An apologie for poetrie*, sig. H2^r.
7. Puttenham, *The arte of English poesie*, sig. C1^r, sig. D3^v.
8. *Ibid.*, sig. D4^r.
9. In his examination of reprobation in domestic tragedies, Glenn Clark draws upon Nicholas Breton's *The Good and the Badde* (1616), a character book that "imagines the reprobate life as one of exciting, active, and delightful villainy. It is a life of desire fulfilled through scheming and violence." Clark, "Hurried to Destruction," p. 113. This characterization of the figure aligns exactly with D'Amville.
10. Anderson, "Introduction," p. 147.
11. Johnson, Sutton, and Tribble, "Introduction," p. 6.
12. Tourneur, *The Atheist's Tragedy*. All citations are from this edition.
13. Perkins, *A direction for the government of the tongue according to Gods word*, sig. B7^v.
14. Perkins, *A Treatise of Mans Imaginations*, sig. A7^r, sig. B3^v.
15. Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, p. 43. Clark is drawing upon Katharine Park's initial observations from her unpublished dissertation.
16. Perkins, *A Treatise of Mans Imaginations*, sig. G6^r.
17. Patterson, *William Perkins and the Making of a Protestant England*, p. 178.

18. Michael Keefer shows how the history of the 1604 A text and 1616 B text of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* convey this shift. Keefer, *Doctor Faustus*, p. 84.
19. Aristotle, *De Anima*, p. 197.
20. Breyfogle, "Memory and Imagination in Augustine's *Confessions*," p. 217.
21. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, p. 47.
22. Simon Harward, for instance, draws upon Aquinas, Augustine, and others to deplore the "Greeke Philosophers," for they "doe erre about the imagination of mā, some of them doe make it to bee all one with the common sense, & some make the imaginatiō in man, & in brute beastes to be both alike." Harward, *A Discourse Concerning the Soule and Spirit of Man*, sig. C3^r.
23. Calvin, *The institution of Christian religion*, sig. A7^v.
24. D'Amville's obsession with Nature in relation to atheism in some ways also connects with natural philosophy claiming "independence" and "propagate[ing] a deterministic concept of intellection on the basis of pure natural philosophy." Kessler, "The Intellective Soul," p. 533.
25. As Thomas Rist points out, the play links Lucretius's *De Rerum Naturae*—a text commonly associated with secularism—with atheism's abandonment of the divine in favor of the powers of the natural world. Rist, *Revenge Tragedy and the Drama of Commemoration in Reforming England*, pp. 107–108.
26. Perkins, *A Treatise of Mans Imaginations*, sig. C6^v.
27. Dove, *A confutation of atheisme*, sig. D1^r. As Kenneth Shepherd notes, the Augustinian underpinnings concerning humanity's relation to God are at work here. Shepherd, *Anti-Atheism in Early Modern England*, p. 70.
28. Drawing upon Aristotle, Stephen Bateman states "that a soule is a beeing mouing it selfe." Bateman, *Batman vppon Bartholome*, sig. D1^r.
29. Roychoudhury, *Phantasmatic Shakespeare*, p. 10.
30. Eckhard Kessler elucidates that the intellective soul—as well as the ethereal and divine more broadly—could only inform cognition based upon the will of the person. Kessler, p. 525.
31. Following the planned murder of his brother, D'Amville refers to "this brain of mine" that "was made / An instrument" (2.4.108–9). Nearer the end, D'Amville once again names his "brain" the "happy instrument" to manifest his own destiny (5.1.38).
32. Charalampous, *Rethinking the Mind-Body Relationship in Early Modern Literature, Philosophy and Medicine*, p. 3.
33. Jeffrey Knapp's recent observation that the early modern imagination depends upon a paradoxical interrelation of material nature and the immaterial divine thus better serves to deduce what Tourneur is staging. Knapp, *Immateriality and Early Modern English Literature*, pp. 168–169.
34. Calvin, sig. A5^r.

35. Maus, *Four Revenge Tragedies*, p. 412.
36. Hester Lees-Jeffries examines the theater, memory palaces, and rhetorical handbooks like the *Ad Herennium* to claim that memory is contingent upon the image and imaginary spaces in the mind. Lees-Jeffries, *Shakespeare & Memory*, pp. 30–31.
37. Bacon, *The two bookes of Francis Bacon*, sig. L4^r.
38. Tourneur thus emphasizes the damnable subversion of God's role, which speaks to Todd Butler's identification of the imagination as frequently associated with treason. Butler, *Literature and Political Intellection in Early Stuart England*, p. 17, p. 62.
39. Although the senses and cogitations were designated to the sensitive soul in some discourses, Katharine Park's chart makes it clear that these worldly and individual perceptual faculties were closer to the intellective soul than motive faculties were. Park, p. 466. Moreover, there were questions from influential philosophers like Augustine concerning the degree to which the senses had a role in intellection. *Ibid.*, p. 475.
40. Huston Diehl claims that no character perspicuously comprehends their material world or its divine orchestration over the course of the play, but the audience is nevertheless led to judge and comprehend. Diehl, "Reduce Thy Understanding to Thine Eye," pp. 48–49.
41. Montaigne, *Essays*, sig. E4^v.
42. Smid, *The Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*, p. 112.
43. Reedy, "'Revenge Should Have No Bounds,'" p. 182.
44. Smid, p. 10.
45. This chapter follows the work of MacDonald P. Jackson and more recently Gretchen Minton, which persuasively and almost irrefutably acknowledges Middleton, not Tourneur, as the author of *The Revenger's Tragedy*. Jackson, "Works Included in This Edition," p. 360; Minton, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, p. 6.
46. Tourneur, *A griefe on the death of Prince Henrie*, sig. C1^r, sig. B2^r.

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From the Image of Christ to the Imagining of the Sovereign: Donne, Hobbes, and the Eclipse of Participation and Transformation

Travis DeCook

This chapter explores how Thomas Hobbes evacuates from the imagination the participatory and transformative dimensions exemplified in earlier approaches to this mental activity. For several reasons, I take as representative of the participatory and transformative imagination John Donne's Holy Sonnet 13 ("What if this present were the world's last night"). Donne's poetry stands within a lengthy tradition of devotional writing which entails imaginative involvement in the life of Christ.¹ Further, Holy Sonnet 13 portrays an especially vivid and poignant image of Christ on the cross, and it delineates a phenomenologically and hermeneutically rich, as well as spiritually transformative, encounter with this image by the poem's

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M. Kaethler, G. Williams (eds.), *Historicizing the Embodied
Imagination in Early Modern English Literature*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-55064-5_15

speaker. Finally, as we shall see, the image of Christ in Donne's poem is not a mere fabrication of the fancy, but rather derives from an act of the imagination which metaphysically participates in divine reality.

While Donne, unlike Hobbes, does not articulate an explicit theory of the imagination, a close consideration of his depiction of the act of the imagination and of the image of Christ in Holy Sonnet 13 reveals significant metaphysical and theological presuppositions concerning the nature of imagination. This includes the idea that the reality of God is accessible by humankind, in however limited and mediated a fashion, through the spiritual dimension of the human person, and that the imagination can play a role in this. Donne's images of Christ mediate between humankind and divinity, and to imagine Christ with devotional intent is not an act of purely human invention or creativity, but rather an event in which the human being enters into a relationship with the divine. The encounter with the image in the poem entails not a subject gazing upon an object, but a relationship of mutuality which transforms the viewer and draws them toward God.

In contrast, Hobbesian imagination rests upon a radical materialist ontology which denies all spiritual reality and reduces existence to matter in motion. What concerns me in this chapter is what the implications of this reductive metaphysics are for imagining the divine and for how we encounter images. As we shall see, in Hobbesian thought the political sovereign and God are both constructions and projections of the human imagination, and as constructions the sovereign and God converge—and serve their chief purpose—as the site upon which political order is founded. Images in Hobbes are frequently depicted as being imposed upon people, with the imagination construed as a resource to be exploited for the sake of ensuring political stability. Rather than envision imagination as a site of participation,² and rather than encounter the image as a space of spiritual transformation, Hobbes presents the imagination as raw material to be shaped and the image as a tool to achieve this shaping. Whereas the imaginative encounter with Christ in Donne is a means of knowing the self and its spiritual condition, and of experiencing the self's integration with the source of its being, the imagination in Hobbes is indicative of an atomized self, functioning either as producer of the artifices which ground political order or as a passive resource to be shaped by images. The chapter concludes by critically examining how the Hobbesian imagination has been valorized as the triumph of literary construction and of a purely human *poesis* (making) of the social and political world. It questions this

valorization by considering Hobbesian *poesis* in light of modernity's fetishizing of narrowly conceived forms of productivity.

DONNE AND THE IMAGE OF CHRIST

One of the most striking ways in which the speaker, and possibly the reader, of Holy Sonnet 13 experiences the image of Christ is as an active presence. By this I mean that rather than serving as an inert object to be gazed upon and mastered by visual perception, the image of Christ's face acts upon the speaker as much as it is subject to the speaker's gaze. The following analysis of the image of Christ in Donne's poetry draws on Thomas Pfau's study of the phenomenology, hermeneutics, and metaphysics of the image, *Incomprehensible Certainty*. At the heart of Pfau's study is an effort to address how images can serve as agents, not merely as objects.³ Pfau regards images as irreducible to naturalistic theories of sight and perception, so he instead approaches them as phenomenological realities. In his argument, grounded most fundamentally in Platonic philosophy and Christian theories of the icon, the image is a medium between the viewer and the transcendent reality—the image's prototype with which the image has an ontological bond properly construed as one of analogy rather than identity.⁴ While there have been various scholarly treatments of images of Christ in Donne's devotional poetry, including, influentially, Louis Martz's argument that they reflect Ignatian systems of meditation,⁵ Pfau's phenomenological and hermeneutical approach to images casts additional light on how images of Christ operate in Donne's poetry.

In Holy Sonnet 13 Donne depicts the face of Christ as a "picture" in his mind's eye. While the poem never explicitly refers to the imagination *per se*, it appears that the image of Christ as experienced by the speaker is a product of their imagination, since the speaker presumably has not witnessed the crucifixion firsthand, nor does the speaker represent themselves as remembering a prior depiction of the crucifixion upon which they gazed. Rather, they are "marking in their heart" the image of Christ. At the same time, this imagined image of Christ on the cross is not a post-romantic, purely human invention, an imagining expressive of the self's creativity. Given Donne's faith, and the theological context in which the poem was produced, it is more accurate to say that the image of Christ in the poem is the image of a divine reality. Imagination here does not manufacture but rather participates in the divine givenness of the Incarnation. Thus, while from a certain perspective the concrete, poignant image of

Christ crucified in Donne's poem can be seen to be a literary creation, it is at the same time an occasion to reflect on transcendent truth—both for the poem's speaker and for the reader. As in the tradition of imaginative meditation developed by St. Bonaventure (a figure who appears frequently in Donne's sermons), in Donne's poem too, a scene of Christ's life is inhabited, not manufactured, and Christ is understood to be spiritually present in these acts of imaginative meditation.⁶ Thus, in Donne's poem, encountering the image of Christ is an event of the imagination while at the same time an exemplification of a real relationship between God and the speaker by way of this encounter with the image. The image of Christ in Donne's sonnet serves as a nexus linking God, the speaker, the poet, and the reader.⁷

Before taking up the poem's devotional engagement with the image of Christ, I want to deal with a possible objection: does not Holy Sonnet 13 end with one of the most scandalous moments in Donne's divine poems, namely the speaker's appeals to his mistresses' mercy on the basis of its putatively innate relationship to their beauty? This has received much attention, and the poem has consequently been read as a failure and as a piece of sophistry.⁸ While it is tempting to bypass the spiritual experience delineated in the poem's octave and home in on the startling sestet, doing so occludes important theological features of the octave. I do not deny the jarring quality of the sestet, but I do not see it as necessarily nullifying the octave,⁹ and I wish here to tarry with the first part of the poem, its depiction of the face of Christ and the speaker's experience of it, in order to draw out what it tells us about the theology of attending to Christ's image in the imagination.

Holy Sonnet 13 opens with a powerful and poignant image, the "picture of Christ crucified," which dwells in the heart of the speaker. Because this is a mental image within the speaker's imagination, it not only gives us a verbal representation of Christ's state as he was nailed to the cross, but also provides us an indication of the speaker's spiritual condition. The image is concisely but concretely portrayed: "Tears in his eye quench the amazing light, / Blood fills his frowns, which from his pierced head fell."¹⁰ This image of Christ's face carries signs of Christ's subjective experience, with the frowns and tears evincing Christ's sorrow. The speaker empathetically imagines these tears blinding Christ's perception of the "amazing light" surrounding him. Visual signs which point to Christ's experience are combined with others which are experienced specifically by the speaker, such as the sight of blood pouring from Christ's pierced head and the

sight of this blood gradually filling Christ's frowns. The poem thus economically articulates an image of Christ which at once carries with it a sense of the subjectivity of both Christ and the speaker.

The speaker's engagement with the image of Christ involves an emotional, spiritual, and intellectual journey from fearing divine judgment to trusting in divine mercy. Considering the mangled and sorrowful face of Christ, the speaker asks himself, "can that tongue adjudge thee unto hell, / Which pray'd for His foes' fierce spite?" (7-8). That the speaker is able to see the battered face of Christ as a "beauteous form" (14) in the final line indicates the attainment of spiritual sight at odds with worldly criteria and values. Important here is the way the poem reworks the courtly love tradition, with the mistress's image in the heart replaced by Christ's.¹¹ This reworking hinges on a revaluation of beauty: the speaker attains capacity to recognize beauty in the image of Christ crucified by seeing in it the expression of divine mercy. In its highly condensed form, the poem depicts a relationship of mutuality between the speaker and Christ's image. In this way, the image can be seen to have a spiritual effect on the speaker and on the reader as well.

Pfau argues that the kind of agency exemplified by images is not causal in an efficient sense; rather it is diagnostic and revelatory, transfiguring those receiving them. Pfau argues that images are a medium that will reveal faith or its absence, but they can never mechanically bring about either condition. For example, an icon transforms the viewer by revealing their own spiritual state.¹² The image of Christ in Holy Sonnet 13 clearly has this kind of agency and presence, affecting the speaker's exploration of their spiritual condition. In his discussion of Holy Sonnet 13, for example, Donald Friedman writes that "[t]o interpret the meaning of Christ's image correctly is to know instantly of one's election or reprobation," and argues that for Donne to recognize the face of Christ is to discern the "lineaments of his own spiritual truth."¹³

Meditation on the image of Christ as depicted in the poem entails a deep engagement with the image and its meaning, thereby enabling participation in the divine reality the image signals both for the poem's speaker and for its reader. As Pfau puts it, "the image's true valence is properly realized only in the beholder's hermeneutic engagement with it."¹⁴ Such an approach to the image helps us to unfold Holy Sonnet 13 more completely than a more strictly formalist reading of the poem would allow. Despite explicitly rejecting the latter approach, Richard Strier, in claiming that Holy Sonnet 13 fails to establish the beauty of Christ

crucified, does not consider the kind of spiritually informed hermeneutical and meditative engagement we have been discussing.¹⁵ On the contrary, we might consider how the poem prompts us, as well as the speaker, to explore the phenomenological and hermeneutical dimensions of the speaker's encounter with the image of Christ. Such attention allows access to "the invisible beauty and truth" the image points toward.¹⁶

While I'm not arguing for a direct influence of the icon tradition on Donne, Pfau's account of how icons were traditionally understood further illuminates the poem's portrayal of an act of imagining Christ on the cross. As Pfau argues, an icon is not an object to be mastered; it is rather a site for spiritual reflection. Veneration of the icon involves the beholder in a progression through and by means of the icon toward the prototype depicted in it.¹⁷ As Pfau discusses at length, within the theories of the icon developed in wake of the Byzantine iconoclastic controversy, we find articulated the idea that seeing the divine image in the icon is always at the same time a *being seen*, a discovering of oneself to be the focus of a gaze from beyond.¹⁸ In a sermon preached in 1622 Donne encourages his auditors to look continuously at the face of Christ—apparently through their acts of imagination—and claims that this act will result in our gaze being returned: "as a Picture looks upon him, that looks upon it, God upon whom thou keepest thine Eye, will keep his Eye upon thee."¹⁹ Donne's description of a mutual relationship between viewer and image here clearly resonates with the phenomenology of the icon as outlined by Pfau. The icon is a living image and not an inert representation: it is a dynamic medium experienced by the faithful beholder as imbued with a unique agency and presence.²⁰

While in Donne's poem "Good Friday, Riding Westward" the image of Christ is experienced as an absent presence—a "spectacle of too much weight" for the speaker rather than a "seen" image—it functions in certain respects like the image of Christ in Holy Sonnet 13. While the speaker rides away from the spectacle of Christ on the cross, he nevertheless addresses Christ, observing that "thou look'st towards me" (35). The image of Christ in his memory, despite being avoided by the eyes of the mind, is still an active presence, and this idea culminates in the speaker imagining a future when Christ will burn off the "rusts" of his soul until the divine image in him is restored, after which point he'll turn his face toward Christ. The poem thus ends with the prospect of a mutual, participatory relationship between speaker and God. As in Holy Sonnet 13, the image of Christ is not an inert visual object from which to receive data, but

an agency revealing and provoking the speaker's spiritual life. As with Holy Sonnet 13, the literary image of Christ here can be seen, at least potentially, to have such an effect on the poem's reader as well. Donne's poems exemplify Pfau's argument that the ethos of the image is one of communion among the beholder, the image, and what the image mediates.²¹ The relationship of viewer to image is one of participation and not spectatorship.

HOBBS AND THE IMAGINING OF GOD AND SOVEREIGN

If the imagination can play a part in the human encounter with God, and if mental images can help one participate in the presence of the divine, how might the radical materialist philosophy of Thomas Hobbes, developed several decades after Donne was writing, impinge upon this earlier account of the imagination? What can an image of Christ be for Hobbes? It must first be acknowledged that Hobbes evinces little interest in religious devotion as anything but the bare acknowledgment of God's supreme power, and he is not concerned with images of Christ as a medium of spiritual reflection.²² Of course, for Hobbes—the thoroughgoing materialist—there is no such thing as spiritual reality. This totalizing materialism is essential to his understanding of imagination and images, as are other theological and metaphysical features of Hobbes's thought which preclude the kind of participatory and transformative imagination we see in Donne's poem. Furthermore, whereas Donne's poetry invites a phenomenological reading in its emphasis on the irreducibly first-person nature of experience, Hobbes's materialist account of cognition reduces consciousness to matter in motion. In this way it can be seen to foreshadow physicalist approaches to the mind fashionable in our own time. Hobbesian cognition is bedeviled by the same impasse caused by trying to reduce first-person, subjective experiences to third-person phenomena.²³

For Hobbes God is not an objective reality—at least, not in a way accessible to humankind—and for this reason too it is not possible to participate in divine reality (the metaphysics of participation is itself impossible in Hobbes's nominalist, materialist scheme). For Hobbes, while both God as known by humans and the political state represented by the sovereign are human constructions, they are real in the way conventions such as legal fictions are real.²⁴ This is not to say that Hobbes denies the existence of God. Yet, regardless of whether or not God really exists “out there,” according to Hobbes God is wholly incomprehensible (“we understand

nothing of what he is, but only that he is" [34.4, p. 614]), and God cannot be accessed, only represented.²⁵ God is not a "natural person," but rather is an "artificial person by fiction," just like the state.²⁶ In *De Homine* Hobbes declares that "since the will of God is not known save through the commonwealth (civitatem) [...] it needs be that his person be created (fiat) by the will of the commonwealth."²⁷ The commonwealth is represented by the sovereign, who also represents God: in Arash Abizadeh's words, "[t]he construction of the state and of God through representation by fiction [...] must be simultaneous and in relation to the very same sovereign representer."²⁸ Abizadeh goes so far as to claim that "the basic premise of Hobbes's account is that there is *no* entity whose divinity obtains ontologically prior to the relation of representation [...] Hobbes's basic premise was that divinity is a status historically constructed via representation; it does not exist prior to or independently of that relation."²⁹

The experience of sovereignty and the experience of God are thus bound up with each other in Hobbes's thought. Both are fundamentally subjective phenomena, matters of perception. As such, they are fundamentally imaginative phenomena. For Hobbes, the imagination—rooted in sensation, which is reducible to matter in motion—is part of all cognitive operations. For him there is ultimately no difference between imagination, sense perception, memory, or other mental activities.³⁰ In consequence, the imagination is central to Hobbes's most fundamental concern: the establishment of absolute sovereignty. Indeed, numerous scholars have shown that for Hobbes the imagination was a major resource to exploit for his overarching political project.³¹

Within this construal of the omnipresent imagination, Hobbes was invested in the metaphor of "imprinting" to describe the influence that education could have on the populace, and this included the idea that images could be impressed upon people's imaginations and influence their thinking and affects.³² While this imprinting metaphor has a venerable history, appearing for instance in Plato, it takes on mechanistic overtones in Hobbes. Behind it is the fact that, as Pfau argues, Hobbes construes human action primarily as "efficient force," and in doing so he occludes "the realm of ideation and transformative meaning, of previously untapped potentialities in the agent, and of a suprapersonal good for the sake of which action is deliberately pursued, and in which it allows the agent to participate."³³ Further, Pfau contends that action in Hobbes is "non-transparent and non-cognitive," meaning that its source is in an inscrutable will.³⁴

Such a conception of action can be perceived in Hobbes's construal of "imprinting" images; an image is understood mechanically as efficient force which extrinsically causes an effect on the recipient. There is no mutuality or relationality here, but rather something is imposed from the outside. This "imprinting" represents an antithesis to the contemplation of images exemplified in the Christian tradition, in which a form of attention and experience involves the viewer's participation with the image's prototype and ultimate transformation. It also contrasts with the image's agency discussed above in relation to Donne, which is decidedly not, as Pfau articulates, a matter of efficient causality. Rather than a medium through which we enter into a higher spiritual reality, the image for Hobbes is a tool to be wielded in order to shape people and make them obedient. Hobbes's mechanization of images puts them into the realm of power: they are construed as mechanical forces used to subdue people. Along these lines, Hobbes seeks to foster an unreflective, passive populace having "formative ideas and images" imprinted on their imaginations.³⁵ Referring to *Leviathan's* famous engraved title page, Teresa Bejan observes that "[t]he memorable engraved images of that 'Mortal God', the Leviathan, or the secular hell of the state of nature were designed to *make an impression*."³⁶

The non-cognitive and mechanistic character of the Hobbesian image is apparent in the tendency for Hobbes at times to draw upon images rather than arguments to make claims about reality—for instance, *Leviathan's* opening proclamation that a person is simply a clockwork mechanism—without providing any kind of rational argument in its support (1, p. 16). This dubious strategy of imposing compellingly bizarre images on his readers without providing arguments for their legitimacy was noted by Hobbes's early critics. In 1672 Thomas Tension wrote that Hobbes "hath rather seduc'd and poyson'd [his readers'] Imaginations, than conquer'd their Reason."³⁷

Notwithstanding Hobbes's investment in a conception of images as imposed on a passive populace according to a model of mechanical causality, and the imagination of the populace as an apparently passive resource to exploit, there are important ways in which his political theory rests on the imagination projected outwards into the world. For example, the sovereign is a fiction grounded in the people's imaginations, yet this projection must be experienced as real and external to them. Of course, such an idea of projection is no less opposed to participation than is the metaphor of imposition.

For Hobbes, a dynamic of imaginative projection is at the heart of all acts of perception.³⁸ External objects exert pressure onto the nerves and organs which causes a “resistance” or “counter-pressure.” For Hobbes, because of this “resistance,” our perception seems to be of an external object, but is in reality merely an internal motion mechanically caused by external things (1.3, p. 22). As Todd Butler points out, Hobbes presents the apparent externality of what is perceived as a product of the imagination.³⁹ Hobbes writes that this “resistance,” “because *Outward*, seemeth to be some matter without. And this *seeming*, or *fancy*, is that which men call *Sense*” (1.3, p. 22). Elsewhere, again underscoring perception as an act of the imagination, Hobbes writes, “Imagination of the Object, from whence the Impression proceedeth [...] seemeth not to be a meer Imagination, but the Body it self without us” (45.352, p. 1012).

Abizadeh argues that Hobbes drew upon the same model of the imagination which he had attacked in his account of idolatry and demonology and recuperated it for what in his view is the positive project of erecting absolute sovereignty.⁴⁰ Idols and demons, according to Hobbes, derive from people’s tendency to project the products of their imagination outwards into the world and experience them as entities external to them. In *Leviathan* Hobbes discusses idolatry as at once a political problem and a product of the imagination. In acts of idolatry, the “thing which they honored, or feared in the Image, and held for a God, was a meer Figment, without place, habitation, motion, or existence, but in the motions of the Brain” (45.356, p. 1026). The ancient Jews’ idolatry, Hobbes proceeds, involved praying to “Representations of their own Fancies” and a rebellion against the true God and his “prime Ministers, Moses, and the High Priests”; this led to “the utter eversion of the Common-wealth, and their own destruction for want of Union” (45.356, p. 1026). Somewhat paradoxically, the production of the sovereign requires a similar process. Victoria Kahn observes that the Leviathan must be both “an artifact of the imagination and an object of our belief.”⁴¹ As Abizadeh writes, in *Leviathan* Hobbes “suggests that the state must itself become an idol,” meaning that while it is a product of the imagination—having no existence outside of the populace’s affirmation of it—it must be experienced as having an independent being as an external entity.⁴²

Similarly, Abizadeh understands that for Hobbes the state exemplifies a “demonic power,” exemplifying as it does the same kind of imaginative projection involved in people’s fabrication of demons.⁴³ In *Leviathan*’s chapter “Of Daemonology,” Hobbes begins by discussing the mechanics

of sense and imagination, underscoring that what appears to us as objects “out there” in the world are in reality motions within our bodies caused by our interactions with the world. The confusion between what is really inside with what is ostensibly outside is at the heart of the belief in supernatural entities (which Hobbes broadly calls “demons” here), whereby various sensory impressions, combined with hopes and fears, cause people to believe that internal phenomena are in reality external entities.⁴⁴

At the heart of the forging of demons is the fact that they are at once a projection of the imagination—and therefore intimately tied to the self—while at the same time experienced as something external to the self. As Abizadeh elaborates, “unless [the pagan] conjures up the demon in his own imagination, it does not exist to him”; the demon “owes its existence, as a sheer phantasm, to the lingering trace of the pagan’s own sensory perceptions.” Yet the demon is not only (erroneously) experienced as something external, for “[d]emonic dread is [...] the dread of his own fantastical self projected outward and experienced as if it were an other completely unknown to him.”⁴⁵ The same process is at the heart of the invention of sovereignty. Given the inevitable limits on the sovereign’s physical capacity for coercion, a charisma of unspeakable power and terror must be conjured around it.⁴⁶ It is essential that the experience of sovereignty be of “an external reality that *simultaneously resonates with what the subject reads deep in his own soul.*”⁴⁷

Crucially illuminating my comparison with Donne, Abizadeh identifies a similar logic between Hobbes’s understanding of God and of the sovereign as imaginative projection. Since, according to Hobbes, God is completely unknowable, “‘God’ is the blank sign of an absolute absence, a canvas onto which we project our own desires and will, by which we represent them to ourselves as split apart from us, and by which we bind ourselves in devotion and fear to the awesomeness of our own projection.”⁴⁸ This complex process of projection can be significantly contrasted with the encounter with the image of Christ depicted by Donne in Holy Sonnet 13. The rightly ordered encounter with the face of Christ in which imagination participates in divine reality is simultaneously a confrontation with knowledge of the self, that is, of one’s spiritual condition. At the same time, the imagining of Christ is not a matter of self-projection, but of human involvement in divine reality. It is both a knowing of self and an entering into a relationship with God and thereby a form of knowing God.⁴⁹ By contrast, the Hobbesian sovereign and the Hobbesian God, as projections of the imagination, involve no self-knowledge, but rather the

willed delusion of experiencing one's own imagination and affectivity as an external reality. This is not a moment of self-knowledge but rather of the inarticulate experience of one's own affects of fear and awe projected onto an imaginary construct—a thoroughly nonrational process. If, as Abizadeh argues, the imaginative construction of sovereignty and divinity in Hobbes involves a splitting of the self,⁵⁰ in Donne the encounter with the image of Christ through imaginative activity involves the integration of the self. Put differently, we can say that whereas the Hobbesian image is founded on self-alienation, the Donnean image helps inspire self-fulfillment. Finally, the encounter with Christ in Donne exemplifies, as we have seen, a relation of mutuality between the speaker and God, whereas the experience of the sovereign and God in Hobbes decisively lacks any mutuality, any intrinsic relationality.

CONCLUSION

In Victoria Kahn's view, the fact that for Hobbes the human political community is constructed through the imagination makes him a source of modernity, liberalism, and secularity.⁵¹ Rather than viewing the political community and sovereignty as expressions of the divinely given order of the universe, Hobbes views them as human creations, as ultimately subjective constructions rooted in the imagination. In consequence, Kahn argues that Hobbes turns philosophy into literature: now philosophy is no longer about accessing truth but rather about generating effects through human artifice.⁵² As Kahn puts it, in Hobbes's scheme "what we contemplate is not an a priori philosophical truth but rather an artifact of our own making."⁵³ This shift in thinking gives literature a new centrality in human affairs.⁵⁴

At the heart of this conception of the literary is the idea of making—the root meaning of *poesis*. Poetry is vital for Kahn "because it is itself a form of productive action that is in turn imitated by the reader."⁵⁵ Kahn's understanding of *poesis*, modeled on that of Hobbes and Vico, is one which rejects "transcendental legitimation."⁵⁶ If we take human productivity to designate humankind's ability to bring about new material, social, and political phenomena, Kahn's argument runs afoul of the fact that Hobbes's fundamental concern is political stability, and he has little to no concern with human productivity *per se*.

More profoundly, Kahn's elevation of literature on the basis of productivity does not square with the kind of literature exemplified by Donne's

devotional poetry. The telos of this poetry is not the advancement of acts of human making, but rather participation of humankind in divine life. The imagination in Donne's poem is participatory, not productive in the sense discussed above. Donne exemplifies a form of "higher imagining" in which the mental faculty of imagination, animated by devotional intent, plays a central role in one's meditation on the divine and, in consequence, one's drawing spiritually closer to God. Such acts of imaginative cognition are a means, however earthbound and limited, of communion with the divine. Grounded as it is in such acts of imagination, poetry here exemplifies and opens up meditation, contemplation, and participation in transcendent reality.⁵⁷

This devotional imagination represents a form of mental activity which falls by the wayside within the immanent construal of imaginative cognition which Hobbes, in some respects, pioneered and which tends to dominate our own intellectual culture. What literary texts of Donne's kind strive to accomplish—that is, incite readers to meditate upon the transcendent—tends to be overlooked by dominant forms of cognitive literary studies, aligned as they tend to be with the naturalism constitutive of parent disciplines like neuroscience, evolutionary psychology, and anthropology.⁵⁸

Modernity can be understood, in part, as the privileging of human power to bring new things into the world under the sign of endless progress, a privileging which concomitantly derogates the kinds of meditative activity and participatory reflections held up in Donne's poetry.⁵⁹ While Hobbes is no champion of progress, his way of conceptualizing the imagination is in terms of its (narrowly conceived) productive potential, that is, its capacity to establish political order. Imagination produces the sovereign, the absolutely necessary savior of humankind, and this dovetails with the imaginative production of the sovereign's transcendent foundation, God. Gone in Hobbes is any sense of human participation in inexhaustible and transcendent divine reality, and gone too is meditation as a transformative event in human life and as an ennoblement of human potential. This shift involves a radical emptying out of the imagination's possibilities. It carries with it a view of images as tools with which to manipulate populations, rather than as media of participatory contemplation, and thus foreshadows the hegemonic forms of image making of our late modern world.

NOTES

1. Holy Sonnet 11 is another obvious example. Here the speaker imagines himself suffering the humiliations and physical torments of Christ leading up to the crucifixion.
2. Even when such metaphysical views are not explicitly stated, early modern writers frequently exhibit what Debora Shuger identifies as participatory habits of thought, which prioritize relationality and forms of permeability between God and world and between subject and object. Shuger, *Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance*. On this topic, see also Andrew Davison's *Participation in God*.
3. Thomas Pfau, *Incomprehensible Certainty*, p. 40.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 28–31.
5. Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation*. Cf. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, who sees Donne exemplifying Protestant traditions of meditation. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*.
6. Karnes, *Imagination, Meditation, and Cognition in the Middle Ages*, p. 152. Bonaventure founded a tradition of imaginative meditation, placing special importance on meditating upon the Passion, in which the imagining of events of Christ's life is understood to draw one into the spiritual presence of Christ. *Ibid.*, pp. 151–178. The imagination is for Bonaventure an especially effective way of ascending to Christ because of the intrinsic affinity between Christ and the imagination: the imagination mediates between the senses and the intellect—here Bonaventure adapts Aristotelian imagination to devotion—and it thus serves an analogous role to Christ in bridging the earthly and the spiritual. *Ibid.*, p. 61, p. 76. See also Walter S. Melion's "Introduction: Meditative Images and the Psychology of Soul," p. 19.
7. Donne supported neither strict iconoclasm nor the Laudian affirmation of devotional images within churches. Anderson, "Internal Images," p. 26. However, without question, literary and mental images play a central role in his portrayals of spirituality. David K. Anderson argues that a critical matter for Donne was whether images were to be used for public—as, for instance, when found in churches—or private devotion; Anderson argues that while he rejected them in the former case, he approved of them in the latter. *Ibid.*, p. 28. However, it remains the case that Donne's various texts, including Holy Sonnet 13, make images available to readers, and therefore these images have a kind of public status (even though most of Donne's poems were solely circulated in manuscript during his lifetime). Further, since the transcendent reality that the image of Christ points toward is universal, it can never be private. Pfau, *Incomprehensible Certainty*, pp. 50–51.

8. Carey, *John Donne*, p. 47; Strier, "John Donne Awry and Squint," pp. 380–381.
9. The sestet is integrated into the devotional concerns of the octave in Donald M. Friedman's "Christ's Image and Likeness in Donne" and Anderson's "Internal Images."
10. Holy Sonnet 13, lines 5–6. Donne, *John Donne: The Complete English Poems*. Hereafter lines from Donne's poetry—taken from this edition—will be cited parenthetically in the body of the chapter.
11. Smith, *John Donne: The Complete English Poems*, p. 632.
12. Pfau, *Incomprehensible Certainty*, p. 6, p. 8, p. 80.
13. Friedman, p. 80, p. 90. Similarly, R.V. Young argues that within Calvinism one's response to Christ's image indicates one's election or reprobation. Young, *Doctrine and Devotion*, p. 25.
14. Pfau, *Incomprehensible Certainty*, p. 90.
15. Strier, pp. 380–381.
16. Pfau, *Incomprehensible Certainty*, p. 8.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 212.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
19. Donne urges, "[b]e therefore no strangers to this face: see him here, that you may know him, and he you, there [...] Look him in the face as he lay in the Manger [...] Look him in the face, in the Temple, disputing there at twelve years." Donne proceeds to list off key moments of Christ's life. Donne, *The Sermons of John Donne*, vol. 4, pp. 129–130.
20. Pfau, *Incomprehensible Certainty*, p. 132, p. 135.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
22. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 3.11, p. 46; 3.1.187, p. 558. Hereafter, citations from this edition will be noted parenthetically in the body of the text.
23. Leijenhorst, "Sense and Nonsense About Sense," p. 94.
24. Abizadeh, "Hobbes's Conventionalist Theology"; Kahn, *The Trouble with Literature*, pp. 33–61.
25. This idea is at the heart of his unorthodox reformulation of the Trinity, which, rather than three persons sharing one divine essence, is understood to be God represented, respectively, by Moses, Christ, and the leaders of the church—first the apostles, and then the sovereigns (*Leviathan*, 42.267–8, pp. 774–778).
26. Abizadeh, "Hobbes's Conventionalist Theology," p. 918, p. 926.
27. Qtd. in *ibid.*, p. 929.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 940. The convergence of sovereign and God is even more obvious elsewhere. In *Leviathan* the sovereign is referred to as the "mortal god." Furthermore, the book's famous title page blurs the distinction between God and sovereign, with the "image of the sovereign [...] accompanied by an epigraph from the book of Job concerning God's awe-inspiring power."

- Kahn, *The Trouble with Literature*, p. 147, n. 51. Ryan Hackenbracht shows that the frontispiece image of Leviathan evokes a tradition of images of Christ in the Last Judgment found in church architecture and engravings in English Bibles. Hackenbracht, *National reckonings*, pp. 52–54.
29. Abizadeh, “Hobbes’s Conventionalist Theology,” p. 933.
 30. Leijenhorst, pp. 97–98; Hull, “Hobbes’s Radical Nominalism.” For an overview of Hobbes’s theory of imagination, see Juhana Lemetti’s “The Most Natural and the Most Artificial.”
 31. Douglass, “The Body Politic ‘is a fictitious body’”; Schwartz, “The Sleeping Subject”; Johnston, *The Rhetoric of Leviathan*; Butler, *Imagination and Politics in Seventeenth-Century England*; Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes*.
 32. Bejan, “First Impressions,” p. 54. It is helpful to distinguish between “images of representation” and “images of resemblance” in Hobbes. The former are associated with conceptual and linguistic constructs like the sovereign, whereas the latter derive from the motions generating perception, which will be discussed later in the chapter. Mulieri, “Imagining Leviathan.”
 33. Pfau, “Varieties of Non-Propositional Knowledge,” p. 269.
 34. Pfau, *Minding the Modern*, p. 186.
 35. Bejan, p. 59.
 36. *Ibid.*, p. 59. Bejan argues that Hobbesian imprinting is best not viewed as the direct indoctrination into this or that specific belief, but it is instead more a matter of establishing the preconditions of belief. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
 37. Qtd. in Butler, p. 139. Butler provides other responses by Hobbes’s contemporaries to the philosopher’s rhetorical manipulations and specious appeals to the imagination. *Ibid.*, pp. 176–178.
 38. For the phantasmic projection involved in the creation of the sovereign as being of a piece with all acts of perception in Hobbes, see Christopher Pye’s *The Storm at Sea*, p. 173.
 39. Butler, p. 160.
 40. Abizadeh, “The Representation of Hobbesian Sovereignty.”
 41. Kahn, *The Trouble with Literature*, p. 57.
 42. Abizadeh, “The Representation of Hobbesian Sovereignty,” p. 125.
 43. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
 44. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chapter 45.
 45. Abizadeh, “The Representation of Hobbesian Sovereignty,” p. 128.
 46. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
 47. *Ibid.*, p. 128. My emphasis.
 48. *Ibid.*, p. 136. The modern secular understanding of God as projection can be seen to be anticipated by Hobbes. At the same time, Hobbes is quite open about this projected quality, whereas post-Enlightenment figures such as Feuerbach and Freud portray themselves as demystifiers.

49. The identification of seeing the divine with self-knowledge is articulated in a sermon Donne delivered at the end of his life at Paul's Cross, which reflects upon the beatific vision. Here Donne states that to fully see God in heaven is at the same time to completely know the self. Donne, *The Sermons of John Donne*, vol. 9, p. 129.
50. Abizadeh, "The Representation of Hobbesian Sovereignty," pp. 143–144.
51. Kahn, *The Trouble with Literature*, pp. 33–61.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
54. One problem with Kahn's identification of Hobbesian state-making with literature is that for Hobbes, once the sovereign state is constructed, the people who fabricate it are irrevocably bound to it (except when the sovereign threatens one's life). That literature does not bind us in any kind of a legal sense means that its applicability to Hobbesian covenant-making is significantly limited. Further, the kind of belief resulting from imaginative production in Hobbes is quite contrary to the way "faith in literature" is normally understood, at least within a secular framework. For instance, Richard C. McCoy argues that our "belief" in the works of Shakespeare—that is, our willed trust in the invented world of the plays, including our willing suspension of disbelief—contrasts with religious faith because of its revocability. McCoy, *Faith in Shakespeare*, pp. 4–5.
55. Kahn, *The Trouble with Literature*, pp. 25–26. Kahn also develops this understanding of *poesis* in *The Future of Illusion*.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
57. In *The Trouble with Literature* Kahn tends to view religious belief in terms of truth claims and propositions, inadequately accounting for the kinds of experiential and participatory dimensions so central to religious faith as it is depicted in the poetry of Donne.
58. See Terence Cave, *Thinking With Literature*; Lisa Zunshine, *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Literary Studies*; and Peter Garratt, *The Cognitive Humanities*. Treatment of cognitive studies of religion exceeds the scope of this paper, but it is fair to say that much of it is presumptively naturalistic.
59. See Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition*.

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