“SPEAKING PICTURES”: WORDS, IMAGES, AND THE VISUAL AESTHETICS OF EARLY MODERN LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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This dissertation explores the prehistory of eighteenth-century aesthetics. Without a word like "aesthetics" to unite a range of discourses beginning to theorize the role of art in early modern culture, I argue that Sidney, Spenser, Jonson, and Bacon turn instead to the concept of the image, which served as the basis for early modern understandings of representation and the representational arts. To understand why early moderns thought of poetry as speaking painting and painting as silent poetry, I focus on the underlying discourse which made such analogies possible: the art of memory, which helped create a distinction between vision and visualization. Histories of the book, reading, and theater have tended to overemphasize the role of *seeing* in early modern culture, neglecting the complex and historically specific ways that poets, playwrights, and their audiences sought to address the phenomenological experience of *seeing-as*—what early poets called the inner "sight of the soul." By demonstrating how visualization or *seeing-as* shaped notions of form in poetry, allegory, theater, and science, I show how theories of visual cognition in the arts of memory form an important but neglected historical framework for aesthetic discourse before the eighteenth century.

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DEDICATION

For Emma

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Introduction

This dissertation traces the origins of modern aesthetics to debates among Renaissance poets over the nature and status of images in the representational arts. While we still regard the image as a fundamental unit of representation in literature, the modern aesthetic divide between words and images has rendered the concept of verbal imagery a contradiction: in what sense is a poetic image an *image*? Poetic images are paradoxically both "there" and "not there"—not visibly on the page, and yet somehow part of the reading experience.[1] Although we tend to think of images in material terms—as paintings, diagrams, or maps, for instance—early modern poets understood the image not as a material object but as that which makes the perceptual experience of material objects possible: the image was something that could not be clearly located in the material world but which was nonetheless partly constitutive of the way we perceive it.

We can better understand the ontological instability of early modern images, I argue, by turning to the memory tradition. Across four chapters on Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Ben Jonson, and Francis Bacon, I show how the visual engagement with texts demanded by the arts of memory shaped many formal aspects of early modern literature, including not only the material forms of type and layout but also the emblematic picturing of virtues and vices in allegory, the use of rhetorical techniques of vivid visualization in romance, scenic conventions of page and stage in early modern drama, and the use of metaphor in scientific writing. Early modern poets, I argue, prepare the way for enduring assumptions about aesthetic experience, from the division between

[1] W.J.T Mitchell, *Iconology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 17.

subject and object, to the nature of aesthetic pleasure, to the affective and perceptual structures—what Kant will later call the *a priori* forms—of embodied experience.

The topic of aesthetics has, traditionally, been the academic province of eighteenth-century studies, and for good reason: aesthetics, as a branch of philosophy concerned with the study of art in relation to the moral concepts of truth, beauty, and goodness, does not emerge in recognizably modern form until the eighteenth century. According to Renaissance scholar Paul O. Kristeller, the concept of art and aesthetics in the modern sense—what he calls the "modern system of the arts"— "is of comparatively recent origin and did not assume definite shape before the eighteenth century, although it has many ingredients which go back to classical, medieval and Renaissance thought."[2] To speak of the "arts" or of "aesthetics" before the eighteenth century, Kristeller concludes, is to entertain misleading anachronisms. By locating the origins of aesthetics at the turn of the eighteenth century, scholarship like Kristeller's helps account for the dominance of Kant in the history of aesthetics.[3] Kant's *Third Critique* offers an account of the sensuous, affective, and perceptual conditions of experience, but despite its breadth of interest, his philosophy of the aesthetic has been "shrunk," as James Elkins wryly puts it, "to individual passages" on art, taste, artistic genius, disinterested pleasure, and beauty.[4] This narrow version of Kantian aesthetics has, somewhat problematically, come to stand-in for modern aesthetics more generally. The 1980's and 90's saw a reaction against the

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[2] Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: a Study in the History of Aesthetics," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, no. 4 (1951): 499-500.
[3] See for example M.H. Abrams, "Kant and the Theology of Art," *Notre Dame English Journal* 13, no. 2 (1981): 76-79; and Paul Guyer, *Values of Beauty: Historical Essays in Aesthetics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), ix-xvii and 3-36.
[4] See James Elkins and Harper Montgomery, eds., *Beyond the Aesthetic and the Anti-Aesthetic* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013), 3. See also Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews and ed. Paul Guyer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 89-127.

"shrunken" version of Kantian aesthetics, a reaction sometimes referred to as the "anti-aesthetic" turn: scholarship from the second half of the last century takes modern aesthetics to task as a discourse which conspired with capitalism to form an ideological framework for class-, race-, and gender-based practices of exclusion and oppression.[5] So effective was the anti-aesthetic movement that scholars have questioned whether aesthetics should persist as a relevant category of analysis.[6]

A number of theorists contend that it should. Isobel Armstrong, for example, argues for the "radical" potential of aesthetics to transform the political and ethical landscape of late capitalism. Her project resonates with the work of Jacques Rancière and more recently Alva Noë—theorists whose concept of aesthetics marks a return to its original, Greek meaning: *aesthesis* (αἴσθησις) or sensory experience. Jacques Rancière's essay, *The Distribution of the Sensible*, builds a theory of politics out of aesthetics, which he defines "in a Kantian sense […] as the system of *a priori* forms determining what presents itself to sense experience," particularly to vision. Aesthetics determines the conditions of visibility—"what can be seen and what can be said about it"—that govern political power structures.[7] It is a definition of aesthetics that engages charitably but in no

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[5] The term "Anti-Aesthetic" gained traction with Hal Foster's 1983 *The Anti-Aesthetic*, a collection of essays which forward several post-structuralist critiques of Modernism. Hal Foster and his contributors use the term "anti-aesthetic" to refer to art which explicitly rejects beauty as a value or end. The anti-aesthetic signals a commitment to political activism and engagement, a rejection not only of beauty, but also pleasure, disinterest, cultured taste, and the associated effects of elitism, oppression, class conflict, and exploitation. Understood this way, the anti-aesthetic is a response to Kantian aesthetics defined in the narrowest sense. Hal Foster's impact has been primarily on art history and art criticism. See Hal Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (New York: The New Press, 1998). The term is used more loosely in literary criticism to refer to Kantian aesthetics rather than Modernism. For literary uses of the term "anti-aesthetic," see Isobel Armstrong, *The Radical Aesthetic* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 5. She cites Terry Eagleton, Pierre, Bourdieu, and John Guillory as figures in the "anti-aesthetic" movement.

[6] For an account of this debate, see Sam Rose, "The Fear of Aesthetics in Art and Literary Theory," *New Literary History* 48, no. 2 (2017): 223-244.

[7] Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, trans. and ed. Gabriel Rockhill (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2000), 13.

way naïvely with Kant, and its focus on perception and vision retains traces of the original Greek notion of *aisthesis*. Alva Noë's *Strange Tools* compliments the re-visioning of aesthetics we find in Rancière and Armstrong because it, too, focuses on habits of perception. Art, according to Noë, is any practice which puts the organizing habits of lived experience "on display."[8] Noë observes that "our lives are structured by organized activities," from the rhythms and patterns of conversation, to driving, to eating, to dancing, to seeing—each of his examples names a habit, skill, or practice of which we are only ever partially aware. "We make art out of organized activities," Noe argues, by representing them, making them suddenly visible in a way they ordinarily are not.

What this brief survey of recent work in aesthetic theory is meant to demonstrate is that the terms "art" and "aesthetics" have broadened considerably in the wake of the anti-aesthetic turn. Armstrong, Rancière, and Noë return us to an earlier version of art and aesthetics: art as skill or practice; aesthetics as sensory perception. They also highlight how important vision remains to our understanding of aesthetics. These attitudes, I argue, are familiar to those of us who study the Renaissance conception of art. I aim to historicize the terms in which we are now discussing aesthetics by situating them in a larger history than Kristeller would have allowed. *Speaking Pictures* gives an account of how our own habits of seeing have been shaped by pre-modern notions of imaging and representation.[9] The question of anachronism, raised by Kristeller, turns on

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[8] Alva Noë, *Strange Tools: Art and Human Nature* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2015), 9.

[9] Several historical studies of art and aesthetics that look "back beyond the crucial but in some ways philosophically narrow developments of the eighteenth century," as Stephen Halliwell puts it, have begun to emerge (Stephen Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: Ancient Texts and Modern Problems* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002], vii). Halliwell's revaluation of the concept of mimesis stands as one example. *The Aesthetics of Mimesis* argues that classical notions of mimesis constitute an ancient theory of "art" that is more prescient of the modern concept "than Kristeller was prepared to admit." David Summers' *The Judgment of Sense* similarly gives us reason to think that, properly qualified, we can speak

questions of methodology and definition. If by "aesthetics" we mean the relationship between perception and representation—for this, after all, is how Baumgarten defined the term when he coined it in 1735—then the concept's history reaches back to the most ancient reflections on *mimesis*, poetry, and theater.[10] I posit, therefore, a distinction between aesthetics and the Aesthetic.[11] The former has, indeed, an ancient history; the latter, by contrast, is an invention of modernity. The motivating questions underlying this dissertation are: what did aesthetics look like before the emergence of the Aesthetic in the eighteenth century? What "ingredients" of premodern aesthetics, to use Kristeller's helpful framework, "prepared the way" for the Aesthetic to emerge when and as it did?

One "ingredient" that has received less attention than it deserves is the early modern reception of classical and medieval arts of memory. Mnemonic techniques developed by ancient rhetoricians asked practitioners to translate material for memorization ekphrastically into visual images, which were then "placed" in an imagined location. The medieval period accommodated these mnemonic techniques to the book, whose decorative elements form part of a complex and richly theorized phenomenology of reading in which text and image could not be functionally distinguished. Because mnemonic practice continued to inform the curriculum in early modern England, the art of memory accounts, I argue, for the underlying contiguity between word and image on which the conceit of the sister arts was premised. As the foundation of both perception and representation in premodern thought—the entire tradition of philosophical inquiry

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of such a thing as Renaissance aesthetics. See David Summers, *The Judgment of Sense: Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[10] Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Reflections on Poetry: Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus*, ed. and trans. Karl Aschenbrenner and William B. Holther (Berkley: University of California Press, 1954), 78.

[11] I am grateful to Michael McKeon for proposing this distinction.

into *aesthesis* and *mimesis* from Plato to Bacon—the memory image inextricably bound the concept of aesthetic form to vision. One of the central contentions of this project is that the literary arts play an important, if not central role in Renaissance visual culture. In what follows, I review scholarship on early modern visual culture before offering an account of the relationship between vision and visualization in ancient philosophy and rhetoric, two discourses which form the foundation of early modern understandings of memory and the memory image. Following recent scholarship which argues that the art of memory is, for writers like Sidney and Spenser, "a *poetic* method" of composition, I argue that poetic images were understood to be memory images and that this provides necessary traction for scholars interested in the relationship between visual and literary cultures of the Renaissance.[12] I then close with a brief description of the chapters that follow.

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Existing scholarship on Renaissance visual culture has tended to concentrate on developments in the visual arts and optics—two discourses which came together in the emergence of linear perspective.[13] William Ivins' still-foundational essay, *On the Rationalization of Sight*, argues that by introducing a geometrical basis for realism in the

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[12] Rebecca Helfer, *Spenser's Ruins and the Art of Recollection* (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 8. *Spenser's Ruins*, "treat[s] the art of memory first and foremost as a *poetic* method" (8). Helfer explains that "scholars have usually portrayed the art of memory as a technique *applied* to poetry, which borrows the rhetorical strategy of using places and images to make its matter memorable; in so doing, they tend to separate the techniques of locational memory from the narratives in which they are embedded. But the stories themselves matter as much as the method of their construction. Heuristic tales about recollection can be understood as part of an interdisciplinary debate about poetry's place in culture […]" (8). Building on these insights, I argue that a formal understanding of early modern poetry necessitates a familiarity with the historical conditions of its making—namely, the formal properties of memory images and the principles of memory construction that guided poetic practice.

[13] See for example, Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1983). See also Alpers et al., "Visual Culture Questionnaire," *October* 77 (Summer 1996): 25-70.

visual arts, linear perspective rendered vision rational and thus objective: the mechanics of linear perspective secured a "rigorous two-way, or reciprocal, correspondence" between visual representation and "external fact."[14] Perspectivism did more than replicate the experience of natural vision; it actively standardized the representation of space as a mathematical construct, whose homogenization of space regularized the visual field and precipitated those advancements in science and technology that we refer to now as the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century.[15] Ivins celebrates the rational objectivity established by mathematical perspectivism: the new science, as a social enterprise, relied on shared acts of seeing to orchestrate the production of facts; by establishing a correspondence between vision and reality, new perspectival techniques made such acts of collaborative seeing possible. In other words, perspectivism did not just mimetically reproduce the visual world, it actively defined its organizational coherence, which in turn shaped social and cultural procedures for seeing.

As historians of visual culture began to extend Ivins' analysis to other feats of perspectival illusion, such as anamorphosis, however, the rationalization thesis became increasingly suspect.[16] Erwin Panofsky reminds us that perspectival techniques are a form of visual illusion. The realism of perspective paintings obscures the numerous "distortions" involved in reducing three-dimensional space to two dimensions—distortions which belie the objective nature of reality: perspective, he argues, in fact

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[14] William Ivins, *On the Rationalization of Sight* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), 9. For a discussion of Ivins' work and its reception, see Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1-5 and 85-90

[15] Ivins, *Rationalization*, 9 and 13.

[16] See Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). For a review of scholarship on the role of anamorphosis in theories of linear perspective, see Clark, 91-92.

called attention to the "fundamental discrepancy between 'reality' and its construction."[17] Stuart Clark's *Vanities of the Eye* builds on this body of work, arguing that the visual order of the early modern period was anything but rational. The dominant attitude was, instead, one of "hostility to visual primacy": in opposition to Ivins' thesis, Clark argues that the "dominant scientific or 'rationalized' visual order" of linear perspective in the visual arts depended on mechanical theories of vision that not only failed to secure an objective correspondence between appearance and fact, but became the grounds on which skeptics of the sixteenth century systematically dismantled inherited models of cognition and thus inherited theories of knowledge.[18] Renewed interest in ancient skepticism and the rise of iconoclasm in the sixteenth century threw the visual cognitive regime of the arts into disarray: the image became a site of intense conflict because philosophical and religious crises alike found expression in predominantly visual terms.

If, as Clark argues, the relationship between linear perspective and anamorphism points to fault lines in the visual epistemologies of the early modern period, what techniques define the literary response to problems of visual uncertainty? The emphasis on visual arts in scholarship on Renaissance visual culture poses a difficulty for literature studies. The literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries exhibits a fascination with vision, but not all of its interests directly correspond to developments in the visual arts. Instead of drawing analogies between painting and poetry, this project seeks to make

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[17] Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, trans. Christopher S. Wood (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 21. Panofsky's analysis begins with a series of observations similar to those of Ivins: "exact perspectival construction is a systematic abstraction from the structure of […] psychophysiological space. For it is not only the effect of perspectival construction, but indeed its intended purpose, to realize in the representation of space precisely that homogeneity and boundlessness foreign to the direct experience of that space" (31). He takes these insights further, however, by pointing to the "discrepancy," as he puts it, between perceived, represented, and real space.

[18] Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, 45-9; quoted on Clark, *Vanities*, 6.

that much-repeated notion that poetry is speaking painting and painting silent poetry intelligible to modern audiences by recovering a theory of the image premised on visualization as distinct from vision—a theory of images derived, that is, from the art of memory. Theories of the image in the memory arts, I argue, unfold a richer cognitive landscape than studies of optics or linear perspective have yielded in recent studies of Renaissance aesthetics. Clark argues that by calling attention to the distinction between appearance and reality, skepticism gestures toward a more expansive epistemology that depends on subjunctive or as-if modes of thinking. This subjunctive epistemology—a model of truth which recognizes potential, speculative, conjectural, and other skeptical modes of thought—also implies, I argue, an as-if mode of perception: an ability not simply to *see* but to *see-as*, that "trick of consciousness" whereby the verbal registers as visual, and the material as ideational—what Sidney refers to as the inner "sight of the soul."[19] The art of memory provided early modern poets like Sidney with the necessary tools to respond to the skeptical crisis by providing a discourse premised on the phenomenology of *seeing-as*.

To understand what Sidney means when he calls poetry an art of "speaking pictures" seen with the "sight of the soul," we must look not to developments in painting but to theories of vision in classical psychology and rhetoric.[20] For both Plato and

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[19] Mitchell, *Iconology*, 17. Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy* in *Sidney's 'The Defence of Poesy' and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism*, ed. Gavin Alexander (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 16. For a discussion of "seeing *as*," a concept Mitchell derives from Wittgenstein, see Mitchell, *Seeing Through Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 20. See also Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations: The German text, with a revised English translation*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1953), 163-168.

[20] Following David Summers, who argues that art became associated with aesthetics when the language of classical psychology was first "adapted" "to the discussion of what art is and what artists do," I similarly look to the ways in which classical psychology entered into theories of poetry in the early modern period (*The Judgment of Sense*, 9). I depart from Summers in emphasizing memory rather than imagination. Summers argues that "imagination is the literally crucial point at which sense and reason meet"—

Aristotle, and subsequently for their scholastic, humanist, and Neoplatonist commentators, all forms of sensory perception were modeled after the mechanics of vision. According to Aristotle, "the soul never thinks without an image."[21] Vision was thought to be not only the keenest of our senses but also the most mediated—least material or bodily and most associated with the intellectual and rational faculties of the mind. For this reason, Aristotle's theory of vision speculates at length on the nature of mediation and consequently, on the nature of representation. Sensory impressions, Aristotle theorizes, register cognitively as images which are stored or inscribed in memory as memory images. These memory images, he explains, are a kind of "impression or picture," a point he elaborates by comparing memories to paintings: just as "a painted picture" is both an image and an image *of* something, so memories are both "a likeness" and a "reminder" of the thing-remembered.[22] More often, however, Aristotle compares the memory to wax on which the images of sensory experience are impressed, like the seal of a signet ring.[23] Aristotle's wax metaphor echoes Plato, who also compares the memory to a wax tablet in the *Theatetus*:

"sensation yields inner images, thought proceeds from these inner images and must return to them in order to act" (*Judgment of Sense*, 24). Mary Carruthers has argued, however, that the imagination plays a much more limited role than we, in the post-Romantic era, have recognized (Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990], 1-17). For reason to operate on the inner images of sense, we must be able to "return" to them—Summers' emphasis on imagination is both typical and misleading, since it is the memory not imagination that sits at the "crucial point" between sense and reason. The creative powers of the mind, what Renaissance writers would call its powers of invention, were explicitly assigned to memory: for sense impressions to be worked upon by reason, they must be organized, stored, and accessible—they must become memories.

[21] Aristotle, *On the Soul* in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: the Revised Oxford Translation*, ed. Jonathan Barnes Vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 431a16. See also *On Memory*, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: the Revised Oxford Translation*, ed. Jonathan Barnes Vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 450a1-5.

[22] Aristotle, *On Memory*, 450b15-30.

[23] Aristotle, *On Memory*, 450a30-33.

> We may look upon it, then, as a gift of Memory, the mother of the muses. We make impressions upon this of everything we wish to remember among the things we have heard or thought of ourselves; we hold the wax under our perceptions and thoughts and take a stamp from them, in the way in which we take the imprints of signet rings. Whatever is impressed upon the wax we remember and know so long as the image remains […].[24]

The association of sense impression with memory in Plato informs Aristotle's account of vision, which doubles as a theory of memory formation. The ancient archetype of the seal-in-wax is rehearsed in rhetoric handbooks, which take it as a given that all thought occurs in such images, impressed on our souls. Echoing earlier Greek sources, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, for example, compares the locations of memory to "wax tablets."[25] Cicero similarly reports that those with "almost superhuman memories" say "that they recorded what they wanted to remember by means of images in the localities they had chosen, just as if they were writing them out by means of letters on a wax tablet."[26]

Plato, and to a certain extent Aristotle, speak of the wax-tablet metaphor in relation to natural memory, but in the hands of ancient rhetoricians, these descriptive accounts of natural memory evolved into a prescriptive theory for constructing artificial memories. Because "the keenest of all our senses is the sense of sight," Cicero explains, even abstract ideas should be "represented by a kind of figure, an image, a shape" so that

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[24] Plato, *Theatetus* in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper and trans. M.J. Levett and Rev. Myles Burnyeat (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), 191d.
[25] Ps. Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, trans. Henry Caplan, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964), III.xvii.31.
[26] Cicero, *On the Orator*, ed. and trans. James M. May and Jakob Wisse (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 221.

"we can apprehend thoughts by means of images."[27] Frances Yates' foundational study, *The Art of Memory*, traces the history of memory practices and techniques from the earliest Latin treatises on the rhetorical art of memory through the medieval and into the early modern periods. Yates' research focuses on Neoplatonism, especially the memory systems of Giordano Bruno, Guilio Camillo, and Robert Fludd. Of these three, Bruno offers the best description of how Renaissance poets, like Philip Sidney, interpreted the classical prescriptions for the formation of memory images. Bruno, who met Philip Sidney during a visit to England in 1584 and dedicates one of his dialogues to Sidney, claims that images allow us to "give universal definitions of sensible things in so far as they are sensible, which is the same as trying to define intelligible things in sensible terms."[28] To think about abstract or "intelligible things," the mind must figure them in "sensible terms": in order to think about equality—*aequus*—he recommends that we imagine a horse—*equus*.[29] By giving the abstract idea of equality "sensible form" in the image of a horse, Bruno teaches readers how to construct memory images: the image cues an aural and visual (in this case typographical) pun that serves a mnemonic function.[30] Like Bruno, who seeks to "define intelligible things in sensible terms," Sidney's poet gives sensible form to abstract ideas by "coupling the general notion with the particular example." The "peerless poet," in this way, "giveth a perfect picture," of

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[27] Cicero, *On the Orator*, 220.

[28] Bruno quoted by Paolo Rossi in *Logic and the Art of Memory: the Quest for a Universal Language*, trans. Stephen Clucas (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 82-83. Dick Higgins mentions Bruno's relationship to Sidney in the introduction to *On the Composition of Images, Signs & Ideas*, trans. Charles Doria and ed. Dick Higgins (New York: Willis, Locker & Owens, 1991), xivi. Bruno documents his friendship with Philip Sidney in the prefatory epistles of two hermetic dialogues between 1584 and 1585: the *Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast* and the *Heroic Frenzies*.

[29] Bruno, *On the Composition of Images, Signs, and Ideas*, 28.

[30] Although we often think of the pun as a single word with two meanings, I use it in a different sense here, as "two or more words of the same or nearly same sound with different meanings" (OED, s.v. "pun"). Many of the memory images I discuss in later chapters involve similar puns.

virtue by "coupl[ing] the general notion with particular example. A *perfect picture* I say, for he yieldeth to the powers of the mind *an image* of that whereof the philosopher bestoweth but a wordish description, which doth neither strike, pierce, nor possess the sight of the soul so much as that other doth."[31] The similarities between Cicero, Bruno, and Sidney point suggestively to the likelihood that Sidney had the art of memory, as described by Bruno and his Latin sources, in mind when he defines poetry as "an art of imitation […] that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth—to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture."[32]

Yates' emphasis on Neoplatonism and architectural mnemonics had the unintended effect of obscuring the importance of book-based mnemonic techniques, and for this reason, I focus more attention on the humanist reception of the art of memory, which I connect to commonplace books and Renaissance reading practices. The association of memory with oral culture led many scholars to assume that the increasing availability of books should coincide with a decline in memory practices, but Mary Carruthers has demonstrated that this is not the case: she goes so far as to argue that "a book is itself a mnemonic" technology.[33] Carruthers also distinguishes several distinct memory traditions, correcting another longstanding misconception that there is such a thing as *the* art of memory when in fact there are many arts of memory.[34] The memory

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[31] Bruno, *On the Composition of Images, Signs, and Ideas*, 32.
[32] Sidney, *Defence of Poesy*, 10.
[33] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 10.
[34] The art of memory is one of those rare intellectual achievements that does not have a linear history: like the calculus, discovered simultaneously by both Newton and Leibniz, the art of memory has been known to emerge in different times and places independently of any tradition. The memory system of S., made famous by neuropsychologist Alexander Luria, is one modern example of how locational techniques can surface spontaneously, independent of historical influences and sources. See A.R. Luria, *The Mind of a Mnemonist: a Little Book about a Vast Memory*, trans. Lynn Solotaroff (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968).

arts of the Renaissance have a complex history that resembles a patchwork, held together by several common principles: the construction of images designed to recall rote material; the method of placing images in ordered locations, conceived either as books or buildings (or both); and techniques for engaging in intensely vivid acts of visualization or ἐνάργεια (*enargeia*) that facilitate the recollection of images.

Enargeia or, as Quintilian defines it, the "vivid illustration" or "representation" presented to "the eyes of the mind," plays a central role in how the ancients describe the mechanics of artificial memory construction.[35] The *Ad Herennium*, a rhetorical handbook written to teach the art of oratory to students, is one of several surviving sources on the classical art of memory, which it discusses as one of the five parts of rhetoric. Memory images, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* tells us, must be "strong and sharp,"[36] "striking,"[37] and "clearly visible."[38] Similarly, according to Cicero, they should be "lively, sharp, and conspicuous." Ruth Webb sees in such descriptions traces of Aristotle's theory of sense and memory—Aristotle's account of vision underlies "the theory of *enargeia*" in Ancient rhetoric. *Enargeia* belongs to a set of related terms, including *ekphrasis*, *evidentia*, and *descriptio*—all of which are used to describe the effect of language which "brings the subject matter vividly before the eyes" with the aim of turning listeners into "spectators."[39] Erasmus defines *enargeia* (*evidientia*, in Latin) under the heading of

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[35] Ruth Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2009), 111. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, ed. and trans. H.E. Butler, Loeb Classical Library 126 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), VIII.iii.61.
[36] Ps. Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, III.xxi.35.
[37] Ps. Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, III.xxii.37.
[38] Ps. Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, III.xix.31.
[39] Webb, *Ekphrasis*, 1 and 20. The concept of vivid description is transmitted to figures of the English Renaissance through the same rhetorical treatises that contained descriptions of the art of memory: the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Cicero's *De Oratore*, and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*. These texts refer to vivid visualization variously as *enargeia*, *ekphrasis*, *evidentia*, or *descriptio*. While we now think of ekphrasis, for example, as the verbal description of visual art, Ruth Webb explains, "this was not its ancient

descriptio, as speech that "fill[s] in the colours" and sets up "a picture to look at, so that we seem to have painted the scene rather than read" it.[40] Henry Peacham, similarly, defines *descriptio* in terms synonymous with *enargeia*, as speech with "doth expresse and set forth a thing so plainly and liuely that is seemeth rather painted in tables, then declared with words," so that the listener "rather thinketh he seeth it then heareth it."[41] The language used to describe the effect of vivid language on an audience connotes impression or imprinting, which suggests "that such language has an effect analogous to sensation."[42] When Aristotle compares the sense impressions stored in memory to paintings, he uses the same language used by later Greek rhetoricians to describe the effects of *enargeia*—such parallels "between the effects of *enargeia* and the effects of direct perception" indicate that "what lies behind vivid speech is the gallery of mental images impressed by sensation in the speaker's mind," what we might call the gallery of memory.[43] Importantly, techniques of vivid visual description are meant to recreate the effect of direct sensory experience. Theories of visualization take the language of phenomena, appearances, imaging, and mediation from theories of sensory cognition and apply them to the effects of language, which helps explain how words can give rise to sensory experiences *like* that of vision.

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sense": definitions of ekphrasis, which first appear in the *Progymnasmata* of the first century (of which four are extant: Theon, Hermogenes, Aphthonius, and Nicolaus), define it as "speech that brings the subject matter vividly before the eyes" (Webb, 1). Ekphrasis does not appear in English to describe the ancient rhetorical trope until the early seventeenth century. Instead, figures like Desiderius Erasmus, George Puttenham, and Henry Peacham discuss vivid visualization under *enargeia* and the related Latin term *descriptio*—the three terms have identical meanings and the latter two are often used interchangeably.

[40] Desiderius Erasmus, *De Copia*, in *Collected Works of Erasmus: Literary and Educational Writings 2 De Copia / De Ratione Studii*, ed. Craig Thompson (Buffalo: Toronto University Press, 1978), 577.

[41] Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence* (London: 1593), 134.

[42] Webb, *Ekphrasis*, 112.

[43] Webb, *Ekphrasis*, 113.

Between mind and world, in ancient thought, there exists a layer of sensory images, conceived as a complex system of representation. Our own analysis of art objects tends to operate in binaries: subject and object; perceiver and perceived. The ancients and their Renaissance inheritors, by contrast, saw the relationship between perceivers, images, and things-imaged as three distinct categories. Whereas in modern aesthetic discourse, a landscape painting and the landscape itself both fall into the category of "object," the painting falls somewhere between the perceiving subject and object perceived in premodern discourse. As co-constituents of the representational field mediating our experience of the world, the senses and the representational arts occupy a shared space between perceiver and world-perceived. This is because images—whether in painting and poetry or in imagination and memory—were seen as imitations of nature, and thus distinct from the nature they were thought to imitate. As W.J.T. Mitchell explains, "an image cannot be seen *as such* without a paradoxical trick of consciousness, an ability to see something as both 'there' and 'not there' at the same time." When, in the famous battle of the painters, Zeuxis tries to pull back Parrhasius' painted curtain, he engages in an act of *seeing-as* that is, in fact, foundational to the logic of representation more broadly.[44] To see anything but a painted surface requires more than imagination; it requires an ability to perceive the world through formal categories that predetermine what is visible in the first place. Images, understood this way, are not objects of perception; they are, instead, part of the architecture of perception itself.[45] Sidney, Spenser, Jonson, and Bacon all take particular interest in forms of artifice that call attention to the gap

[44] Mitchell, *Iconology*, 17.

[45] I use the term "art" in a sense closer to "artifice" in this dissertation. I have tried to make clear when I am using it in its modern sense. Because its premodern and modern meanings often converge or overlap in the authors I discuss, and I also try to make clear when and where I see such points of convergence happening.

between appearance and reality, perceiver and perceived: *trompe l'oeil* and other forms of illusion preoccupy these writers precisely because it calls attention to the mediated nature of sensory perception.

As something which is both "there" and "not there"—something that exists over and above its material particulars—the image behaves in ways very similar to the Platonic idea of form. Until Plato, the concept of form is not clearly distinguished, either conceptually or etymologically, from images. The word Plato uses most often for "form," *eidos* (εἶδος), means "that which is seen."[46] It derives from the verb *eido* (εἴδω), "to see" and "to know," and is cognate with the Greek word *eidolon* (ἴδωλον), "image in the mind" or "idea." We come to know the forms, Socrates argues in the *Phaedrus*, by seeing them imaged or pictured in the material world of human experience: the man who falls in love with a beautiful boy is *remembering* the form of beauty itself as the charioteer of his soul saw it in heaven—the boy is a *mnemonic image* of the Form of Beauty.[47] According to Plato, the *eidos* (εἶδος) or "form" of an object registers cognitively as an *eidolon* (ἴδωλον) or "image" in the mind, such that "image" (*eidolon*) is to "form" (*eidos*) what representation (the beautiful boy) is to thing represented (the Form of Beauty).[48] Plato's

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[46] It is worth noting that the word *idea* (ἰδέα), which is strongly associated with Plato's philosophy, is, like *eidos* (εἶδος), also derived from *eido* (εἴδω).

[47] Plato's *Phaedrus*, 250d-252c discusses the form of beauty as an example for how the philosopher "remembers" the forms by seeing them imaged in the world of human experience. Plato uses *eikon* (250d) and *eidolon* (250d) interchangeably in his explanation for how we "perceive" "images" of the "forms" or "ideas" that the soul saw in heaven—in this section he refers to the beautiful boy as an *eikon* or "image" of the form of beauty, but uses the word *eidolon* elsewhere to describe the relationship between "image" and "form." Plato also refers to the written dialogue itself as an *eidolon* or "image" of spoken dialogue (276a). See Plato, *Phaedrus*, trans. Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1995).

[48] Mitchell, *Iconology*, 5. Mitchell explains that "the Platonic tradition" "distinguishes the *eidos* from the *eidolon* by conceiving of the former as a 'suprasensible reality' of 'forms, types, or species,' the latter as a sensible impression that provides a mere 'likeness' (*eikon*) or 'semblance' (*phantasma*) of the *eidos*" (5). The related Greek term, *morphe* (μορφή), "form" or "shape" (possibly cognate with *forma* in Latin, from which the English "form" is derived), is also used to theorize the concept of form, particularly in Aristotle. But *morphe* is used rarely by Plato in the *Republic*, and not at all in the *Phaedrus*. Aristotle uses it in the

argument for a metaphysical distinction between form and image thus depends on a prior, *aesthetic* distinction between image and thing imaged: failing to distinguish one from the other, in either case, can only end in existential anguish and confusion.

Paradoxically, Plato exemplifies two traditions in the history of aesthetics, one iconoclastic and the other formalist. The iconoclastic tradition emphasizes the danger of mistaking representation for reality: to mistake the image for the thing itself—the beautiful boy for the Form of Beauty—is, Socrates argues, to misunderstand the nature of representation and thus the nature of reality. This kind of metaphysical error (best exemplified by the paradox of *trompe l'oeil* painting) gives rise to an anti-visual aesthetic that resurfaces in the rhetoric of religious reformers in the sixteenth century.[49] The iconoclastic aesthetic associates images with deceit and language with truth—an association that accords well with a new biblical hermeneutic premised exclusively on the Word of God. By contrast, what I call the formalist tradition emphasizes the didactic power of images—visual and verbal—to move the soul toward knowledge of truth and beauty. The formalist aesthetic does not recognize the distinction between words and images as metaphysically or ontologically meaningful because within this tradition, words register phenomenologically as images. It is in this sense that poetry is "speaking picture"—a commonplace coined by the apocryphal father of the art of memory, Simonides of Ceos.[50] The formalist aesthetic finds its most powerful expression among

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Metaphysics, but significantly less often than *eidos*. *Eidos* and *eidolon* therefore play a more role in the history of the concept of form, for my purposes, than *morphe*, although other conceptual frameworks were also at play.

[49] I should emphasize that my argument is not that protestant reformers were directly influenced by or responding to Plato but rather that, viewed retrospectively, both form part of a single aesthetic tradition.

[50] The notion that painting is silent poetry, poetry speaking picture is captured in Horace's famous dictum in the *Ars Poetica*: "ut pictura poesis" (*Satires, Epistles, The Art of Poetry*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, Loeb Classical Library 194 [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926], 481). But it was attributed by Plutarch to a much more ancient source, Simonides of Ceos. See Plutarch, "Were the Athenians More

sixteenth-century poets, who, embracing the ambiguous relationship between knowledge and vision, understood *mimesis* as more than simply "mirroring" its objects: it was, instead, a process for making images of all kinds, from the many visual illusions scattered through so many Renaissance literary works to foundational poetic techniques such as metaphor, simile, allegory, emblem and other modes of figuration that relied on perceptual habits of *seeing-as*. Whereas iconoclasm understood *seeing-as* to be the foundation of idolatry (mistaking the image for the thing imaged), poets understood it as foundational to the nature of representation. The Renaissance fascination with the "image," exemplified in the works of Sidney, Spenser, Jonson, and Bacon, I argue, incited critical reflection on the visual strategies and mechanisms of poetic representation, in this way precipitating the emergence of aesthetics as an autonomous discourse by helping to define the nature of representation itself.

The hypervisualism of Renaissance poetry garnered attention in the earlier half of the twentieth century, which saw a number of monographs and articles on the topic of poetic imagery, most notably Rosemond Tuve's *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*.[51] Even then, Tuve complained that no clear definition of the poetic or verbal image had emerged, and while her careful analysis of the relationship between rhetoric, logic, and poetry helped clarify the historical and cultural context of Renaissance poetics, a clear definition of images never really surfaced.[52] Those in search of a theoretical

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Famous in War or in Wisdom?" in *Moralia, Volume IV*, Trans. Frank Cole Babbitt, Loeb Classical Library 305 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936), 503. The apocryphal attribution of this concept to Simonides of Ceos is significant because Cicero writes in the *De oratore* that Simonides of Ceos also invented the art of memory (*De oratore*, 465).

[51] Rosemond Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery: Renaissance Poetic and Twentieth-Century Critics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947). See also Tuve, "Imagery and Logic: Ramus and Metaphysical Poetics," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 3, no. 4 (1942): 365-400.

[52] Tuve seeks to correct modernist readings of early modern poetry, which tended to characterize the imagery of early modern poems as "sensuous" in its attention to and description of "particulars." Instead,

account of the image will find it not in poetics but in semiotics, which extended the meaning-making properties of words to images. By turning both words and images into signs, however, semiotics had the unintended effect of reducing visual codes of meaning into verbal ones; instead of a general theory of signification that gives words and images equal footing, semiotics offers a linguistic theory of meaning that, as James Elkins puts it, ignores "those places in pictures where the inevitable linguistic or semiotic model stops making sense."[53] Establishing the role of iconoclasm in the history of aesthetics since the Renaissance allows us to see more clearly how Reformation aesthetics has continued to shape modern theories of the image well into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. By taking the distinction between words and images as given or natural, we, as scholars, continue to operate within a basically iconoclastic framework. We understand images in ways more aligned with early modern reformers than early modern artists. Only by recovering a tradition that takes the image rather than the word as its primary object of meaning-making, can we understand the visual aesthetics of early modern poetry.

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Chapter one lays out the philosophical and historical genealogies underpinning the revolutionary changes in Renaissance attitudes toward the image at stake in each of

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she draws lines of continuity between rhetoric and logic, on the one hand, and poetic imagery on the other to describe Renaissance poetic imagery as serving logical or argumentative ends, and as achieving its argumentative effect through almost mechanical relations between symbols and meanings. In forwarding a new account of how poetic images convey meaning in Renaissance poetry, Tuve sought to give poetic images more than "ornamental" purpose. What her work calls attention to, I suggest, is theoretical disagreement over the nature of images—what purpose they serve and the kinds of meaning that can be ascribed to images.

[53] James Elkins, *Pictures and the Words that Fail Them* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), xi. Elkins, also a scholar of visual culture, interested in theorizing images, resists the tendency to reduce images to signs. *Pictures and the Words that Fail Them*, Elkins remarks, "might well have been titled *The Antisemiotic*" because it is premised on a critique of the linguistic turn in image studies (xi).

the four figures I examine. It looks at the intersection of memory and vision in Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy* and *Old Arcadia*—texts centrally concerned with the visual paradoxes of poetic imagery. In the *Old Arcadia*, Sidney stages the tragic consequences of visual illusion motivating broader iconoclastic anxieties about the relationship between vision, knowledge, and virtue: war, adultery, and rape ensue when a prince falls in love with the painted portrait of a woman—the portrait, not the woman herself. The *Defence* later attempts to foreclose the ethical and epistemological ambiguity of the *Old Arcadia*'s imagery by defining poetry as an art of image-making whose end is the virtuous fashioning of readers. Both the *Arcadia* and the *Defence*, I argue, respond to Plato's *Republic*: when Socrates exiled the poets from the ideal state, he created the conditions under which poetry would perpetually need to justify its own existence. Sidney's engagement with Plato and the history of Platonism highlights the defining question of Renaissance poetics: what does it mean to fall in love with art?

I go on in Chapter Two to show how Edmund Spenser responds to this crisis by shifting the center of debate away from the ethics of poetic fashioning and toward an emerging theory of poetic representation. Spenser exemplifies the shift from ethical to aesthetic concerns when, in Book II of the *Faerie Queene*, he allegorizes the art of poetry as Acrasia. Her Circe-like power to transform men into beasts carries obvious moral valences about the dangers of sensuous pleasure, but it also figures her ethically suspect powers of seduction as a form of visual prestige or illusion. Spenser's frequent ekphrastic descriptions of *trompe l'oeil* images in the Bower of Bliss episode cast the problem of ethical ambiguity as, more fundamentally, a problem of perceptual ambiguity. In this way, I argue, Spenser offers a defense of poetry against the iconoclasts of Protestant

England that restricts debate over poetry's value to questions about representation. While Spenser echoes Sidney's mnemonic theory of ethical fashioning in the "Letter to Raleigh," Spenser also derives from the memory arts a defense of poetic imagery that challenges the charge of idolatry by appealing to the role of memory in the representational arts.

Chapter Three then turns to the Renaissance stage to argue that Ben Jonson's defense of theater draws on Spenser's innovative turn from ethics to aesthetics to reconstitute the relationship between ethics and memory as an aesthetic theory of dramatic character. In chapters one and two, I discuss *trompe l'oeil* as a recurring trope in early modern poetry that served as a figure for the visual paradox of poetic imagery. Here, I argue, the theater becomes an object and engine of a similar kind of illusion. Stepping into the theater is like stepping into a *trompe l'oeil* painting: characters, like poetic images, are both "there" and "not there"—"there" on-stage, and yet "not there," since it is an actor, not the character he plays, who stands before us. The strange ontological status of character, I argue, is a specifically theatrical iteration of poetry's more general concern with the nature and status of images in the representational arts. The transformation of ethos into character folds traditional elements of poetic humanism into the representational space of the stage, turning ethics into a formal problem of aesthetic representation rather than its grounding condition.

I begin my study with chapters on Sidney, Spenser, and Jonson because vision sits at the center of these authors' mnemonic literary aesthetic. Their visual orientation is exemplary of their cultural and historical moment. But I end my study in Chapter Four with Francis Bacon, who more than any other author of the early modern

period exemplifies the desire to decenter vision. By the mid-sixteenth century, optical illusions, which were originally seen as exceptions to the otherwise reliable mechanisms of veridical visual experience, suddenly came to challenge the traditional association between vision and epistemological certainty. The Protestant Reformation and rise of iconoclasm played a crucial role in this process: iconoclasm reversed the cultural value of images by developing an idiom of visual mendacity, an anti-mimetic and anti-theatrical rhetoric directed at the representational arts in both religious and secular contexts. Bacon's "Doctrine of Idols" initiates a fateful separation of the literary arts from philosophy and science—a separation which finally culminates in the emergence of aesthetics as an autonomous discourse in the eighteenth century.

Before the eighteenth century, aesthetics remained closely associated with *aesthesis*, "perception by the senses." The representational arts became associated with *aesthesis* in the sixteenth century and thus with aesthetics in the seventeenth and eighteenth because they imagined new ways of seeing that entailed, at the same time, new ways of knowing. It often goes unnoticed that Plato's foundational distinction between formal and material reality depends on a prior, aesthetic distinction between image and thing-imaged: the false images of Plato's cave laid the groundwork for much of western metaphysics. From Plato to Bacon to Kant, attempts to understand the nature of reality—political, scientific, or philosophical—invariably lead us recursively back to the aesthetic: to the conditions of perception and the strategies we develop to represent the world to ourselves. The representational arts, understood this way, do more than mirror things as they are: rather, they constitute the horizons of perception itself by mediating our

aesthetic (i.e. sensory) experience of reality, and it is this insight which continues to underwrite the value of art, especially literature, today.

Chapter One

The Poetic Image: Defending Poetry from Plato to Sidney

I. Introduction

In book ten of the *Republic*, after denying poetry and the other mimetic arts any place in a city-soul ruled by reason, Socrates makes the following invitation: "we'll allow its defenders, who aren't poets themselves but lovers of poetry, to speak in prose on its behalf and to show that it not only gives pleasure but is beneficial both to constitutions and human life."[1] Philip Sidney, among poetry's greatest defenders, addresses his *Defence of Poesy* in part to Plato, who "of all the philosophers I have ever esteemed most worthy of reverence; and with good reason, since of all the philosophers he is the most poetical."[2] Sidney's *Defence*, which reads almost as a point-by-point response to Plato's *Republic*, centers on a matter that remains of great concern to humanists today: the place of poetry in relation to other fields of human knowledge. At stake in both Plato's *Republic* and Sidney's *Defense* is the relationship between art and politics, which plays out in the oppositional tension between poetry and philosophy, love and reason.

The "ancient quarrel between [poetry] and philosophy" (*Republic*, 607b), as Socrates calls it, is staged as a struggle between love and reason in the *Republic*. And reason wins. Greek culture, especially the culture of Greek philosophy, Martha Nussbaum argues, believed that through reason we could transcend the condition of tragic suffering engendered by our human attachments. The Greeks understood τύχη

[1] Plato, *Republic* trans. G.M.A. Grube and C.D.C. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. 1992), 607d.
[2] Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*, in *Sidney's Defence of Poesty and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism*, ed. Gavin Alexander (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 38.

(*tuchē*)—typically translated as "fortune" or "chance" but best understood as any force or event that is outside of human control—as a formidable obstacle to living well, not just in the sense that unforeseeable or uncontrollable circumstances often end in human suffering, but also in the sense that such circumstances compel us to act in ways we would not otherwise choose to.[3] What the Greeks needed was a "skill," "method," or "art"—a τέχνη (*technē*)—for preserving human life, both individually and communally, in the face of such tragedies.[4] Drama, especially tragedy, provided one such *technē*: a situational knowledge of action derived from practical experience—an empirical, phronetic method which proceeds case by case, drawing inductively on both social convention and myth. In the *Republic*, Socrates rejects the method of poets by denying that it is a method at all: instead, Socrates insists on reason and on the art of reasoning, philosophy, as the only means by which the Greeks might assert control over *tuchē*.

But the story of Plato's dialogues as a whole—the death of Socrates—complicates the redemptive picture of reason we get in the *Republic*. Socrates' trial and self-defense, as well as his final hours, are enacted in the early dialogues; but in the middle ones, especially the *Republic*, *Symposium*, and *Phaedrus*, Socrates' death is the urgent and tragic background to the conversation between Socrates, his friends, and his opponents. His carefully staged aspiration to dispassionate self-control is complicated by the meaning which passionate suffering—not only pain, loss, and grief, but also joy, love, desire, and ambition—confers on human experience. Whether reason, in particular, "could make safe, and thereby save, our human lives," as Nussbaum puts it, is less an assertion that Plato makes across the dialogues than a question which unfolds in the

[3] Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, abridged (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), s.v. "τύχη."
[4] Liddell and Scott, s.v. "τέχνη."

defining tragedy, as he saw it, of Athenian politics: each dialogue ultimately explains why Athens neither understood nor recognized the person Plato regarded as its greatest citizen, and who chose death rather than endure exile from the city which was his life.[5] Athens' crime was less a failure of reason than a failed commitment to true understanding of ourselves: Plato argues for the passionate pursuit of a self-knowledge that helps us to discern truth from illusion, that can save lives, perhaps another Socrates.

Understood this way, the dialogues embrace (in ways Socrates himself often does not) the ambiguous risk posed by love and other forms of vulnerability as necessary to and constitutive of the best human life. Plato's only dialogue in defense of poetry and rhetoric, the *Phaedrus*, in fact begins as a defense of love. Phaedrus persuades Socrates to leave the footpath and walk, instead, in the cool shallows of the river Illisus, the very place, Phaedrus notices, where "people say Boreas carried Oreithuia away."[6] According to this myth, Boreas, the north wind, fell in love with and abducted a mortal girl, Oreithuia, daughter of an Athenian king, who was never seen again. Socrates says he could give a "rational account" of her disappearance—that she was blown over the edge of the cliff and perished—but this too would be nothing more than a "clever story" (*Phaedrus*, 229c). "I have no time for such things," Socrates tells Phaedrus, departing from the attitude readers have come to expect Socrates will take toward myth in relation to rational explanation. Accounts which demythologize the incredible, although they are "amusing enough" (*Phaedrus*, 229d), deprive human tragedy of love and so of meaning. This is the argument Socrates is about to make against Lysias, whose cool and

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[5] Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3.
[6] Plato, *Phaedrus*, trans. and ed. Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company Inc., 1995), 299b.

dispassionate case for bestowing one's favors on a non-lover is another such "rational account."

The *Phaedrus* is unique, not only because it is one of the few places where Socrates engages in sincere and impassioned defense of love, poetry, myth, and rhetoric, but because it takes place outside of Athens.[7] The *Phaedrus*, I argue, is the first pastoral in the Western literary tradition: set in a countryside landscape filled with the song of Cicadas, we find our interlocutors discoursing on love while reclining on the banks of the river Ilisus under a plane tree; it has all the conventions that have come to define pastoral as a genre.[8] But "pastoral" is not just a genre. It also describes a practice, the spiritual care of souls and by this logic also the care a teacher extends to students.[9] Socrates engages in pastoral care of the younger Phaedrus, teaching him not cynically, as Lysias does, the technics of speech-writing, but the art of eloquence, which, we are told, entails conviction and belief, the ardent pursuit of truth in all its forms, and also "a deep love for a particular human being of similar commitments,"[10] a love that, unlike that of the *Symposium*, is both "rare and deeply personal."[11] Socrates enacts the love that underwrites the *philos* of philosophy, bringing Phaedrus around from brutal expediency and self-interest—the rhetoric of sophists and logographers—to a sense of shared

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[7] Phaedrus remarks, "as far as I can tell, you never even set foot beyond the city walls"—Socrates, Phaedrus muses, has "never travel[ed] abroad" (230d).

[8] Traditionally, scholarship on pastoral has focused on the Theocritean tradition. Most scholars regard Theocritus' *Idylls* as the first work of literary pastoral and trace his influence forward through Virgil's *Eclogues* to Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* and Sidney's *Old Arcadia*. I am not the first, however, to argue that Plato's *Phaedrus*, which predates Theocritus by almost a century, is the first work of pastoral. Clyde Murley has argued that Plato and Theocritus established two separate pastoral traditions. The Platonic tradition, I argue, extends from the *Phaedrus* through Cicero's *De Oratore* to Philip Sidney's *Old Arcadia*. The pastoral philosophy of these three figures take the question of poetry's place in relation to the polis as its central dilemma. See Clyde Murley, "Plato's *Phaedrus* and Theocritean Pastoral," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 71 (1940): 281-295.

[9] OED, s.v. "pastoral."

[10] Nussbaum, *Fragility*, 220.

[11] Nussbaum, *Fragility*, 218.

purpose, the crafting of artful expression as a medium of mutual self-understanding. The pastoral labor of philosophy, Socrates insists, is a labor of love.

The *Phaedrus*, in its concern with beauty and truth, love and madness, poetry and philosophy, is in many ways a companion piece to the *Republic*—a palinode, or song of recantation, for the brutal rationalism of the *Republic*.[12] Like the *Republic*, in which Socrates attacks the muses, Socrates' first speech in the *Phaedrus* attacks love—both the muses and eros, Socrates argues, incite madness, confusion, chaos, and ultimately human suffering by giving rein to the passionate parts of the soul. Socrates' second speech in the *Phaedrus*, which stands metonymically for the argument of the dialogue as a whole, recants these arguments against the gods: by speaking in defense of eros, Socrates speaks in defense of the muses; beautiful words, like all beautiful things, move the soul toward truth through the force of erotic desire. The pastoral landscape of the *Phaedrus* calls on Greek cultural attitudes toward politics, citizenship, and the good life to map the ideological relationship between aesthetics and politics onto the spatial logic of the city and country—built into the spatial logic of pastoral is an argument about the place of poetry in relation to other fields of human activity and knowledge.[13] Socrates' defense of artful speech takes place outside the polis because that is the only place where, in the

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[12] This is Martha Nussbaum's argument in *The Fragility of Goodness*. It is worth noting that the *Republic* was likely written after the *Symposium* and before the *Phaedrus*.

[13] Steven Mullaney reminds us of the centrality of the arts, especially drama, to Greek civic life: "in fifth century Athens," "drama essentially cohered with the ritual life of the community"—"it is not overstating the case to say, along with Victor Ehrenberg, that theater *was* the polis. Drama in Athens was fully incorporated into the civic and religious life of the city. Serving as the climax to the spring festival of Dionysus, the annual dramatic competition sponsored by the city stood as a central event in the civic calendar, one that lay at the heart of the community's concern. And in Athens, the centrality of drama's cultural situation, its 'place' in the sense of its status, was reflected in its topographical situation" (Steven Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage: License, Play, and Power in Renaissance England* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988], 7).

Republic, art and discourse about art is said to belong. Only in a pastoral landscape can Socrates safely theorize the force with which beautiful words move the soul toward truth.

In spite of their differences, then, the *Phaedrus* still crucially operates within the framework established by the *Republic*, in which aesthetics is paradoxically both foundational and antithetical to politics. This paradox persists in contemporary accounts of the aesthetic. Isobel Armstrong, for example, characterizes recent work on aesthetics among cultural and literary critics as an antagonistic rivalry between, on the one hand, "those who have purified the aesthetic from political analysis, and who tend to write as if the political does not exist at all in the context of aesthetic experience," and on the other, an eclectic range of "anti-aesthetic" critics—those who argue that all art is politics in disguise.[14] Pastoral, as a genre, has traditionally served the needs of both camps: pastoral is always located in the countryside, outside the city or polis—in this sense, it is a-political; and yet, pastoral has also been defined as a genre of political allegory. In setting aesthetics apart from politics—whether by merely asserting their incompatibility or by subsuming art into politics—both camps reinforce the paradox which Plato's dialogues inscribed into the foundations of Western aesthetic theory.[15]

Sidney's pastoral romance, the *Old Arcadia*, takes the question of what it means to be a "lover of poetry" in a comically literal way. Sidney's *Old Arcadia*, a prose romance written in the 1580's, follows the wandering exploits of two, fictional, Grecian

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[14] Isobel Armstrong, *The Radical Aesthetic* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 5.

[15] Roger Scruton's antagonism toward photography, film, and television, which Armstrong takes as typical of the apolitical stance toward aesthetics, proceeds along strikingly Platonic lines. Photography, in Armstrong's reading of Scruton, is too mimetic: "in photography only the empirical world provokes our recognition of the picture's meaning" (Armstrong, 6)—the Platonic argument against paintings has shifted, ever so slightly, to the new medium of photography. It thus comes as no small irony that the anti-aesthetic thinkers, represented by Armstrong's case study of Michael Cousins, maintain a similar definition of aesthetics: art is a "special category where certain judgments must be suspended," a definition of art that, like Scruton's, fiercely separates "art" from "vulgar mimesis" (Armstrong, 11).

princes—Pyrocles and Musidorus. Its narrative is set in motion by Pyrocles' encounter with a portrait of Philoclea, the beautiful daughter of an Arcadian Duke. Gazing upon the image of Philoclea, Pyrocles "received straight a cruel impression of that wonderful passion which to be defined is impossible, by reason no words reach near to the strange nature of it."[16] Pyrocles' errant wandering away from Greece and toward Arcadia, out of epic and into pastoral romance can be traced to this fatal moment of seduction—not Philoclea's but the *painting*'s seduction of Pyrocles. Sidney's *Old Arcadia* asked the defining question of his time—a question originally posed by Plato: what does it mean to fall in love with art?

The *Old Arcadia* realizes Socrates' worst nightmares: Pyrocles' idolatrous love for a beautiful image leads to adultery, rape, sedition, and effeminacy. Sidney revisits this scene in the *Defence*, when he describes the difference between good and bad poets through an analogy to good and bad painters. Sidney contrasts

> …the meaner sort of painters, who counterfeit only such faces as are set before them, and the more excellent, who having no law but wit bestow that in colours upon you 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 painteth not Lucretia, whom he never saw, but painteth the outward beauty of such a virtue.[17]

The good poet, like the good painter, pictures forth an image of virtue, and as Sidney later explains, "[…] if the saying of Plato and Tully be true, [one] who could see virtue would be wonderfully ravished with the love of her beauty" (*Defence*, 29). The *Defence*, in other words, attempts to foreclose the iconoclastic fears realized in the *Old Arcadia*. Taking up the cause handed to him by Socrates, Sidney, a "lover of poetry" who writes

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[16] Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 11.
[17] Sidney, *Defence*, 11.

"in prose on its behalf," answers from across the centuries: poetry "not only gives pleasure but is beneficial both to constitutions and human life."

Renaissance scholars have tended to focus on the ways poets, like Sidney, labored with difficulty to manage political tension through art, especially love poetry. Under Elizabeth, the unrequited love of the Petrarchan poet became a metaphor for the unrequited political ambitions of courtiers like Sidney. Arthur Marotti's foundational study, "'Love is Not Love,'" exemplifies the temptation to read Sidney's love poetry as political allegory[18]. Marotti argues that Sidney's sonnets created a coterie audience of politically frustrated courtiers—a new community whose identity was formed in and through the writing of love poetry but whose basis for formation was shared political embarrassment and failure. The literary canon as we now know it was as much a political formation as it was a literary or aesthetic one. Poets began to recognize themselves as part of a political community of ambitious but marginalized actors at the same time that they came to recognize themselves and each other as poets.[19] Love is not love, Marotti argues, because love is politics.

In what follows, I argue that love *is* love. Pastoral offers an instructive heuristic for how humanists in the past imagined and understood the political work that art facilitates while still retaining art's integrity as a distinct sphere of activity. If Sidney's poetry helped to create a new community of political outsiders, it did so by establishing love as an organizing principle of its formation. Sidney leverages the logic of pastoral to

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[18] Arthur Marotti, "'Love is Not Love': Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences and the Social Order," *ELH* 49, no. 2 (1982): 392-428.

[19] Spenser's sonnets follow Sidney's example of expressing frustrated political ambition in love poetry; they serve as much as an expression of his friendship with Raleigh as a bid for preferment—again, pastoral is where Spenser and Raleigh begin to form a political community whose shared frustration marks them as separate from the established order.

stake out a meaningful claim about the value of literature: for art, especially poetry, to exist and be valued, we must create the space for it. Our labor of love sustains poetry, and poetry in return recreates the space of literary production as a pastoral landscape, where the *negotium* or work of intellectual labor is recast as the *otium* or leisure of aesthetic pleasure.

II. The Philosopher's Ode: Iconophobia in the *Republic* and *Old Arcadia*

In the *Republic*, Socrates defines the relationship between appearance and reality as one of mimesis. The Greek term μίμησις (*mimesis*), Stephen Halliwell reminds us, was translated as *imitatio* in Latin, which was translated, in turn, as *imitatione* in Italian, *l'imitation* in French, and *imitation* in English during the sixteenth century.[20] By "imitation," we now mean, usually, resemblance or correspondence between an original and its copy, but "throughout the neoclassicism of the sixteenth to eighteenth century texts that employ the language of 'imitation' often do so alongside, and interchangeably with, a cluster of other terms, above all the language of 'representation.'"[21] The modern concept of imitation, and thus of mimesis, is much narrower than its premodern antecedents. Halliwell's distinction is important and well-taken, but representation does not sufficiently account for why mimesis was an object of such intense anxiety in the history of aesthetics from Plato to Sidney. In this section I argue that Socrates' theory of mimesis is not just about representation. It is more specifically about representational illusion—the gap between appearance and reality, image and thing-imaged and the

[20] Stephen Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: Ancient Texts and Modern Problems* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 13.
[21] Halliwell, *Mimesis*, 14.

possibility that we may not be able to distinguish the two. Mimesis plays on the vulnerability of human perception and judgment to error. Understood this way, mimesis names a set of problems whose implications extend beyond representation and knowledge to questions of justice, virtue, and action—to, that is, ethics and politics.

Plato's theory of mimesis in the *Republic* is an early articulation of what I call the aesthetics of iconoclasm. Platonic iconophobia found fertile ground among iconoclasts of early modern England because Socrates' account of mimetic illusion resembles later accounts of the logic of idolatry: namely, mistaking the images and icons of religious worship for the immaterial figures and ideas they represent. The word "idol" in English derives etymologically from the Greek word Plato uses for "image": the word εἴδωλον (*eidolon*) in Greek means "likeness," "image reflected in a mirror or in water," "image in the mind," "idea," and later, "image of a god."[22] One of my main arguments in this dissertation is that iconoclasm is not just a religious response to the threat of idolatry: it is an aesthetic theory premised on skepticism toward visual representation—whether in painting or poetry. Iconoclasts sought to exclude poets and painters from the Elizabethan state for the same reasons that Socrates had excluded poets and painters from his—both feared illusion as a source of human error.

Plato's desire to understand the relationship between appearance and reality is what ultimately organizes a set of key concepts, central both to the status of art in the dialogues and to the early modern reception of classical thought on art: illusion, deception, psychological and affective absorption, and the related concepts of beauty and

[22] Liddell and Scott, s.v. "εἴδωλον."

seduction.[23] Paul O. Kristeller has influentially argued that that the "modern system of the arts" and by extension, also, the modern concept of aesthetics "is of comparatively recent origin and did not assume definite shape before the eighteenth century, although it has many ingredients which go back to classical, medieval and Renaissance thought."[24] Kristeller entertains the possibility that mimesis might serve as a principle of unity connecting the various arts, but ultimately dismisses it:

> […] wherever Plato and Aristotle treat the "imitative arts" as a distinct group within the larger class of "arts," this group seems to include, besides the "fine arts" in which we are interested, other activities that are less "fine," such as sophistry, or the use of the mirror, or magic tricks, or the imitation of animal voices.[25]

Kristeller hits on one of the crucial aspects of premodern aesthetics that distinguishes it from modern aesthetics. Surely he is right that mirror-images and magic tricks are not "arts" in the relevant sense. But each of these examples testify to the ancient preoccupation with sensory error and illusion as sources of insight into the nature of representation: discussion of the representational arts regularly introduce speculation about the nature of sensory cognition—and vice versa. The ancients move seamlessly from poetry and painting to mirror images and animal calls because each "represents" something other than itself.

Errors of perception, Socrates argues in the *Republic*, give rise to errors of judgment, and errors of judgment have serious political consequences in the world of Plato's dialogues, which reflect in painful ways on the historical errors of judgement

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[23] Plato defines the relationship between appearance and reality as a form of μίμησις (*mimesis*) in earlier dialogues and as μέθεξις (*methexis*) in later dialogues. I am focused on mimesis here, because I am interested primarily in the middle dialogues, where mimesis is the predominate concept.
[24] Paul O. Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics Part I," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, no. 4 (1951): 498.
[25] Kristeller, "Modern System of the Arts," 504.

which led to Socrates' death. Plato was apocryphally descended from the last King of Athens on his father's side and from Solon, the poet and law-giver, on his mother's.[26] He was a wealthy aristocrat, who, like his brothers, Glaucon and Adeimantus, was poised for an illustrious civic career. But the career in Athenian political life that seemed likely from his youth never materialized. By his own account in the *Seventh Letter*, Plato remembers the rise of the Thirty Tyrants, and his optimism as young man that they would lead Athens from an "unjust life" and "establish her in the path of justice." It was in the wake of the Thirty Tyrants, that Socrates was summoned before the courts, condemned, and put to death and that Plato withdrew from government.[27] At this point Plato's formative political commitments—commitments we now associate with the *Republic*—started to take shape. Plato's investment in philosophy and the system of education which would support it began and ended in the lived experience of actual political tragedy.

The *Seventh Letter* should be taken not as an interpretive key to the *Republic* but as an account of those events which drove Plato to ask the questions posed by the *Republic*—questions which seem not to have easy or straightforward answers: what is the nature of justice? How does one lead a state like Athens from an "unjust life" to a just one? What place can love, beauty, or poetry have in a just community ruled by reason? Love, in the *Republic*, is the most consequential source of human error—errors of both perception and judgment. Socrates' case for reason's necessity typically begins with some aspect of love or act of loving. Book three begins with a literary analysis of poetry that seeks to explain, in detail, the shared human response to beautiful things. Harmony,

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[26] C.D.C Reeve, introduction to *Republic*, by Plato (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1992), viii.
[27] Plato, *Seventh Letter* in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John Cooper and trans. Glen R. Morrow and ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), 324d.

grace, style, mode, and rhythm—qualities of poetry, rhetoric, and song that we typically associate with aesthetics, in the modern sense—are carefully and methodically analyzed. Socrates argues in book three that the habits of virtue developed by studying poetry and music are born out of a love which one can only cultivate in response to beautiful things. Socrates, in other words, begins with poetry and music as an entry-point into a discussion of "love" and "beauty"—or more accurately, love of beautiful things: "the right kind of love is by nature the love of order and beauty that has been moderated by education in music and poetry" (*Republic*, 403a). Socrates will later abandon this argument because love, he warns, is dangerous: where there is love there can be no reason.

But love enters again in book five. The difference between "the lovers of sights […] and the lovers of sounds" (*Republic*, 475d), on the one hand, and true philosophers on the other, depends on an ability to recognize the form of beauty as such: "the lovers of sights and sounds" are "unable to see and embrace the nature of the beautiful itself" because they "think that likeness is not a likeness but rather the thing itself that it is like" (*Republic*, 476b-c). Aesthetes fail to recognize the form of beauty because they mistake the image for the thing-imaged, the mutable for the immutable, opinion for knowledge, and so forth.[28] Love, the common human response to beautiful things, Socrates argues, impedes one's ability to distinguish appearance from reality—"many beautiful things" from "the reality of the beautiful itself" (*Republic*, 493e). Understood this way, love concerns Socrates primarily as an efficient cause of illusion—errors of perception or judgement which lead us to mistake appearance for reality.

[28] Eventually, Socrates will legislate parental love, filial love, and intimate love away: the guardian classes exchange sexual partners annually and are discouraged from developing personal attachments; children are raised by caretakers so that they will not come to know their parents, and so that parents will not know their own offspring.

Socrates points to painting as his primary example of perceptual error in book ten—a painting that, as he describes it, realistically reproduces visual sensory experience or what he calls the "appearance" of, in this example, a bed: "if he is a good painter and displays his painting […] at a distance, he can deceive children and foolish people" into mistaking the representation for the thing represented (*Republic*, 598c). The reference here is to *trompe l'oeil* illusions: just as "something looks crooked when seen in water and straight when seen out of it" so "*trompe l'oeil* painting, conjuring, and other forms of trickery have powers that are little short than magical"—in every case "our eyes are deceived" (*Republic*, 602d). Socrates is preoccupied with visual realism because it uniquely creates the conditions under which observers might mistake appearance for reality. *Trompe L'oeil* exercises tremendous force over discussions of mimesis because it captures one of the defining paradoxes of representation: the more real or true an illusory experience seems, the more successful is its deception and thus the less stable our certainty in the veridicality of all appearances.

Plato's argument in book ten discusses painting only as an analogy for Socrates' primary target: poetry. The perceptual errors involved in *trompe l'oeil* illusions exemplify more profound errors of judgement engendered by poetic illusions:

> And in the same way, I suppose we'll say that a poetic imitator uses words and phrases to paint colored pictures of each of the crafts. He himself knows nothing about them, but he imitates them in such a way that others, as ignorant as he, who judge by words, will think he speaks well about cobblery or generalship or anything else whatever […]. (*Republic*, 601a)

The poets, it was commonly believed, "know all the crafts, all human affairs," from "warfare" to "generalship" to "city government" to "people's education" (*Republic*, 598d-599c). The poet "deceives" us into mistaking the appearance of knowledge for true

knowledge—anyone deceived by Homer's apparent knowledge of battles would find himself sorely disabused of his mistake should he find himself in combat. Given the danger such illusions pose to the state, Socrates concludes, those practiced in the more skilled illusions of poetry must be denied political citizenship. Socrates merely does to artists what artists do to reality: if mimesis is an illusion which displaces reality, the only way to protect the city-soul from such deception is to displace those who practice mimesis.

Illusion was, of course, also a flashpoint in Renaissance aesthetics. Pyrocles' image-love engenders exactly those errors of judgement Socrates warns of. It also reminds us that the increasingly heated rhetoric against idolatry had, by the time Sidney writes his major works, begun to intersect with the coincident rise of Petrarchism in Elizabethan England. Petrarchism gained traction under the auspices of England's first female monarch, portrayed as an unattainable Petrarchan beloved by so many of her bureaucrats. Elizabeth I walked a fine line between monarch and deity precisely because the poetic tradition had sanctioned the association of secular love with divine worship.[29] In the Petrarchan tradition, love of beautiful persons became conventionally figured as love of beautiful images, and love of beautiful images evoked the language of idolatry: "profane love had long been described in terms of religious worship"—a fact which dovetails the even longer tradition of figuring idolatry as a form of illicit sexual desire.[30] Idols in the Old Testament, for example, were often figured metaphorically as harlots, a

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[29] Love takes on singular importance in Renaissance poetry and poetics in part because Petrarchism intersected, as a matter of historical accident, with Elizabeth's rise to power. The reversal of normative gender roles in Petrarchan sonnets provided courtiers like Sidney, Essex, and others with a vocabulary for conducting traditional power struggles under the sanctioned guise of subordination to a female monarch. As Marotti argues, Elizabethan poets remade love poetry into a thinly veiled discourse of power.

[30] Jane Kingsley-Smith, "Cupid, Idolatry, and Iconoclasm in Sidney's *Old Arcadia*," *Studies in Philology* 48, no. 1 (2008): 65.

point of comparison amplified among both protestant and catholic critics of religious art, who feared that reverence paid to images of the saints could slip into more erotic forms of admiration: "Desiderius Erasmus," Jane Kingsley-Smith notes for example, "had complained of Catholics kissing and fondling statues that became synonymous with the alluring but corrupting whore."[31] Image-worship, in other words, often implied image-love.

The contradictory forces of Protestant iconophobia and courtly iconophilia activated by love (chaste or erotic, divine or secular) collided in the late sixteenth century, and as a result of their collision, the "deeply iconic" nature of Renaissance poetry, Ernest Gilman has argued, would come to "pose a crucial dilemma for the literary imagination of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries":

> By nearly every precept of Renaissance aesthetic theory, the poet was encouraged to assume the deep affiliation of literary and pictorial art. Poetry, he knew, was a "speaking picture," its figures and structures designed by creative acts as fully visual as verbal. Yet he also knew, on the authority of the Reformation's attack on idolatry, that not only devotional images in churches but the very imaging power of the mind was tainted by the pride and sensuality of fallen humanity and open to the perils of worship misdirected from the Creator to the creation. From one point of view, *pictura* and *poesis* were companionable sisters in the service of the poet's art; from the other, the word was the bulwark of the spirit against the carnal enticements of the image.[32]

It is this emerging conflict between religious and secular versions of idolatrous love that takes center stage in the opening pages of Sidney's *Old Arcadia*, which presents us with arguments on both sides of the question: Pyrocles' defense of love persuades Musidorus to aid him in his erotic pursuit of Philoclea; but both the consequences of his love-sickness and the less flattering depictions of love voiced by other characters gives the

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[31] Kingsley-Smith, "Cupid, Idolatry, and Iconoclasm," 71.
[32] Ernest Gilman, *Iconoclasm and Poetry in the English Reformation: Down Went Dagon* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1986), 1.

text, as a whole, its characteristic ambivalence. The debate between Pyrocles and Musidorus over the merits of love, a passage which speaks to Sidney's own rhetorical skill as a classically trained humanist, takes the argument Socrates makes about the problem of illusion and transforms it from an epistemological into an ontological dilemma: "true love," Musidorus asserts, "hath that excellent nature in it, that it doth transform the very essence of the lover into the thing loved, uniting and, as it were, incorporating it with a secret and inward working" (*Old Arcadia*, 18). Love of heaven makes one heavenly, love of virtue makes one virtuous, "effeminate love of a woman" makes one womanly (*Old Arcadia*, 19). And indeed, as Musidorus warns, Pyrocles becomes a woman, Cleophila, respectfully referred to throughout the narrative as "she" by the speaker. In the *Republic* "lovers of sights and sounds" confuse the object of their love—a beautiful thing for beauty itself. In the *Old Arcadia*, the confusion extends to the lover, whose "very essence" is transformed.

These philosophical arguments against love give way to a darker vision of love in the first eclogue. Dicus, one of the pastoral shepherds who sings in the first eclogue, appears in emblematic fashion holding a whip in one hand, "in the other a naked Cupid," and wearing a "painted table" emblazoned with a picture of Love

> Sit[ting] upon a pair of gallows, like a hangman, about which there was a rope very handsomely provided: he himself painted all ragged and torn, so that his skin was bare in most places, where a man might perceive all his body full of eyes, his head horned with the horns of a bull, with long ears accordingly, his face old and wrinkled, and his feet cloven. In his right hand he was painted holding a crown of laurel, in his left a purse of money; and out of his mouth hung a lace which held the pictures of a goodly man and an excellent fair woman. And with such a countenance he was drawn as if he had persuaded every man by those enticements to come and be hanged there. (*Old Arcadia*, 57)

This god of love, Dicus explains, was born of Argus' lust for Io, while he guarded her. The cloven feet and horns mark him as a satanic fiend, which combined with the various devices of death associate him with the punishments of hell. The crown of laurel in his right hand associates him also with the myth of Apollo and Daphne and thus also with poetry. In the Ovidian myth, Cupid vengefully hits Apollo with a golden dart and Daphne with a leaden dart—Daphne transforms into the laurel tree, which Apollo consecrates as a testament to his love for her by offering it in reward to good poets. This god of love, in other words, is the god not just of love but of love poetry; he presides, Dicus would seem to suggest, over the very competition recounted in the first Eclogue.

The shepherd Histor interrupts Dicus' invective on the cruelty and folly of love to warn Dicus, in turn, of love's capricious wrath. Histor recounts the story of Erona, a princess of Lydia, whose chaste iconoclasm provoked Love's rage: "seeing the country of Lydia so much devoted to Cupid as that in each place his naked pictures and images were superstitiously adored" she, either through "shamefast consideration" or "hate," moved to "utterly" "deface and pull down all those pictures of him" (*Old Arcadia*, 60). Cupid revenges Erona's error by causing her to fall in love with Antiphilus—whose name means "against love"—a base-born man who betrays her and delivers Latona to the Queen of Persia. Histor narrates this story as a testament to "how terribly he [Love] punishe[s]" those who would speak against him (*Old Arcadia*, 60). Importantly, the debate over love in the *Old Arcadia* plays out at the level of images: the spectacular nature of love—whether represented emblematically in his true form, as Dicus would argue, or as an idol of worship, as in the story of Erona—marks it as dangerous. Even love's defenders regard it as a destructive force, threatening not only individual victims

but the security and stability of the state itself. In the end, Sidney gives us every reason to doubt poetry's power to translate, as he puts it, "well-knowing" into "well-doing" (*Defence*, 13). But to appreciate the force of Sidney's ethical argument in the *Defence of Poesy*—an argument to which Spenser and Jonson would later respond—requires a more thorough examination of Sidney's theory of images. If poetry admits of defense at all, the case rests on how knowing and doing are linked in the early modern imagination. The defense of poetry, for Sidney as for Plato, depends on the ethical, epistemological, and metaphysical nature of images.

III. The Poet's Palinode: Iconophilia in the *Phaedrus* and *Defence*

Just as Plato writes the *Phaedrus* as a palinode for the *Republic*, so Sidney writes the *Defence of Poesy* as a palinode for the *Old Arcadia*. In this section, I argue that the defining aesthetic concepts of early modern poetry—imitation, decorum, delight, order, clarity, and the didacticism of early modern poetic theory—derive from the art of memory, and that the early modern literary aesthetic ultimately crystalizes around the concept of (mnemonic) imagery. I outline the major arguments Sidney lays out in defense of poetry and argue that the entire artifice rests on the association of poetry with memory—an association which Sidney establishes through reference to Plato and Cicero, key figures in the history of pastoral, but also key figures in the ancient memory tradition. If pastoral is the place of poetry, the construction of poetry's pastoral places relies on an implicit knowledge of the rules for constructing memory images and placing them in ordered locations.

The *Defence* defines the poet as one who "giveth a perfect picture" of virtue by "coupl[ing] the general notion with the particular example. A perfect picture, I say, for he yieldeth to the powers of the mind an *image* of that whereof the philosopher bestoweth but a wordish description, which doth neither strike, pierce nor possess the sight of the soul…"(*Defence*, 16). Terms like "strike," "pierce," and "possess" connote qualities which we would easily associate with aesthetics, understood in the modern sense as the philosophical study of beauty and art. But it is words like "picture," "image," and "*sight* of the soul"—words that connote visual sensory experience—that associate Sidney's description of poetry with aesthetics in the pre-modern sense. The word "aesthetics" derives from the Greek *aestheisis* (αἴσθησις) "perception by the senses," a nominalized form of the verb *aesthonomai* (αἰσθάνομαι), "to perceive, to apprehend by the senses" but also, sometimes, "to learn."[33] In pre-modern cultures, the concept of the aesthetic extends well beyond the analysis of beauty. It refers to the very foundations of human knowledge: sensory experience.

That aesthetics only belatedly becomes associated with art and beauty lends importance to a question posed by art historian David Summers: at what point did artists begin to think that "art *is* aesthetic"?[34] While the term "aesthetic" does not appear in the English language until the late eighteenth century, Summers argues that the concept of the Aesthetic begins to emerge during the Renaissance, when "the language of psychology" entered into discussions about "what art is and what artists do."[35] Embedded

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[33] Liddell and Scott, s.v. "αἴσθησις" and "αἰσθάνομαι."
[34] David Summers, *The Judgment of Sense: Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 9.
[35] Summers, *Judgment of Sense*, 9. See also OED s.v. "Aesthetic." According to the OED, the "post-classical Latin *aesthetica* was introduced by the German philosopher A.G. Baumgarten" in 1735: "Although Baumgarten defined the Latin word as 'science of cognition by the senses,' in accordance with the sense of the ulterior etymon ancient Greek αἰσθητικός, he also intended *aesthetica* to cover the sense

in the rules for images and places in classical and medieval *artes memorativae*, I argue, we find just such a "language of psychology." The art of memory, which exercised tremendous influence on the English vernacular poetic tradition, became an important discursive site for conversations and debates about sensation, pre-rational cognition, and the role of the affects in right action. Without a word like "aesthetics" to unite a range of discourses beginning to theorize the relationship between sensation, judgment, art, beauty, and ethics, poets like Sidney turn to the concept of the image.

Rosamond Tuve's foundational study of the image in Elizabethan and Metaphysical poetry exemplifies the tendency among modern critics to take words abstractly or metaphorically that Elizabethans would have understood literally: words like "clear," "luminous,"[36] "vivid,"[37] and "striking,"[38] are, in our own aesthetic vocabulary as literary scholars, dead metaphors. But these words had specific, literal meaning in the art of memory and consequently in early modern poetics. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, long attributed to Cicero—it was known through the middle ages as the *rhetorica nova* ("new rhetoric") and thought to be the sister treatise to Cicero's *De Inventione* or *vetus rhetorica* ("old rhetoric")—gives a detailed account of the aesthetic (i.e. sensory) qualities images must have to be remembered, and it is exactly these qualities that Sidney later associates with poetic images, suggesting, I argue, that poetic images *are* memory images in

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'criticism of good taste,' and it was chiefly in this sense that the Latin noun and its dervatives were adapted into German and other European languages." The word first appears in English in the late eighteenth century.

[36] Rosemond Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 30-31. See also Tuve, "Imagery and Logic: Ramus and Metaphysical Poetics," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 3, no. 4 (1942): 365-400.

[37] Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, 81.

[38] Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery*, 37.

Sidney's poetics.[39] It provides, in other words, important context for what Sidney means by the term "speaking pictures." The *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* contains the fullest account among classical sources of the basic methods of the art of memory and serves as one of the key sources for the art as it was practiced after the twelfth century. The Herennian mnemonic defines the memory image variously as a kind of *forma* ("form"), *nota* ("mark," "sign," "impression," "means of recognition"), or *simulacra* ("likeness," "figure," "image"). Images must adhere to the following aesthetic (i.e. sensory) rules:

> We ought, then, to set up images of a kind that can adhere longest in the memory. And we shall do so if we establish similitudes as *striking* as possible; if we set up images that are not many or vague, but doing something (*imagines agentes*); if we assign to them exceptional beauty or singular ugliness; if we dress some of them with purple cloaks, for example, so that the likeness may be more *distinct* to us; or if we somehow disfigure them, as by introducing one stained with blood or soiled with mud or smeared with red paint so that its form is more striking, or by assigning certain comic effects to our images, for that, too, will ensure our remembering them more readily.[40]

Images must be as "striking as possible"—extraordinary, novel, marvelous, or unusual—an effect achieved by constructing figures that are deformed, ugly, or very beautiful. Images performing some kind of action are more memorable than static images, and the sense of sight takes a privileged position among the other senses because, as Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, and countless other authorities in the mnemonic tradition insist, all

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[39] As Mary Carruthers explains, the "'vetus rhetorica' (Cicero's early work, *De Inventione*) and the 'rhetorica nova' (the *Rhetroica ad Herennium*)" were "copied together during the Middle Ages; the *Ad Herennium* was not proven to be by someone other than Cicero until the sixteenth century" (Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990], 394 n. 118.). The editors of the Loeb edition trace the first doubts as to the treatise's authorship to 1491 (Ps. Cicero, *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, trans. Harry Caplan, Loeb Classical Library [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954], ix). Whether Sidney himself believed Cicero to be the *Herennium*'s author matters less than his reception of the tradition. The association persists to this day: the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* continues to be indexed under Ps. Cicero by the Loeb library.

[40] Ps. Cicero, *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, 221 (my italics).

thought occurs in images.[41] By encoding information as images, the art of memory facilitates the contemplation of abstract ideas in concrete, typically personified form.[42]

Crucial to the vivid visualization of images and to their disposition in the correct order are the rules for constructing places. The construction of images aids the recollection of memorized material, but their placement in a locational scheme ensures their recollection in the right order. Places therefore receive the same detailed treatment that images do: places must be (1) "arranged" in an "ordered" "series," so that the mind can range "forwards or backwards" in "either direction" to locate specific images and

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[41] Aristotle asserts that "without an image thinking is impossible" (*On Memory* in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol.2, ed. Jonathan Barnes [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984], 450a1). In his commentary on Aristotle's *On Memory*, Aquinas glosses this assertion by explaining that "a memory does not exist without a phantasm" (163): "a person wishing to understand some object sets before his mental eyes a phantasm of some definite size, insofar as it is a particular image" (160) (Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary* on Aristotle, *On Memory and Recollection*, in *The Medieval Craft of Memory*, ed. Mary Carruthers and Jan Ziolkowski [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002], 153-188). See also Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 27.

[42] In its simplest form, the image of a weapon might stand for the concept of warfare, but in its more sophisticated forms, a memory image will use verbal and visual puns to create associative "similitudes." To remember the line "Iam domum itionem reges Atridae parant"—"And now, their home-coming the kings, the sons of Atreus, are making ready"—the *Ad Herennium* constructs the following image:

> …in our first background, we should put Domitius, raising his hands to heaven while he is lashed by the Marcii Reges—that will represent "Iam domum itionem reges" ("And now their homecoming the kings,"); in the second backround, Aesopus and Cimber, being dressed for the roles of Agamemnon and Menelaus in *Iphigenia*—that will represent "Atridae parant" ("the sons of Atreus, are making ready"). (*Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 217)

Frances Yates explains that the first image—the image of a man named "Domitius" raising his hands to heaven as another man, named, "Marcii Reges," lashes him publicly—refers to the names of two "distinguished families" of Rome: the aristocratic Marcian *gens* and the Domitians, of plebian origin. The family names *Domitius* and *Reges* use verbal puns to recall the words *domum* ("home") and *reges* ("kings") in the line of poetry to be remembered. The second image—the image of Aesopus and Cimber preparing themselves to play the roles of Agamemnon and Menelaus in a play called *Iphigenia*—uses the names of two, well-known literary characters—Agamemnon and Menelaus, sons of Atreus—to recall the word *Atridae*. But the image is not of the characters Agamemnon and Menelaus—it is of two *actors* "preparing" themselves for the stage, recalling the preparation (*parant*) of the two kings for their homecoming. The image of two actors preparing to play the parts of Atreus' sons serves as a kind of visual pun to recall the second half of the verse (Yates, *Art of Memory*, 13-4). The verbal and visual play of punning allusions secured by associative similitudes provide a model of *imitatio* that is less about verisimilitude than about associative wordplay—the same principle behind the quasi-allegorical names of Sidney's characters, like Pyrocles (ὀχλέω "troubled" by πῦρός "fire"), Musidorus (δῶρον "gift" of the μοῦσα "muse"), Philoclea (ὀχλέω "troubled" by φίλος "love"), or Basilius ("king"). The ability to "invent" material for effective, decorous address, the ability to delight with "striking" images, and the ability to speak with clarity—these aesthetic qualities of early modern poetics derive from the prescriptions for places and images.

thus recall specific information; (2) every fifth room "should be marked" by an image that reminds us of our place in the sequence—for example, placing a "golden hand" at the entrance to the fifth room and "in the tenth, some acquaintance whose first name is Decimus"; (3) the places should be deserted because "crowding…of people confuse[s] and weaken[s] the impress of the images"; (4) places should be unique to avoid confusing one room with another, and "distinguished" so that they "may be clearly visible"; the room must "be neither too bright nor too dim," because "shadows" might "obscure the images" while the "luster" of too much light will make them "glitter," effectively blinding us as we try to recollect our images; and finally, (5) the room must be appropriate for the size of the images because a room too big will render the images small and indistinct, whereas a room too small will make them appear large and the room crowded.[43] The *Ad Herennium* emphasizes the size of the images, their distance from the position from which they are viewed, and the distance between rooms because "like the external eye, so the inner eye of thought is less powerful when you have moved the object of sight too near or too far away."[44] The careful and strict attention paid to relative proportions and distances orchestrates an act of intensely vivid visualization that would later become associated with imagination. But as Mary Carruthers has argued, many of the cognitive functions which we now assign to the imagination, pre-modern culture associated instead with memory.[45]

The *Phaedrus* radically revises the position Socrates had taken in the *Republic* toward images, poetry, and love. The defense of love and poetry depends, in the

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[43] *Ps. Cicero, Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 211-213.
[44] *Ps. Cicero, Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 213.
[45] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 1-9.

Phaedrus, on what Rebecca Helfer has called the "Platonic art of memory": in the form of a poetic myth, Plato argues that philosophy is an art of recollection—only by falling in love with images of beauty can we recall knowledge of the forms.[46] In the intervening period between Plato and Sidney, however, the "Platonic art of memory" became a rhetorical rather than philosophical art. The most important figure in this history is Cicero, whose *De Oratore*, a pastoral dialogue on the art of rhetoric patterned after the *Phaedrus*, provided Renaissance memory artists with another mythological account of memory: the story of Simonides, the poet who discovered the rules for images and places and who also invented the conceit of the sister arts—Simonides is the first poet to have called poetry speaking painting, painting silent poetry. Sidney's numerous references to the "speaking pictures" of poetry is a direct reference to Cicero's *De Oratore*. Cicero was a Platonist whose various accounts of the art of memory, from Sidney's perspective, turned the philosophical art of memory into a rhetorical art of memory; Sidney's *Defence* in turn transforms Cicero's rhetorical art of memory into a poetics of memory.[47] Sidney argues that poetry's value lies in its power to fashion readers' memories in the habits of virtue.

The *Phaedrus*, Plato's dialogue on the art of rhetoric, is composed of three speeches, each on the topic of love. When Socrates encounters Phaedrus walking toward the city's outer limits, Phaedrus explains that he has just left the company of Lysias, the great Athenian speech-writer. Lysias, in an effort to seduce Phaedrus, has written a "clever and elegant" (*Phaedrus*, 227c) speech that argues beautiful boys, like Phaedrus,

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[46] Rebecca Helfer, *Spenser's Ruins and the Art of Recollection* (Buffalo: University of Buffalo Press, 2012), 157.
[47] See Helfer, *Spenser's Ruins*, 146.

should give their favors to one who is not in love, who is therefore always in his right mind. Erotic desire is both dangerous and unpredictable; the attentions of a rational non-lover, by contrast, are safe because disinterested. Socrates asks Phaedrus to recite Lysias' speech, but Phaedrus answers coyly, "do you think that a mere dilettante like me could *recite from memory* in a manner worthy of him a speech that Lysias, the best of our writers, took such time and trouble to compose?" (*Phaedrus*, 228a, my emphasis). Phaedrus denies having memorized the speech, but Socrates knows better: "Oh Phaedrus, if I don't know my Phaedrus I must be *forgetting* who I am myself—and neither is the case." "Having learned—I am quite sure—the whole speech *by heart*" Phaedrus, Socrates knows, went in search for "a partner": Phaedrus "was going to recite it even if he had to force an unwilling audience to listen" (*Phaedrus*, 228a-c, my emphasis). Socrates discovers the speech hidden under Phaedrus' cloak, and instead of an oratorical performance, Phaedrus delivers a reading of the speech. The opening thus sets up the three principal themes of rhetoric, love, and memory.

Socrates, unimpressed by Lysias' speech, boasts that he can compose a better speech—one more varied and more beautiful. In the second speech of the *Phaedrus*, Socrates makes the same argument Lysias had but with more sophistic skill. Phaedrus, the young lover of speeches, praises Socrates' virtuoso performance, but Socrates himself is troubled: these speeches against love, he says, are not true. He insists on composing a third and final speech—a palinode. More poetry than philosophy, Socrates' palinode recounts the myth of the chariots—a myth about the nature of formal reality which recalls Socrates' early analogy of the cave from the *Republic* but offers a radically different account of the relationship between images and forms. To give a "rational account" of the

soul would "require a very long account," so Socrates offers instead a simile of "what it is like": the soul is like a charioteer led by two horses, one driven by passion and impulse, the other by reason and deliberation (*Phaedrus*, 246a). Each soul is born up by wings, which carries it around the circuit of the rim of heaven, where it "has a view" of all the forms, above all, Beauty (*Phaedrus*, 247d). Gazing on the forms of reality, the soul is nourished and strengthened. But a soul that fails to reach the rim and gaze upon the forms will shed its wings and fall into an earthly body where it "takes on forgetfulness" and loses its memory of heaven (*Phaedrus*, 248c). A fallen soul that "sees the beauty we have down here and is reminded of true beauty" fills will love—a passionate desire for the image of beauty it encounters in earthly form. Beauty "shine[s] out through" its "images" (*Phaedrus*, 250b) more clearly than the other forms: "beauty alone has this privilege, to be the most clearly visible and the most loved" (*Phaedrus*, 250d). As the most "visible" of the Platonic forms, Beauty and the love of beautiful things functions as a paradigm-case for the manifestation of formal reality in the world of human experience.[48]

Only by loving images of the beautiful can we recall our forgotten memories of the forms. The defense of love entails a defense of images and thus a retraction of Socrates' earlier iconophobia in the *Republic*—what he had said about loving images there, like what he had said in his first speech, was not true. Socrates' palinode ends here, but the dialogue does not—Socrates and Phaedrus continue to talk about rhetoric, speech-writing, and above all, memory. Socrates returns to the topic of memory at the end of the *Phaedrus* in the myth of Theuth, which Socrates cites in support of his argument that

[48] See John Steadman, "Image-Making in the Verbal and Visual arts: A Renaissance Obsession," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 61, no.1 (1998): 55.

writing ensures only the appearance of memory—not memory itself. The myth of Theuth presents readers with a paradox: Socrates calls writing a φάρμακον (*pharmakon*)—both a "poison" and a "remedy" for memory (*Phaedrus*, 274e). As a kind of artificial memory, writing can only help us recall what we already know. Working backward through Socrates' chain of reasoning we find that the whole account of love, images, and memory has been about the importance of poetry, rhetoric, and myth: tragic is the soul "that never saw the truth" for it "cannot take a human shape, since a human being must understand speech in terms of general forms, proceeding to bring many perceptions together into a reasoned unity. That process is the recollection of things our soul saw" in heaven (249b-c). The "lover of poetry" sees in the object of his love an image of beauty—to love poetry is to engage in "the recollection of things our soul saw in heaven." The irony of the myth of Theuth, of course, is that anyone with the power of speech already knows the forms—we have simply forgotten them. The very dialogue before us serves as a poetic "reminder," an image of the truth which we know but have forgotten.

When Sidney writes the *Defense*, he argues along the same grounds that Socrates had in the *Phaedrus*: beautiful images imitate the form of Beauty itself, making possible the human experience of an other-worldly reality paradoxically more real and more true than nature. The argument for poetry's defense depends on a reworking of Platonic formalism—poets alone have access to the forms of metaphysical reality:

> Neither let this be jestingly conceived, because the works of the one [nature] be essential, the other [poetry] in imitation or fiction, for any understanding knoweth the skill of each artificer standeth in that *idea* or fore-conceit of the work, and not in the work itself. And that the poet hath that *idea* is manifest by delivering them forth in such excellency as he had imagined them. (*Defence*, 9)

Poetry draws down "*ideas*," which it instantiates "substantially" in the world, to create new material realities—Sidney calls on the Platonic notion of "ideas" or forms (from *eidos*) to argue what is already latent in Plato's metaphysics: that without images, we would have no access to the forms.[49] Sidney's account of poetic imitation comes from Plato and provides the grounds upon which Sidney will begin to build a place for poetry. Sidney defines poetry in part through contrast to the other arts, which take "the works of nature for [their] principle object"—so much so that "they become actors and players, as it were, of what nature will have set forth" (*Defence*, 8). Sidney here references the familiar definition of art as the imitation of nature but argues that poetry owes no such naïve or subservient debt to nature. For "only the poet, disdaining to be tied to any such subjection, lifted up with the vigour of his own invention, doth grow in effect another nature, in making things either better than nature bringeth forth or, quite anew, forms such as never were in nature." The poet ranges "freely […] within the zodiac of his own wit" (*Defence*, 8-9). Philosophy and history, major contenders for pride of place in the kingdom of learning, can provide material for rote memorization, but only the poet can transform rote learning into material for recollection: "no doubt the philosopher, with his learned definitions be it of virtues or vices, matters of public policy or private government replenisheth the memory with many infallible grounds of wisdom," but these precepts will "lie dark before the imaginative and judging power, if they be not

[49] OED, s.v. "idea." Etymologically, "idea" in English derives from the Latin transliteration of the Greek, ἰδέα ("form"). Ἰδέα, the OED explains, is cognate with the verb ἰδεῖν ("to see" and "to know"), one of the forms of the verb εἴδω (also "to see" and "to know"). A cluster of words in Plato's texts establish an underlying conceptual continuity among several words in English that form the core of this dissertation's inquiry: in Greek, εἴδωλον ("image," esp. "image in the mind"), εἶδος ("form"), and ἰδέα (also "form") are all cognate with εἴδω ("to see" and also "to know"). These Greek words ultimately give rise to both "idea" and "idol" in English. More specifically, "idea" and "ideal" originally carried a stronger Platonic resonance, especially for someone like Sidney who studied ancient Greek. See Liddell and Scott, s.v. "εἴδω."

illuminated or figured forth by the *speaking picture of poesy*" (*Defence*, 16). Without the creative and affective power of poetic images, the precepts of philosophy and examples of history will "lie dark" before the "sight of the soul."

Sidney's definition of poetry as "an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in the word *mimesis*, that is to say a representing, counterfeiting or figuring forth—to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture—with this end: to teach and delight," has directed many scholars to Aristotle's *Poetics* and the Aristotleian concept of mimesis (*Defence*, 10). The purported end of poetry—to "teach and delight"—has directed many others to Horace.[50] What has received less attention is the intellectual genealogy behind Sidney's "speaking pictures," which glances at the Horatian principle of the sister arts ("*ut pictura poesis*") but in fact references the poet Simonides, as Rebecca Helfer has argued: "Sidney characterizes *mimesis* not through the famous Horatian phrase, *ut picture poesis* but according to Simonides' saying that painting is silent poetry, poetry a speaking picture."[51] Plutarch attributes the conceit of the sister arts of painting and poetry to the ancient poet Simonides, who, according to Cicero, was also the father of the art of memory.

Cicero's *De Oratore* recounts Simonides' discovery of the rules for images and places: the necessary translation of verbal matter for memorization into visual forms; and the related discovery of locational ordering systems as an aid to memory. Memory was one of the five parts of rhetoric and makes an appearance as such in the *De Oratore*,

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[50] For an Aristotelian reading of Sidney, see, for example, Kathy Eden, *Poetic and Legal Fiction in the Aristotelian Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 170. For an account of Sidney's relationship to the Horatian tradition, see Stephen Matz, *Defending Literature in Early Modern England: Renaissance Literary Theory in Social Context* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 56-87.
[51] Helfer, *Spenser's Ruins*, 146.

Cicero's Platonic dialogue on the art of rhetoric. "I am thankful to Simonides of Ceos," Antonius confesses to his interlocutors,

> […] who is said to have been the first to introduce the art of memory. According to this story, Simonides was dining at Carnnon in Thessaly at the house of Scopas, a rich nobleman. When he had finished singing the poem that he had composed in Scopas' honor, in which he had written much about Castor and Pollux for the sake of embellishment, as poets do, Scopas reacted with excessive stinginess. He told him that he would pay him only half the agreed fee for this poem; if he liked, he could ask for the rest from his friends, the Tyndarides [i.e. the twin gods Castor and Pollux], who had received half the praise. A little later, the story goes on, Simonides received a message to go outside: two young men were standing at the door, who were urgently asking for him. He got up and went outside, but saw no one. In the meantime, precisely while he was gone, the room where Scopas was giving his banquet collapsed, and Scopas, together with his relatives, was buried under the fallen roof and died. When their families wanted to arrange their funeral, but could not possibly distinguish them because they had been completely crushed, it was reportedly Simonides who, from his recollection of the place where each of them had been reclining at table, identified every one of them for burial. Prompted by this experience, he is then said to have made the discovery that order is what most brings light to our memory. And he concluded that those who would employ this part of their abilities should choose localities, then form mental images of the things they wanted to store in their memory, and place these in the localities. In this way, the order of the localities would preserve the order of the things, while the images would represent the things themselves; and we would use the localities like a wax tablet, and the representations like the letters written on it.[52]

I quote this passage at length because it is among the most important accounts of the art of memory, not only for its brief description of the ancient method of placing vivid images in ordered locations, but also for its narration of the memory arts' mythical origins. Helfer has argued that the *De Oratore* is itself a reworking of the Simonides myth: Cicero writes it as a memorial to Crassus and Antonius, who now lie dead under "Rome's collapsing political structure." The myth of Simonides "forms the unseen frame for this ostensibly pastoral dialogue about rhetoric."[53] In imitation of Plato, whose

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[52] Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator*, trans. James M. May and Jakob Wisse (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 219.
[53] Helfer, *Spenser's Ruins*, 4.

dialogues memorialize the life of Socrates and also figure the decline of Athens as a consequence of Socrates' tragic death, Cicero memorializes the lives of his friends and rewrites the story of Rome's fall as the story of Antonius' and Crassus' deaths. Memory thus serves two purposes: it makes its standard appearance as one of the five parts of rhetoric, but this part also lends narrative coherence to the dialogue as a whole.

We know that Sidney means to invoke the association of poetry with the classical art of memory in his definition of poetry as an art of "speaking pictures" because it appears alongside numerous references to the art of memory. Sidney offers a lengthy account of the mutual dependence of poetry and memory when he explains the purpose of verse:

> …thus much is undoubtedly true, that if reading be foolish without remembering, memory being the only treasure of knowledge, those words which are fittest for memory are likewise most convenient for knowledge. Now, that verse far exceedeth prose in the knitting up of the memory, the reason is manifest: the words (besides their delight, which hath a great affinity to memory) being so set, as one cannot be lost but the whole work fails, which accusing itself calleth the remembrance back to itself and so most strongly confirmeth it. Besides, one word so, as it were, begetting another, as, be it in rhyme or measured verse, by the former a man shall have a near guess to the follower. Lastly, even they that have taught the art of memory have showed nothing so apt for it as a certain room divided into many places well and thoroughly known. Now, that hath the verse in effect perfectly, every word having its natural seat, which seat must needs make the word remembered. But what needeth more in a thing so known to all men? Who is it that ever was a scholar that doth not carry away from verses of Virgil, Horace or Cato, which in his youth he learned, and even to his old age serve him for hourly lessons […]. But the fitness it hath for memory is notably proved by all delivery of arts […]. So that verse being in itself sweet and orderly, and being best for memory, the only handle of knowledge, it must be in jest that any man can speak against it. (*Defence*, 32-3)

Sidney's extended comparison of metrical patterning to rooms in a building strains the modern imagination: no obvious resemblance between poems and buildings could possibly account for Sidney's metaphor. Instead, the logic of the comparison depends on

our familiarity as readers with the art of memory—"a thing so known to all men" that it hardly bears repeating. Meter cues the memory, Sidney explains, because it orders the verse. "Order" in the art of memory, as described by the *Ad Herennium* and *De Oratrore*, is always figured as a series of places or locations. The "natural seats" of poetic meter here recall the seats in which Scopas' guests sat around the banquet table. Without memory, we could neither store up the "treasures" of our knowledge nor hope to recall them once stored. The term "treasure," it is worth noting, was often used in medieval discussions of the art memory, since it refers not only to that which is stored but also the store house or treasury itself—memory, the "only treasure of knowledge," is where we keep "treasures" of learning gleaned through reading.[54]

Memory figures so importantly in Sidney's poetics because the ethical claim Sidney makes in poetry's defense—the claim, that is, that it teaches virtue—depends on a longstanding argument about memory as an art of ethical fashioning. As Mary Carruthers explains: "all virtues and vices," in the Aristotelian tradition "are habits, good and bad. Defining memory as a *habitus* makes it the key linking term between knowledge and action, conceiving of good and doing it."[55] As an art of memory, poetry can claim to fashion readers' memories in the habits of "well-doing and not of well-knowing only" (*Defence*, 13). This argument for the ethical fashioning of readers' memories dovetails Sidney's claim, cited above, that poetry "is not wholly imaginative"—that it "substantially […] worketh not only to make a Cyrus, which had been but a particular excellency as nature might have done, but to bestow a Cyrus upon the world to make many Cyruses, if they will learn aright why and how that maker made him" (*Defence*, 9).

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[54] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 41.
[55] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 81.

Where others had defined poetry as the imitation of nature, Sidney redefines it as the imitation of Platonic ideas—this is one sense in which poetry is an art of memory. But poetry is also an art of imitation insofar as it creates a "perfect pattern" of virtue to be collected and recollected by readers: the relationship between reader and text is one of mimesis, a process of "making" that relies on the fashioning of reader's memories (*Defence*, 19). Poetic expression has the ontological or "substantial" force of divine fiat: poetry's ability to make many Cyruses defines poetry as an art of image-making that recalls the divine creation of man in the image of deity. Indeed, Sidney argues that the poet is a "maker," in imitation of the divine Maker—both of whose crafts are unrestricted by "nature" (*Defence*, 9).

Sidney's "many Cyruses" explain why the "speaking pictures" most frequently cited in the *Defence* are great figures of ancient mythology and Greco-Roman identity: Anchises, Ulysses, Agamemnon and Menelaus, Achilles, Oedipus, Medea, etc. (*Defence*, 17). Sidney elaborates:

> For as the image of each action stirreth and instructeth the mind, so the lofty image of such worthies most inflameth the mind with desire to be worthy, and informs with counsel how to be worthy. Only let Aeneas *be worn into the tablet of your memory*—how he governeth himself in the ruin of his country, in the preserving his old father, and carrying away his religious ceremonies" (*Defence*, 29).

Poetic images, this passage makes clear, are memory images—in this case the image of Aeneas carrying Anchises on his back and bearing the idols of his ancestors with him out of Troy. We can now understand how the rest of Sidney's argument hangs on the scaffolding which memory provides. In summary form: "this purifying of wit, this enriching of memory, enabling of judgment, and enlarging of conceit, which commonly we call learning, under what name soever it come forth" serves a single end: "the

knowledge of a man's self, in the ethic and politic consideration, with the end of well-doing and not of well-knowing only" (*Defence*, 13). Poetry is a mnemonic art which wears "into the tablet" of our "memory" images of virtue and vice; the foundation of memory supports an ethical knowledge of self; knowledge of self guides one's relations with others, and so provides the basis of political community formation. By demonstrating poetry's power to both teach and delight, and to do so more effectively than philosophy and history, Sidney is able to assert a place for poetry within the kingdom, as it were, of learning: "the ending end of all earthly learning being virtuous action, those skills that most serve to bring forth that have a most just title to be princes over all the rest" (*Defence*, 13). Poetry stands over the other "serving sciences" as he calls them, as a "prince" over his servants. Sidney supplants Socrates' philosopher-kings with poet-princes.

IV. The Politics of Pastoral

The kind of knowledge Sidney sees Plato and Cicero offering is political—the knowledge of justice, "chief of virtues," in Plato's case, and "love of country" in Cicero's, since "Tully" or Cicero "taketh much pains and many times not without poetical helps, to make us know the force love of our country hath in us" (*Defence*, 17). Indeed, in the opening pages of the *Defence*, we are reminded that Amphion "was said to move stones with his poetry to build Thebes." Solon, a "poet […] having written in verse the notable fable of the Atlantic island, which was continued by Plato," authored the first political utopia (*Defence*, 5). By referencing these political foundation myths and by grounding the conditions of political community formation in the ethics of mnemonic

fashioning, Sidney frames the *Defense* as deliberately political in its implications. Sidney imitates many models in composing the *Old Arcadia*, but Katherine Duncan-Jones suggests that the most relevant intertext may be Polybius' *Histories*, according to which "the Arcadians' practice of music and poetry […] kept the country at peace." "When one city in Arcadia abandoned it," Polybius recounts, "they immediately fell into civil strife."[56] Polybius marked Arcadia as both a pastoral landscape and as a literary topos for thinking about poetry's relationship to the state. Polybius' myth asserts a tidy separation of poetry from politics: politics begins when and where poetry ends. Sidney's *Old Arcadia* complicates the moral of Polybius' story by reinserting politics in its pastoral landscape.

Marxist scholarship views pastoral as a genre of political allegory that mystifies class relations between rich and poor: by dressing courtiers as shepherds, it gives the working class's simplicity and wholesomeness over to a morally bankrupt leisure class; by the same token, it lends dignity and beauty to the pain and suffering of rural life, masking the lived experience of hard labor. In the wake of Raymond Williams' nuanced account of "country literature," *The City and the Country*, pastoral became "a false vision, positing a simplistic, unhistorical relationship between the landowning class […] and the workers on the land."[57] Such oversimplifications do not reflect the complex work of figures like Williams and Empson, but it does accurately reflect the general trend, which was to read pastoral through the lens of class conflict. Louis Montrose's important

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[56] Polybius, *The Histories*, trans. W.R. Paton and rev. F.W. Walbank Loeb Classical Library 137 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), IV 20-1. Quoted by Jones, *The Old Arcadia*, n.4 369.
[57] John Barrell and John Bull eds. *A Book of English Pastoral Verse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 4. Quoted in Louis Montrose, "Of Gentlemen and Shepherds: the Politics of Elizabethan Pastoral Form," *ELH* 50, no.3 (1983): 419.

essay "The Poetics of Pastoral Form," while sympathetic with the "moral indignation" of such evaluations, questions the blunt dichotomies of rich and poor, city and country, leisure and work, pleasure and pain that reduce what is in fact a "dialectic between Elizabethan *pastoral forms* and Elizabethan *social categories*," a dialectic exchange which "mediate[s] class differences and ideological contradictions, so as to make a particular version of 'the social order' possible." What sets Montrose apart from his more heavy-handed contemporaries is his emphasis is on the *reciprocal* nature of dialectical mediation: pastoral negotiated the "complex mediations through which cultural forms and social relations are reciprocally shaped."[58]

As an ideological feedback loop through which country and court were mutually defined, pastoral raises historical questions about the actual conditions of pastoral life in Elizabethan England, which depended almost exclusively on sheep for domestic and export markets. Montrose constructs his reading of Elizabethan pastoral on a historical narrative about pastoral life leading up to major works of pastoral in the late sixteenth century. The evidence he provides, however, is scattershot—only Thomas More's *Utopia* recognizably engages in a critique of actual political crisis in rural England (namely, the enclosure movement) and this text hardly exemplifies pastoral as a genre. Our own modern notions of the country have been profoundly shaped by pastoral, to be sure, but it remains unclear whether pastoral bore in any real way on Elizabethan country life and thus whether pastoral in fact created the "reciprocal" feedback loop between city and country Montrose describes. If George Puttenham is any indication, early modern pastoral had very little to do with rural life: poets, Puttenham explains,

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[58] Montrose, "Of Gentlemen and Shepherds," 417-18.

> […] devised the eclogue long after the other dramatic poems, *not of purpose to counterfeit or represent the rustical manner of loves and communication*, but under the veil of homely persons and in rude speeches to insinuate and glance at greater maters, and such as perchance had not been safe to have been disclosed in any other sort, which may be perceived by the *Eclogues* of Vergil, in which are treated by figure matters of greater importance than the loves of Tityrus and Corydon. The eclogues came after to contain and inform moral discipline, for the amendment of man's behavior, as be those of Mantuan and other modern poets. (128, my emphasis)

Puttenham resists stadial theories of pastoral development: eclogues and other pastoral forms were not actually developed by shepherds, nor do they offer proto-anthropological studies of the "rustical manner" of rural life. Instead, they "insinuate and glance at greater matters," matters of state and of politics. Puttenham defines pastoral as a genre of political allegory, and in this sense sanctions the tendency among Marxists to read pastoral allegorically. But these pastorals do not allegorize class relations—courtly poets had no interest, sadly, in how the other side lived. Instead, pastoral served to reimagine new social and political orders outside those very structures of oppression which Marxist criticism sees as constructed by pastoral. To find antecedents to works of pastoral like the *Old Arcadia*, we must look not to actual, historical countrysides, but to Eden, Utopia, or even the New World—spaces of political fantasy where we find new orders of social organization "such as never were in nature."

Montrose does, however, perceptively identify the stakes of pastoral for modern scholarship: "modern theories of pastoral," he observes, "always have a way of turning into theories of literature"—indeed, theories of art more generally, one might argue. This insight points to a certain synergy between Montrose's critique of Marxist scholarship on pastoral and Isobel Armstrong's critique of Marxist scholarship on the Aesthetic. Both Montrose and Armstrong identify common tendency among cultural and materialist

scholars to expose and subvert the politics of pastoral or of the Aesthetic but without offering any alternative: no positive reimagining or remaking of either pastoral or the Aesthetic steps-in to fill the void left by the hermeneutics of suspicion. Such sympathies between scholarship on pastoral and the Aesthetic, I argue, reflect their shared history: early modern theories of art and literature were regularly conducted as and through pastoral.[59]

Isobel Armstrong seeks to find a positive alternative to the anti-aesthetic. Her own "radical aesthetic," as she calls it, challenges "the politics of the anti-aesthetic" by redefining the aesthetic as a set of "experiences"—playing, dreaming, thinking, and feeling—that "keep us alive."[60] I want to focus on the first of these, playing, because the claim Armstrong makes for play links her line of thinking up, I argue, with Jacques Ranciere's work on the politics of aesthetics. Together, Armstrong and Ranciere provide a foothold for what it could possibly mean for poetry to "worketh" "substantially" in the world: it helps us imagine how poetry could claim to create new forms of nature such as never existed before and to take seriously Sidney's claim that poetry creates "golden worlds" separate from but no less real than the "brazen" world of Elizabethan politics. "Play," Armstrong argues, "is cognate with aesthetic production": it is "a form of knowledge" that is "interactive, sensuous, epistemologically charged"—"it is only in play that it is possible to make an essential cognitive leap which radically changes one's relation to reality."[61] Drawing on Vygotsky's psychological work with children, Armstrong defines play as a process which transforms "the very structure of perception."

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[59] Louis Montrose, "Of Gentlemen and Shepherds," 415.
[60] Isobel Armstrong, *The Radical Aesthetic* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 2.
[61] Armstrong, *Radical Aesthetic*, 37.

To see a stick as a horse requires a break or tear in the normal ontology of everyday experience, a rift which allows language to attach to ideas rather than things. But play is not "wholly imaginative," as Sidney would say, because it continues to operate on the world of material experience, creating new categories and patterns of association between concepts and things that make the perception of yet further associations and structures possible.

Jacques Ranciere's essay, "The Distribution of the Sensible," gives some insight into what happens when we transpose the logic of prop-play to politics. Aesthetics defines what is and is not visible, thinkable, and sayable and by virtue of this fact serves as the set of conditioning principles that make politics—that which determines who is visible, what they are allowed to think and say—possible. If politics "revolves around what is seen and what can be said about it" then aesthetics functions as the vanishing point—the invisible core—around which politics revolves. Art intervenes in the aesthetic structures which determine visibility; such interventions, in turn, alter the horizons of possibility upon which politics is predicated. What Armstrong says about play dovetails with what Ranciere says about art: play, as Armstrong defines it, intervenes in the distribution of the sensible by creating new structures of visibility—play allows us to *see* a stick *as* a horse. If "play is cognate with aesthetic production," as Armstrong argues, it is because play allows us to alter the structural relations between ideas and things; Ranciere would call those structural relations the "system of *a priori* forms" of perception that determine the conditions or rules of political power structures.

None of the terms Armstrong and Ranciere use to theorize the aesthetic were available to Plato or Sidney. But love in Plato and Sidney, I argue, performs work very

similar to that of the Aesthetic in Armstrong and Ranciere. For Plato, love conditions our ability to see beauty in the world of ordinary experience; without this ability, we could not access our memories of the form of beauty itself. For Sidney, love functions in much the same way. Arcadia, as Pyrocles describes it, is a place "clothed with a continual spring because no beauty here should ever fade"; the birds, flowers, trees, and rivers conspire to make the place a "heavenly dwelling."[62] Pyrocles' love transforms "the very structure of perception"—it conditions what is visible and in so doing refashions the landscape in the image of his own desire. Sidney's description of poetry's "golden world[s]" resonates with this description of Acradia's pastoral landscape: "nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets have done, neither with so pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-smelling flowers, nor whatsoever else may make the too-much loved earth more lovely" (9). Sidney elaborates what remains latent in Plato's *Phaedrus*: the potential for love of poetry to perform the work of perceptual transformation.

That perceptual trick of consciousness made possible by love whereby grass becomes emeralds is, however, an illusion. The conceit of the sister arts was premised on the experience of such illusions: the art of concealing art—from *spretzzetura* to *trompe l'oeil* to Sidney's own ironic characterization of poetry as an idle pastime—fascinated Renaissance aesthetes, who, rather than resist the association of art with illusion, embraced it. Sidney saw in the gap between appearance and reality opened up by illusion a zone of ironic complexity: a space where one might speak with conviction and yet "nothing affirm[]."[63] It is a space outside the polis because outside time and space: a

[62] Sidney, *Old Arcadia*, 14.
[63] Sidney, *Defence*, 34.

place of "continual spring" where "no beauty" "should ever fade," an aesthetic nowhere, conjured by love poetry and maintained by love of poetry.

The 1598 edition of Sidney's *Old Arcadia* was printed with *Astrophil and Stella* and the *Defence of Poesy* although the title for this collection was simply *The Covntesse of Pembrokes Arcadia*—as if the whole collection of Sidney's works belonged to the *Old Arcadia*, and so to the space of pastoral. The conceit of pastoral *otium* has been taken as a mystification of rustic labor—the fantasy of capitalism, as of pastoral, according to this line of argument, is that the pleasures of consumerism are not the result of dehumanizing forms of labor. Perhaps, though, Sidney is not being naïve about the labor involved in pastoral occupations: if pastoral literature refashions the *negotium* of rustic labor into the *otium* of countryside pleasures, so too does it refashion the *negotium* of poetic labor into the *otium* of poetic pleasure. Pastoral provided Sidney with a conceptual and imaginative space for poetry to exist—a golden world, outside the brazen world of Elizabethan politics. If he failed to convince even himself of the ethical justification for poetry's inclusion within city limits, he nevertheless succeeded in establishing a place for poetry—a common ground upon which poets of the past and present could (re)collect, a place where the canon of English literature would be established. Each of the poets I discuss in the chapters that follow were, in fact, actually excluded from the polis: Sidney was exiled from court and wrote much of his poetry from his country estate; Spenser was sent to Ireland; Shakespeare and Jonson wrote for theaters located outside the city limits of London—the London "liberties" as they were called. If we were to ask: what happened to Plato's exiled poets? Sidney might answer: we left the city for the country.

Chapter Two

The Allegorical Image: Allegory and the Art of Memory in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*

I. Introduction

At the end of Book II of Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, as Guyon and the Palmer leave Acrasia's ruined Bower of Bliss, they encounter her former lovers, whom, Circe-like, she has transformed into wild beasts. Guyon asks "what meant those beastes, which there did ly" and the Palmer explains that "these seeming beasts are men indeed" whose "figures hideous" Acrasia has transformed to reveal "mindes like monstruous."[1] If these "hideous" "figures" are "men indeed," Guyon reasons, they should be made to appear so. The Palmer restores them to human form and thus, apparently, to legibility, but even after resuming their manly appearance, Acrasia's lovers "vnmanly looke" (II.xii.86.3). One man "aboue the rest in speciall," Grylle, laments his transformation from "hoggish" to "naturall" "forme" (II.xii.86.6-9) leaving readers to wonder whether Grylle is a "seeming" beast but a man "indeed" or a seeming man and a hog indeed. Grylle would seem to provide his own answer, since his name, in Greek, means "hog" and conventionally signifies the beastly pursuit of sensual pleasure.[2] We should remember Maureen Quilligan's crucial observation that allegorical personification

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[1] All references to Spenser's writings are taken from Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton, Hiroshi Yamashita, Toshiuki Suzuki, and Shohachi Fukuda, Second Edition (New York: Longman, 2007), book II, canto xii, stanza 84, line 9, and stanza 85, lines 1-5. Hereafter cited parenthetically by book, canto, stanza, and line numbers.

[2] The footnote in Hamilton et al. to II.xii.86 explains that Grylle is "the companion of Ulysses who was transformed by Circe into a hog—hence his name γρύλλος, hog, a type of lechery"(286). See also *Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon*, abridged, s.v. "γρύλλος."

"manifests the meaning as clearly as possible by naming the actor with the concept."[3] In hoggish form, Grylle means exactly what he appears to mean, and yet Guyon somehow fails to recognize that he is already legible: his question—"what meant those beastes which there did ly"?—insists that Grylle means something else.

By assuming that Grylle means something other than he appears to, Guyon invokes the standard, Quintilian definition of allegory as that which "presents one thing in words and another in meaning."[4] The *allos* (ἄλλος) or "other" of allegory, according to this tradition, refers to an "other" meaning concealed or secreted by the figure. But this concealment raises a difficult and fundamental problem for theories of allegory: how do we know what the allegory means if that meaning is, by definition, concealed? To ask what an allegory means is to imply that it means something "other" than it appears to, which, as Gordon Teskey has argued, opens a "schism" or "rift" between literal and metaphorical levels of meaning that the subsequent act of interpretation seeks to repair.[5] Guyon's question—"what meant those beastes which there did ly"?—paradoxically creates the very indeterminacy which it then retroactively seeks to resolve. Only by belatedly supplying an "other" meaning—that "these seeming beasts are men indeed"—can Guyon and the Palmer circuitously repair the very "rift" or "schism" Guyon himself has created. But the Palmer's answer raises a more pressing question: how does he know "what meant those beastes which there did ly"? The Palmer appears to have known all along—before even encountering Grylle. Guyon's question, which creates a spatial rift

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[3] Maureen Quilligan, *The Language of Allegory: Defining the Genre* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), 31.
[4] Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, trans. H.E. Butler, Loeb Classical Library 126 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), VIII.vi.44..
[5] Gordon Teskey, *Allegory and Violence* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1996), 2.

between levels of meaning, creates at the same time a temporal rift, in which the supposed meaning, which one can only arrive at after the fact, is treated as if it were known all along.[6] We are left with a version of Meno's paradox: as a figure of concealment, allegory puts readers in the impossible position of having to know what the allegory means before even having read it.

Guyon's response to the hermeneutic dilemma of allegory is one of interpretive violence, and it is consistently directed at other allegorical figures—emblematic images of virtues and vices—in the landscape around him. By retroactively concealing Grylle's "hoggish minde" in human form, Guyon erases the features that would remind readers what Grylle represents and in doing so conceals the dangers of intemperance (II.xii.87.8). Grylle's vices now lurk beneath an otherwise innocent countenance—an act of erasure that reiterates Guyon's destruction of the Bower itself. Guyon iconoclastically de-faces Grylle, just as he "deface[s]" Acrasia's "gardins," "groues," "banket houses," and "buildings" by "rac[ing]," (i.e. "razing") them to the ground, thereby "[e]racing" them from memory (II.xii.83.5-8). Teskey's influential account of allegorical hermeneutics in *Allegory and Violence* bears such striking resemblance to Guyon's own violent

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[6] Following the work of Paul de Man, theorists of allegory have insightfully argued that the project of re-aligning literal and metaphorical levels of meaning results, also, in a temporal rift, where the text's "other" metaphorical meaning is treated retrospectively as if it were the cause rather than the effect of interpretation. It is worth quoting Paul de Man's articulation of this paradox because of its influence on subsequent theories of allegory and because it is here that de Man draws on the vocabulary of linguistic semiotics to explain the temporality of allegorical signification: in allegory we find "a relationship between signs in which the reference to their respective meanings has become of secondary importance. But this relationship between signs necessarily contains a constitutive temporal element; it remains necessary, if there is to be allegory, that the allegorical sign refer to another sign that precedes it. The meaning constituted by the allegorical sign can then consist only in the *repetition* (in the Kierkegaardian sense of the term) of a previous sign with which it can never coincide, since it is of the essence of this previous sign to be pure anteriority" ("The Rhetoric of Temporality," in *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism*, 2 ed., Theory and History of Literature 7 [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971], 207). For a particularly lucid account of the problem of temporal anteriority in relation to medieval practices of allegoresis, see Rita Copeland and Steven Melville, "Allegory and Allegoresis, Rhetoric and Hermeneutics," *Exemplaria* 3, no. 1 (1991): 159-187.

hermeneutic because the structuralist tradition within which Teskey is writing understands the nature and function of imagery in much the same way that Guyon does: both labor under an aesthetics of the image that is fundamentally iconoclastic.[7] Where sixteenth-century Protestant iconoclasts sought to destroy what W.J.T. Mitchell calls "literal" images—paintings, statues, stained glass windows, etc.—twentieth-century semioticians succeeded in destroying what he calls "metaphorical" (i.e. mental and verbal) images.[8] By routing the image through semiotics, post-structuralism effectively eliminated the image as a conceptual category distinct from language: images began to signify in ways that are indistinguishable from words.[9] By reducing images to signs, or

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[7] In *Downcast Eyes*, Martin Jay argues that French structuralist and post-structuralist writers—Georges Bataille, Andre Breton, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Emmanuel Levinas, Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser, Guy Debord, Jaques Lacan, Luce Irigaray, Roland Barthes, Jaques Derrida, and others—exemplify what he calls an "antivisual discourse" that has remained "a pervasive but generally ignored phenomenon of twentieth-century Western thought" (*Downcast Eyes: the Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993], 14). Moments of religious crisis—eighth-century Byzantium, the Lollard movement of fourteenth-century England, and the Protestant Reformation—form an important part of the antivisualist tradition, but it is worth emphasizing, with Martin Jay, that such antivisualism "extends beyond the boundaries of religious thought" (Jay, 14). My analysis here calls attention to the impact of religious conflict on the history of aesthetics because the terms of religious antivisualsm continue to shape contemporary discourses, but the larger tradition surrounding religious conflict has secular origins and end-points.

[8] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 12-13. The tendency to think of mental and verbal images (dreams, hallucinations, verbal descriptions in prose and poetry) as "metaphorical" and thus derivative of their "literal" or material counterparts (pictures, paintings, diagrams, maps, etc.), W.J.T. Mitchell argues, surreptitiously reverses the historical chronology of the two concepts: the image originally referred to perceptual images and only later to paintings, statues, etc. In Greek, the word *eidolon* (εἴδωλον) originally meant "image, likeness, image in the mind," and only later came to refer to representations of pagan deities, i.e. idols. See Liddell and Scott, s.v. "εἴδωλον." The OED explains that "the order of appearance of the senses in English does not correspond to their original development in Greek, where the sequence was apparently: 'appearance, phantom, unsubstantial form, image in water or a mirror, mental image, fancy, material image or statue,' and finally, in Jewish and Christian use, 'image of a false god.' In English this last was, under religious influence, the earliest, and in Middle English the only sense… The other uses are 16th c. adoptions of early Greek senses." By the sixteenth century, the philological history of the word "idol" had returned, full circle, to its original Greek meaning, and the OED cites Spenser's *Faerie Queene* as one of the places where "idol" is used to refer to "a counterpart, likeness, imitation; = image." So the philological argument for the relationship between image and form in the history of aesthetics that I make here is specifically relevant to Spenser.

[9] James Elkins has characterized post-structuralist approaches to images in much the same way. In the introduction to *On Words and the Pictures that Fail Them*, he explains that "this book might well have been titled *The Antisemiotic*" because it resists "the tendency to interpret images as systems of signs," choosing instead to focus on "those places in pictures where the inevitable linguistic or semiotic model

allegory to semiotics, post-structuralist approaches to allegory have completed the aesthetic trajectory of sixteenth-century iconoclasts: the poetic image, so central in earlier conceptions of allegory, now names a distinction without a difference.

Early modern poets themselves, however, describe poetry in undeniably imagistic terms. Philip Sidney famously describes poetry as something which "yieldeth to the powers of the mind an *image*" or "speaking *picture*" that "doth...strike, pierce [and] possess the *sight* of the soul."[10] Kenneth Gross voices an almost universal cliché in Spenser criticism when he characterizes Spenser as an "allegorical *imagemak[er]*" and a "literary *pictorialist*."[11] While we are used to thinking of paintings, diagrams, maps, and other material objects as images, I propose that the image is in fact best understood as a perceptual rather than material object of study—as something which cannot be clearly located in the material world but which is partly constitutive of the way we experience it. The poetic image presents one of the clearest cases for the value of this approach: poetic images are paradoxically both "there" and "not there"—not visibly on the page, and yet somehow in the poetry.[12] Largely neglected by visual culture scholars and literature scholars alike, the poetic image refers not to seeing the printed words on the page but to the phenomenological experience of seeing-as: "the paradoxical trick of consciousness" whereby the verbal registers as visual.[13] In what follows, I argue for a return to earlier image-based approaches to allegory by recovering a neglected history of the image in

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stops making sense" (*On Pictures and the Words that Fail Them* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998], xi). For a discussion of images in post-structuralist theory, see W.J.T. Mitchell, *Iconology*, 53-74.

[10] Philip Sidney, '*Sidney's Defence of Poesy' and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism*, ed. Gavin Alexander (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 10 and 16. My emphases.

[11] Kenneth Gross, *Spenserian Poetics: Idolatry, Iconoclasm, and Magic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 9. My emphases.

[12] Mitchell, *Iconology*, 17.

[13] Mitchell, *Iconology*, 17.

premodern aesthetics: the art of memory tradition. Both Guyon and Teskey have overlooked the fact that Spenser's allegorical figures are memory images designed according to the rules prescribed by ancient and medieval *artes memorativae*.[14] The paradox of temporal anteriority that provokes Guyon's spasm of iconoclastic violence is less mystifying than it appears if we reframe the discovery of allegorical meaning as a process of rediscovery—that is, as a process of recollection. We need not ask what Grylle "mean[s]" because his name tells us: Grylle, whose name means "hog" and who indeed looks and behaves like one, recalls Homer's *Odyssey*, Plutarch's *Moralia*, and Calvin's *Institutes*—all texts which allegorically personify the vices of sensual pleasure in the figure of a hog named Grylle.[15]

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[14] My argument draws on the work of Michael Murrin, Maurice Evans, William Engel, Grant Williams, and Rebecca Helfer. Michael Murrin and Maurice Evans, following the publication of Frances Yates' foundational work on the art of memory (*The Art of Memory* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966]), were among the first critics to recognize the influence of the art of memory on Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. They argued that Spenser's allegorical figures are memory images designed according to rules prescribed by the ancient and medieval *artes memorativae*. Michael Murrin, "The Purpose of Allegory: Its Memorial Role in Society" in *The Veil of Allegory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969); Maurice Evans, "Fashioning a Gentleman" in *Spenser's Anatomy of Heroism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970). William Engle, Grant Williams, and Rebecca Helfer, taking up this line of criticism, have recently argued persuasively for further connections between Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and the *ars memorativa* or "art of memory" tradition. See William E. Engle, "Spenser's Places of Memory: Revisiting the Double Threshold in *Cebes Tabula*" presented at the 2015 Spenser Society Conference, forthcoming in *Spenser Studies*, 2017); Grant Williams, "Phantasties Flies: The Trauma of Amnesic Enjoyment in Spenser's Memory Palace," *Spenser Studies* 18 (2003): 231-252; William E. Engel, Rory Loughnane, and Grant Williams, eds., *The Memory Arts in Renaissance England: A Critical Anthology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016); and Rebecca Helfer, *Spenser's Ruins* (Toronoto: University of Toronto Press, 2012). For further connections between poetry and the art of memory, see: Mary Carruthers, "The Poet as Master Builder: Composition and Locational Memory in the Middle Ages," *New Literary History* vol. 24, no. 4 (1993): 881-904; Beryl Rowland, "The Artificial Memory, Chaucer, and Modern Scholars," *Poetica* 37 (1993): 1-14; and Rowland "The Art of Memory and The Art of Poetry in the *House of Fame*," *Revue de l'Universite d'Ottawa* vol. 51, no. 2 (1981): 162-171.

[15] As Roscoe Parker has argued, Grylle can be traced to Plutarch's dialogue, "Beasts are Rational," between Odysseus and Gryllus, a humorous exchange that draws on the original myth of Gryllus, one of Circe's victims, in book ten of the *Odyssey*. Plutarch, "Beasts are Rational," *Moralia XII*, trans. Harold Cherniss and William C. Helmbold, Loeb Classical Library 406 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), 489-533. But Parker also discovered a fascinating connection between Spenser's Grylle and Calvin's *Institutes*, which suggests that Grylle is as much an ethical commonplace of the Christian faith as it is of pagan poetry. See Roscoe Parker, "'Let Gryll be Gryll,'" *Philological Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (April 1937): 218-219.

Spenser stages both the history and basic principles of the art of memory in the figure of Eumnestes, his allegorical personification of "iust memory"(II.Proem.1.5). Guyon's lesson in the House of Temperance culminates in the chamber of memory, where he is reminded that ethical fashioning consists in the construction of a well-built memory: the books in Eumnestes' library are mnemonic images of knowledge which he has already memorized—already "laid…vp in his immortall scrine"—and the library itself is an allegorical projection of the sage's own artificial memory (II.ix.56.6). By collecting and recollecting books "lost or laid amis," "tossing and turning" their pages "withouten end" (II.ix.58.2-6) and returning them to their proper places, Eumnestes' "endlesse exercise" represents memorization through repeated recall (II.ix.59.2). But Eumnestes does not personify Good Memory in an uncomplicated or straightforward way. As mnemonic images or reminders, the books are memory traces, evidence of what Eumnestes knows but has forgotten; they indicate loss as much as recovery, forgetfulness as much as remembrance. In other words, Eumnestes paradoxically personifies both remembrance and forgetfulness, as the etymological pun in his name ambiguously implies: the "εὐ" in Eumnestes aurally evokes the Greek homophone "οὐ"; "Eumnestes" means not only Good Memory but also No Memory.[16]

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[16] This same homophony informs the paradox of utopia, which means both "good place" and "no place." Giordano Bruno, a contemporary of Spenser's, offers an example of the heuristic purpose of such puns within the art of memory when he recommends using the image of a horse, *equus*, to signify the concept of equality, *aequus*. In this example, the image of a horse mnemonically recalls the concept of equality through aural and visual punning on the words *equus* and *aequus*. See Giordano Bruno, *On the Composition of Images, Signs, and Ideas* or *De imaginum, signorum, et idearum compositione, ad omnia inventionum, compositionum, dispositionum et memoriae genera* (1591), trans. Charles Doria and ed. Dick Higgins (New York: Willis, Locker and Owens, 1991), 28. For Bruno's contributions to the art of memory, see Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory*, 243-265. See also Paolo Rossi, *Logic and the Art of Memory*, trans. Stephen Clucas (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983). Mary Carruthers has also observed a link between so-called "false etymologies" and mnemonic technique in Chaucer. See "Inventional Mnemonics and the Ornaments of Style," *Connotations* 2, no. 2 (1992): 105.

By giving the art of memory methodological and topical visibility in the figure of Eumnestes, Spenser reinforces its importance for a poetics whose fate was inextricably tied to its ethical promise of "fashion[ing]" readers in "vertuous and gentle discipline" (*LR*, 714).[17] As a negative exemplar, Guyon reminds readers that evacuated of its mnemonic function poetry can serve no purpose beyond sensory titillation. The gorgeous, seductive, shockingly beautiful mnemonic figures of Spenser's poetry can only numb the soul through an excess of pleasure in the hands of a forgetful reader like Guyon, whose hermeneutic assumes an iconoclastic literary aesthetic completely at odds with Spenser's stated ethical project of fashioning "gentle" readers. It remains unclear, however, whether remembrance as a model of ethical fashioning ever finally succeeds in the *Faerie Queene*. Eumnestes' equivocal status as a figure for memory compels us to ask: does Guyon learn habits of remembrance or forgetfulness in Eumnestes' chamber? The consequences played out in Acrasia's Bower would suggest the latter. Guyon's "wrathfulnesse" and "rigour pittilesse" (II.xii.83.2-4)—instruments of erasure and thus oblivion—associate Guyon, the Knight of Temperance, with intemperance: it is tragically Guyon, not Grylle, who "forg[ets] the excellence / Of his creation" in the final scene of Book II (II.xii.87. 2). The destruction of the Bower of Bliss thus figures as an act of violent forgetting, not, as Jennifer Summit has argued, "an act of violent remembering."[18]

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[17] Edmund Spenser, "Letter to Raleigh," in *The Faerie Queene*, 714-718. Hereafter referred to as *LR*.
[18] Jennifer Summit "Monuments and Ruins: Spenser and the Problem of the English Library," *ELH* 70, no. 1 (2003): 25.

II. The Art of Memory and the Commonplace Book

What is the art of memory? The term "art of memory" misleadingly implies a single tradition, when in fact it refers to a set of practices that surface in a range of discourses, including poetry, rhetoric, hermeticism, sermon-writing, law, and education. It describes practical rules both for rote memorization and for organizing material memorized by rote into locational systems that facilitate retrieval. The artificial memories described in Cicero's *De Oratore,* the anonymous *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* take the form of an architectural edifice in which the orator-in-training can imaginatively place images—pictures, symbols, rebuses, emblems, etc.—which serve as reminders for memorized content. By walking through the imagined location and re-collecting each image in order, the orator can recall memorized speeches, laws, and court cases with relative ease and accuracy.

But the architectural mnemonic, which has received so much critical attention since Frances Yates' foundational study, is not the only locational scheme described by ancient mnemotechnicians. Cicero and Quintilian also refer to the memory as a pair of wax tablets onto which the memory artificer can inscribe material for memorization.[19] Echoing classical sources, Thomas Wilson's *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1560) observes that "the places of memory are resembled unto Waxe and Paper. Images are compted like vnto Letters or a Seale. The placing of these Images, is like vnto wordes written."[20] The classical trope of the wax tablets prefigures an important "location" in the history of the *artes memorativae* alluded to here by Thomas Wilson and extensively analyzed by Mary

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[19] Cicero, *De Oratore*, ed. H. Rackham and trans. E.W. Sutton, Loeb Classical Library 348 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948), 265-7; Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, trans. H.E. Butler, Loeb Classical Library 127 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), XI.ii.4.
[20] Thomas Wilson, *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1560), (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), 214.

Carruthers: the "book of memory." With the rise of literate culture during the medieval period, readers began to adapt the rules for places and images to the production and consumption of books: the division (*divisio*) of text into paragraphs or verses facilitated rote memorization; rubrication and illumination helped create a distinct *mis-en-page* that effectively turned each page into a "place" for fixing images designed to recall memorized text; and the inclusion of visually striking, sometimes punningly allusive images in the margins by both illuminators and readers transformed words into images, which could be recorded in and read back from the book of one's memory.[21] By marking important passages with marginal images, readers used the art of memory as a method for memorizing key sections of books, and in some cases, whole books.

Fig. 1: Marginal images in pen and ink: Aristotle, *Libri Naturales* (ca. 1260), V.b.32, by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington D.C. This illuminated manuscript dates from mid to late 13th century, Paris. Manuscript images date to the 14th century and include manicules, floral patterns, serpents, dogs, pigs, fish, mice, a wide range of human faces, and several full human figures.

[21] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 274-337.

With some exceptions, the practice of marking books with marginal images gradually becomes less common over the course of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[22] Instead of images, books more often contain traces of an emerging mnemonic aid: the commonplace.[23] While conventions of organization and presentation vary widely across both printed and manuscript commonplace books over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, humanist proponents of the commonplace book invariably advertise it as an "aid to memory."[24] The commonplace book played a central role in the humanist training of figures like Sidney and Spenser and was largely responsible for the dissemination of relatively uniform mnemonic practices as the humanist educational model spread north to England. I argue that the commonplace book provided a material

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[22] The most important exception to this general trend is the manicule, which is discussed at length in Chapter Two of Bill Sherman's *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 25-52. But what is strikingly absent from Sherman's review are the kinds of elaborate images that Mary Carruthers describes in *The Book of Memory*. His discussion of illumination, rubrication, and illustrations in early modern books suggests that the decrease in visual elements in printed books can be attributed to the iconoclasm of the Protestant Reformation in England, although he documents the ways in which individual readers cut and pasted illuminations and decorative capitals back into their own devotional materials. See esp. 87-108. Nevertheless, his overview points to a shift toward symbol systems, manicules, and flowers—a marked turn away from the beautifully elaborate, detailed, and wide-ranging images in earlier medieval texts—and his account of early modern marginalia makes very little reference to the art of memory.

[23] The marginal commonplace is likely related to the marginal commentaries of medieval books. Carruthers describes these, also, as part of medieval memory practices (Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 267).

[24] See Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996). In spite of her claim that the commonplace book replaced the art of memory as an information management technology, Moss does affirm throughout that the art of memory played an important role in the history of the commonplace book: it was "part of the imaginative space available to men and women in eras before the invention of printing and in the period of transition, when some habits of thought took longer to die than others" (8). Among the sources which Moss suggests saw the commonplace book as an aid for memorization are: Gasparinus Barizzia (53); Rodolphus Agricola (193-204); Johannes Murmellius (88); and Johannes Sturmius (147). Moss has also argued that techniques of commonplacing can be traced to the *loci communes* of ancient rhetoric, which are none other than the memory "places" described by Cicero, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and Quintilian. Well into the early modern period, "proponents of the commonplace-books never fail to draw attention" to "their utility for training and supplying the memory" (8). Michael Bath has also argued that the commonplace derives from the "places" of the ancient *ars memorativa*: "the commonplace books were essentially a techniques for assisting the memory," and "the close connections between commonplace books and memory systems by which writers were traditionally trained to systematize ideas in order to be able to recall or retrieve them for use helps to explain why there is often a relationship between emblem books and the *ars memorativa*" (*Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture* [New York: Longman, 1994], 33-34).

support for memory practices ultimately derived from the classical and medieval *artes memorativae*. Historians of the commonplace book, most notably Ann Moss, have traced its origins to the medieval florilegium, a kind of text-book collection of memorable passages drawn from poetry, theology, and philosophy. Moss's tendency to associate this pre-modern form with the modern text-book obscures an important difference, emphasized by Carruthers, who has argued that the florilegium "is basically the contents of someone's memory, set forth as a kind of study-guide for the formation of others' memories."[25] The purpose of the medieval florilegium "is not to substitute for the study of original texts, but to provide cues for recollecting material read earlier"—a function that, I argue, the Renaissance commonplace book also performs.[26] Late medieval mnemonic reading practices persist well into the sixteenth century and memorization—not simply reading—continued to form an important part of the humanist curriculum.

To understand how the commonplace book functions as a mnemonic aid, we first have to establish evidence of the close relationship between commonplacing and the art of memory in humanist culture. Erasmus, arguably the most influential figure in the history of the commonplace book, takes an ambivalent attitude toward locational memory in his *De ratione studii*, which has led several scholars to the misleading conclusion that Erasmus rejects locational mnemonics. Erasmus would seem to provide support for Ann Moss's argument the art of memory is a "trick" or "knack" "which the proliferation of printed commonplace books will gradually make redundant during the Early Modern period."[27] In the *De ratione studii*, which describes Erasmus' method of collecting

[25] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 218.
[26] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 219.
[27] Moss, *Commonplace-Books*, 8.

exempla and *sententiae* into notebooks, Erasmus expresses reservations about locational memory that echo those of Quintilian, after whom Erasmus patterns much of the *De copia* and *De ratione studii*.[28] Erasmus writes that "although I do not deny that memory is aided by 'places' and 'images,' nevertheless the best memory is based on three things above all: understanding, system, and care."[29] Like Quintilian, who dismisses the locational method of memory-training after proceeding to describe the method in detail, Erasmus expresses reservations before proceeding to outline what can only be described as locational mnemonic aid.[30] He advises readers to "take things which it is necessary but rather difficult to remember…and have them written as briefly and attractively as possible on charts and hung up on the walls of a room where they are generally conspicuous," to write "brief but pithy sayings such as aphorisms, proverbs, and maxims"—in other words, commonplaces—"at the beginning and at the end of your books," "on rings or drinking cups," "on doors and walls," and "even in the glass of a window so that what may aid learning is constantly before the eye."[31] In short, Erasmus recommends turning one's architectural surroundings into a "place" for storing things-to-be-remembered: using the simplest of locational techniques, Erasmus recommends associating textual excerpts with objects—books, cups, doors, walls, and windows—so that they can be "placed" in a familiar location to facilitate the recollection of "things which it is necessary but rather difficult to remember." It differs only slightly from traditional methods of memory-training described by classical authors.

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[28] For Erasmus' relationship to Quintilian see Moss, *Commonplace-Books*, 108.
[29] Desiderius Erasmus, *De Ratione Studii*, in *Collected Works of Erasmus* vol. 24, ed. Craig R. Thompson (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 671.
[30] Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H.E. Butler LCL 127 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1922), XI.ii.23-26.
[31] Erasmus, *De ratione studii*, 671.

It is helpful to turn to John Willis, whose *Mnemonica* (1618) offers advice strikingly similar to that of Erasmus, for a clear example of how this advice was understood by some early modern readers.[32] Willis somewhat idiosyncratically refers to the memory image as an "idea," although he defines it in familiar terms as "a visible representation of things to be *remembered*."[33] In the third book, which describes the traditional prescriptions for memory places and images, Willis describes how to construct a "written idea" or "Scriptile Idea"—that is, a verbal image.[34] A "written idea," he explains, "is where the thing to be *Remembered*, is imagined to be written with black letters in a plain white Table, four foot square, hanging against the opposite wall of the *Repository*."[35] Willis decorates his "*Repository*" or memory locus in the way Erasmus recommends decorating real spaces of learning: hanging charts on the walls, "for so they [written characters] are most easily attracted by the visual faculty, and transferred to *Memory*."[36] The usefulness of this method in constructing locational memory systems explains why, Willis observes, "such like writings and inscriptions are frequently seen in walls of Churches and houses"—and, in light of Erasmus' recommendations, in humanist classrooms.[37]

Willis' notion of a verbal image or "Scriptile Idea" points to an important difference in the way that early modern writers think of the distinction between words

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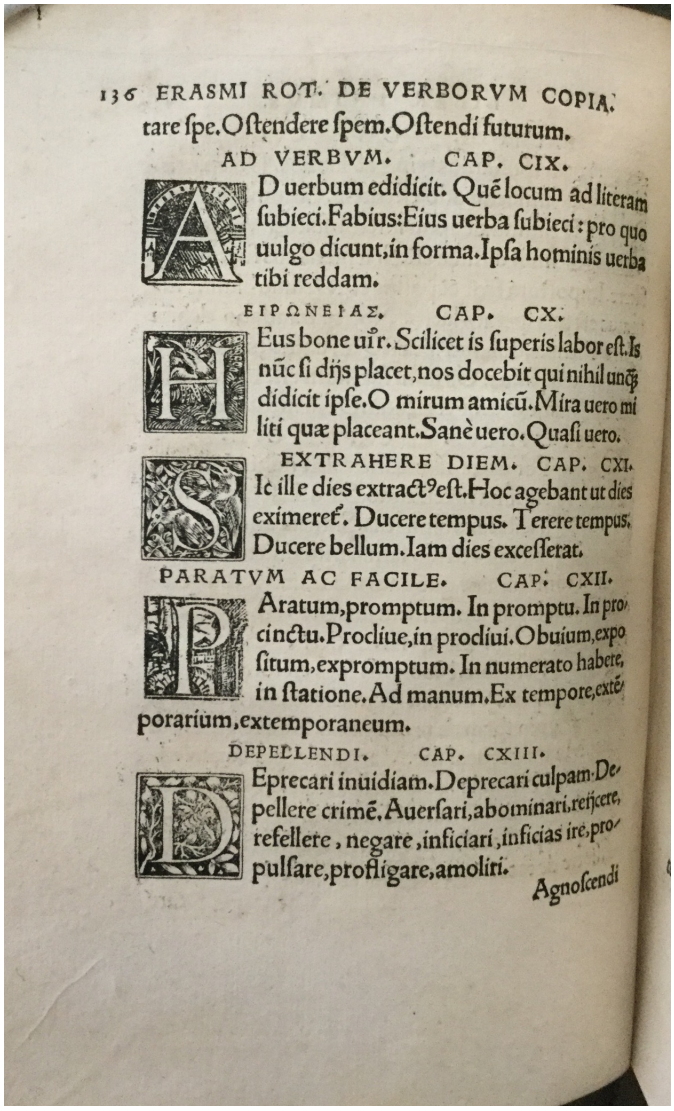
[32] John Willis, *Mnemonica; or the Art of Memory* (London: 1661). The 1661 text is Leonard Sowersby's English translation of John Willis's original Latin text, published in 1618. Willis himself published his own English version of *Mnemonica* in 1621, titled *The Art of Memory* (London: 1621), but this text differs substantially from the Latin *Mnemonica*. References to Willis' *Mnemonica* are taken from Sowersby's 1661 translation throughout.
[33] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 58.
[34] Willis, *The Art of Memory*, 33.
[35] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 82.
[36] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 83.
[37] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 82.

and images: the tendency, in modern aesthetics, to insist on a clear distinction between words and images generates some confusion when confronted with a text like Willis's, which instead draws a distinction between *visual* and *verbal* images. While Willis might seem to break with the traditional model of constructing memory images described in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, his "Scritpile Ideas" instead point to an alien aesthetic, according to which words can function as images. Our own critical vocabulary retains traces of this earlier aesthetic: we still refer to "poetic imagery," even though we no longer have the memory-based, sensory-cognitive paradigm to explain in what sense a verbal image is an *image*. For Willis, verbal images are *images* because they have to be visualized, or as he puts it, "easily attracted by the visual faculty," to be located in a mnemonic scheme: "Memory," he explains, "is stronger conversant about sensible things then about insensible; and of sensible things, those which are *visible* make the deepest impression; therefore things heard are more firmly retained in Memory, then those which are barely conceived in mind, & things seen better than those which are heard."[38] To ensure that our "Scriptile Ideas" "are more firmly retained in Memory," Willis gives specific guidelines for ensuring that they are "seen" rather than "barely conceived in the mind": letters must be written large enough to "be plainly read by one standing somewhat remote"; the first letter of a word or first word of a phrase must be "very great," by which he means capitalized and made larger so that it stands out from the rest of the text; vowels should be colored gold; etc.[39] In short, he recommends anything that would make the word as much like an "image" or "picture" as possible, that it might "strike," "pierce," and "possess the sight of the soul." The goal is to avoid "wordish descriptions,"

[38] Willis, *Mnemonica*, "Preface."
[39] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 86.

as Sidney puts it.[40] The emphasis on making "the first letter" of a word "very great" explains a typographical peculiarity in a 1521 printing of Erasmus' *De Copia*, one of the earliest printed commonplace books, which begins every fragment or excerpt with a large, decorated capital—the typographic conventions of this edition turn each page into a uniquely organized "place" for memorizing "Scriptile Ideas" (see Figure 2 below).



136 ERASMI ROT. DE VERBORVM COPIA.

tare ſpe. Oſtendere ſpem. Oſtendi futurum.

AD VERBVM. CAP. CIX.

AD uerbum edidicit. Quẽ locum ad literam ſubieci. Fabius: Eius uerba ſubieci: pro quo uulgo dicunt, in forma. Ipſa hominis uerba tibi reddam.

ΕΙΡΩΝΕΙΑΣ. CAP. CX.

HEus bone uĩr. Scilicet is ſuperis labor eſt. Is nũc ſi diis placet, nos docebit qui nihil unq̃ didicit ipſe. O mirum amicũ. Mira uero mi liti quæ placeant. Sanè uero. Quaſi uero.

EXTRAHERE DIEM. CAP. CXI.

SIc ille dies extractꝰ eſt. Hoc agebant ut dies eximeret. Ducere tempus. Terere tempus. Ducere bellum. Iam dies exceſſerat.

PARATVM AC FACILE. CAP. CXII.

PAratum, promptum. In promptu. In pro cinctu. Prodiue, in prodiui. Obuium, expo ſitum, expromptum. In numerato habere, in ſtatione. Ad manum. Ex tempore, extẽ porarium, extemporaneum.

DEPELLENDI. CAP. CXIII.

DEprecari inuidiam. Deprecari culpam. De pellere crimẽ. Auerſari, abominari, reiicere, refellere, negare, inficiari, inficias ire, pro pulſare, profligare, amoliri.

Agnoſcendi

Fig. 2. Capitalized commonplaces: Desiderius Erasmus, *De Copia* (1521), PA 8517 P23 Cage, by permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washtington D.C.

[40] Sidney, *Defence*, 16.

Willis's "Scriptile Ideas" suggest an important continuity between humanist methods of memorizing commonplaces and traditional methods prescribed by the art of memory. But, paradoxically, they belong to what Willis calls "artificial memory…without *Writing*." Writing finds its place in traditional locational mnemonics in the form of an image which can be sharply visualized. What, then, is "artificial memorie…in *Writing*"?[41] It is here that the commonplace book takes its place within early modern mnemonic culture. Willis affirms "that *Writing* is the surest *Guardian* of memorable things far excelling all other Art of Memory"[42] and therefore concludes that it is "unnecessary" to memorize everything one wishes to remember "because writing of things worthy memory in a book, is much easier, more certain and readier for use."[43] Willis confirms Ann Moss's conclusion that the commonplace book served as an index or reference guide that allowed readers to return to key passages in their original sources, and in this sense, the commonplace book does indeed "replace" the need for rote memorization.[44] In another sense, however, Willis contradicts Moss's argument, since he makes it clear that the practice of writing *memoranda* in one's commonplace book is itself an "artificial memorie"—one of the "two-fold" techniques of memory construction, "in *Writing*, or without *Writing*." Somewhat implicit in Willis' exposition of "artificial memorie…in *Writing*" are book-based techniques of memorization that employ commonplacing as a mnemonic aid. It is to these that I want to turn, briefly, because they introduce an important qualification to Moss's position: the commonplace book does not

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[41] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 1.
[42] Willis, *Mnemonica*, "Preface."
[43] Willis, *Mnemonica*, "Preface."
[44] Willis explains that if passages and excerpts "to be remembered, are already extant in print, it is sufficient to set down their Titles in your Common-place Book, under their proper heads," which allows one to return "to that place…whensoever you please" (*Mnemonica*, 15).

replace the architectural mnemonic; rather, the commonplace book is itself an artificial memory scheme which exists alongside other mnemonic arts well into the seventeenth century and beyond.

The "*written* way of *Remembering*," Willis explains, refers to "writing notes in Tablebooks"—that is, writing in commonplace books, a method which "it were superfluous to speak of" because it is so well known.[45] Willis skips over the basic principles of commonplacing already described at length by Erasmus, Melanchthon, and other major figures in the humanist tradition, and turns instead to advice concerning "Sentences worthy of memory": "I mean such as we desire to preserve *not only in paper*, but *in our hearts*."[46] After copying memorable *sententiae* into a commonplace book, Willis advises us that "this *Enchiridion* wherein you write such remarkable sentences ought always to be carryed about you" to be read over repeatedly in moments of leisure. By this method "you will keep in mind things worthy remembrance better, safter, sooner, more certainly, profitably, and delightfully…"[47] The commonplace book serves as a material support for memory both because it is where we "discharge"[48] things-to-be-remembered, relieving the memory of its "burthen," but also because it facilitates memorization of "Sentences" or *sententiae* that we "desire to preserve" "in our hearts"—that is, that we wish to memorize. The commonplace book absorbed many of the techniques originally left to the imagination before the increased availability of paper and printed books. Instead of *imagining* wax tablets or "Tablebooks" upon which one would inscribe *memoranda*, the early modern student could use an actual book to visualize

[45] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 1.
[46] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 11 (my emphasis).
[47] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 11.
[48] Willis, *Mnemonica*, "Preface."

passages organized into *loci* or places of memory. The metaphorical power of the "book of memory" takes on new force with the widespread use of commonplace books. "If men deal impartially," Willis insists, defending the art of memory against "Detractors," "they will easily find, that the *Art of Memory* by *Place* and *Idea's* or *Images*, doth very nearly resemble *Writing*. The *Places* in artificial *Memory*, are as it were *Leavs*; the *Idea's*, *Letters*; the distribution of them in *Places* representeth *Writing*; lastly, the repetition of them, *Reading*."[49] This formulaic comparison between memory and books, countlessly repeated in rhetorical and mnemonic handbooks from Cicero forward, provide evidence for the argument that books functioned and were explicitly understood to be cognitive extensions of natural memory, that they shaped and were shaped by the limits and demands of real human memories.[50] To say that the commonplace book *replaces* memory is like saying that the microscope or telescope *replaced* vision.

But the commonplace *book* captures only one element of a culture organized around the commonplace, which as Moss argues should be understood as a "structure of thought"—a cultural episteme—manifested by the commonplace book but by no means limited to it. Commonplacing describes a method of reading that manifests in at least two ways, not just in the making of commonplace books but also in the practice of leaving marginal commonplace headings in books to mark passages for transcription into a commonplace notebook. Willis provides indirect evidence for how the practice of writing marginal commonplaces in books served a mnemonic function. In the chapter "Of remembering long Speeches," Willis describes how to remember "any large Treatise

[49] Willis, *Mnemonica*, "Preface."
[50] Written technologies, Mary Carruthers has demonstrated, do not replace the mnemonic arts (*The Book of Memory*, 9-10). In fact, her research suggests just the opposite: books *supplement* rather than *supplant* memory-training.

composed of many sentences of one kind," including "*Sermons, Orations, Declarations*," and *"Heads* or *Sections* of Books."[51] By "speeches" Willis means any long piece of writing (whether or not it was delivered orally), and in his advice for memorizing "speeches" of our own composition, Willis provides crucial evidence for *how* the commonplace facilitates memorization. Such "speeches" "may be deeply fastened in memory" in four stages: "*Method*, *Writing*, *Marginal Notation*, and *Meditation*."[52] "Method" refers to the organization of arguments, the logical order of which "is called the *Chain of Memory*"; "Writing" refers to copying text out by hand, and revising it, leaving corrections as they stand since "the blots and interlining do more firmly fasten in mind the sentences so blotted and interlined" because they stand out on the page; "Marginal Notation" refers to commonplaces written in the margins which remind us of the key point of each paragraph; and "Meditation" refers to the process of memorizing each link or argument in the "*Chain of Memory*."[53]

Willis' description of "Marginal Notation" deserves close and careful attention because of its singular importance as evidence of the mnemonic function of commonplacing. "*Marginal Notation*," Willis explains, "is when one or two chief words of every sentence is placed in the Margent, which so soon as seen (which is with the least cast of an eye) revoketh the whole sentence to mind."[54] He then inserts a "small Treatise of the *Ressurection*" "to be learned by heart," which in format and presentation looks like most other printed books in the period: this "Treatise" is basically a sermon that breaks each argument up into ordered paragraphs—exemplary of the "*Chain of Memory*"—with

[51] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 13.
[52] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 14.
[53] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 15.
[54] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 16.

short "Marginal Notations" printed in the margins next to each paragraph, which either describe the main concept or give a textual reference to a source cited—"I Cor. 13-35," for example.[55] As evidence that marginal notes like these were understood by early modern readers to be a form of commonplace heading, consider the printed format of Georg Major's *Sententiae veterum poeatrum per locos communes digestae* or *Ancient sentences of the poets digested into commonplaces* (1527), an early example of a printed commonplace book that has "Marginal Notations" printed in the margins of the book next to each excerpt.[56] What is significant about this text is its *Index Locorum Communium* or Index of Common Places lists commonplace headings alphabetically with page numbers for each topic next to it. The index of *locorum communium* gives the page number for each marginal reference, which suggests that the marginal references are themselves *commonplaces*. The fact that printers adopted the convention of leaving commonplaces in the margins of all kinds of text in the form of a "*Marginal Notation*" suggests that they expected readers to record these passages in their own private commonplace books, but as Willis suggests, they could also be used to *memorize* these passages or "speeches" as Willis calls them using the four-stage method he describes in *Mnemonica*. The fact that Ben Jonson marked his own copy of the *Faerie Queene* with marginal commonplaces and the fact that he is known to have memorized some of Spenser's poetry suggests that we cannot rule out the likelihood that early modern readers did in fact use the commonplace method to memorize passages from the *Faerie Queene*.[57]

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[55] Willis, *Mnemonica*, 16-17.
[56] Major, Georg. *Sententiae veterum poetarum per locos communes digestae* (Magdeburg: 1537).
[57] See James A. Riddell and Stanley Stewart, *Jonson's Spenser: Evidence and Historical Criticism* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1995). For another example of how early modern readers marked the *Faerie Queene*, see Folger STC 23082 Copy 5, a 1596 edition of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, also contains heavy marginalia by a reader (probably a student) who has clearly marked the text for

III. Reading for Memory

The episode in Alma's Castle is important for our understanding of how the art of memory works in Spenser's poetics because unlike other key texts in the mnemonic tradition, it makes visible the method that it employs. While Thomas Aquinas's artificial memory, for instance, would have been populated with shocking, monstrous, salacious, or beautiful mnemonic figures, what he produced was the *Summa Theologica*, a text composed using the art of memory but which does not contain any trace of the system used to compose it.[58] By contrast, Spenser's *Faerie Queene* inscribes a constructed memory system thematically into the content of the narrative. By figuring Eumnestes' chamber as a library—as an architectural space for housing books of memory—Spenser neatly encodes both mnemonic schemes into his allegory. In canto nine of Book II, Alma guides Guyon and King Arthur to Eumnestes' memory chamber, a library full of books, scraps of paper, scrolls, and other written records, which, as several critics have noted, suggests a metonymic relationship between writing and remembering. Eumnestes is a man of "infinite remembraunce" who records

> things forgone through many ages held…in his immortall scrine,
> Where they for euer incorrupted dweld. (II.ix.56.1-7)

As Judith Anderson and Carruthers have argued, the word "scrine" performs a dual function here. The Latin word *scrinium* refers to chests, boxes, niches, or rooms used to keep important state or ecclesiastical papers, saints' relics, or other "things for

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transcription of commonplaces into a notebook, often by leaving marginal commonplaces next to key allegorical virtues and vices.

[58] The fact that the memory system leaves no traces of itself in the finished work has been a source of frustration for historians and literature scholars. Important figures in the tradition like Cicero and Aquinas leave only descriptions of the general method, not descriptions of their own mnemonic systems. For a discussion of Thomas Aquinas and the art of memory, see Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory*, 86; and Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 4-8.

remembering."[59] In addition to its long-standing "association with books and archives," the word "scrine" evokes "equally persistent associations with memory or with things worth remembering."[60] It refers, in other words, both to Eumnestes' "archive and his memory."[61] The double reference sets up a facile analogy: books are to memories what the library is to the faculty of memory. This doubling, combined with the recent emphasis on the material texts of Eumnestes' chamber, has led to the critical consensus that Eumnestes' memory "derives from" his books.[62]

However, as Garrett Sullivan and Alan Stewart remind us, these two "scrines" sit in uneasy tension with one another. The "incorrupted" memories "recorded still" (II.ix.56.3) in the "immortall scrine" of Eumnestes' memory seem out of place in a "scrine" or chamber that the poet describes as "ruinous and old" (II.ix.55.1) filled with aged "records" and "parchment scrolls / That were all worm-eaten, and full of canker holes" (II.ix.57.7-9). Eumnestes' page, Anamnestes, scrambles to find "thinges…lost, or laid amis"(II.ix.58.6) since Eumnestes, "halfe blind" and "all decrepit in his feeble corse" (II.ix.55.5-6), is "vnhable them to fett" (II.ix.58.3). If Eumnestes' own immortal memory "derives from" the materials in his library, Stewart and Sullivan ask, "what do we do with a depiction of Memory in which his actions are revealed as contingent upon perishable materials?"[63] By offering up a figure for memory who misplaces and ruins his own records by heaping them in disorganized piles, Spenser paradoxically sets Eumnestes'

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[59] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 46.
[60] Judith Anderson, "'Myn Auctor': Spenser's Enabling Fiction and Eumnestes' 'immortal scrine,'" in *Unfolded Tales: Essays on Renaissance Romance*, ed. George Logan and Gordon Teskey (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1989), 19.
[61] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 46.
[62] Judith Anderson, for example, writes that the "content" of Eumnestes' "memory…derives from" his books. See "Myn Auctor," 20.
[63] Alan Stewart and Garrett A. Sullivan Jr., "'Worme-eaten, and full of canker holes': Materializing Memory in *The Faerie Queene* and *Lingua*," *Spenser Studies* 17 (2003): 217.

"imperishable" memory in direct opposition to the material and thus perishable conditions of the archive around him.

What, then, does Eumnestes do in the chamber of memory? Recent criticism, which implicitly assumes that writing—and by extension, Eumnestes' books—allegorizes remembrance in the *Faerie Queene*, has ignored Harry Berger Jr.'s insight that "the emphasis on written documents in Memory's chamber seems to be a direct reminder of the contrary doctrine stated by Plato in the *Phaedrus*."[64] According to Socrates, "words that have been written down" can only "remind those who already know what the writing is about," which sheds light on the significance of a mostly blind sage "tossing and turning" (II.ix.58.2) the decaying pages of books "that were all worm-eaten, and full of canker holes," but whose memory is nevertheless described as "immortall" and "incorrupted" (II.ix.56.6-7).[65] In Socrates' terms, Eumnestes "already know[s] what the writing is about": the books are mnemonic images that "remind" him of content which he has already "laid…vp in his immortall scrine." Eumnestes' "endlesse exercise" in Alma's castle allegorizes not reading but recollection. He summons the contents of the library and then returns them to their place in his memory system to simulate the motions of repeated recall. The *Ad Herennium* closes its lesson in the construction of an artificial memory with an exhortation to "unremitting exercise": the shifting images will fade without constant attention, thus the student "in placing the images" must "exercise every

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[64] Harry Berger Jr., *The Allegorical Temper: Vision and Reality in Book II of Spenser's* Faerie Queene (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 79. For the role of memory in Plato, see Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory*, 37.

[65] Plato, *Phaedrus*, ed. by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1995), 80.

day."[66] The image of Eumnestes "tossing and turning…withouten end" externalizes in a material way the inward rehearsal of mnemonic images.

Eumnestes thus presents us with another example of the paradox of temporal anteriority with which this essay opened. Like the Palmer, who seems to know "what meant those beastes which there did ly" before encountering them, Eumnestes knows "what meant those [books] which there did ly" before reading them. Whatever knowledge Eumnestes' books might represent will always exist prior to their composition, not just because, as memory images, they remind him of what he already knows but, more fundamentally, because of the temporality of representation itself: to re-present something is to make it present again, not just spatially but temporally.[67] Remembrance is foundational to representation because it is what allows us to re-experience something past as present. This helps explain why writing would figure so importantly in discussions of memory, why Eumnestes' memories take the form of books. We are used to thinking of writing as representational but in spatial rather than temporal terms; the representation stands-in for something that is not "here" but "there."[68] In characterizing representation in the bileveled, spatial relationship between signifiers and signifieds we have forgotten the temporal conditions of representation, the

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[66] Ps. Cicero, *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, ed. T.E. Page and trans. Harry Caplan, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), III.xxiv.40.
[67] *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. "repreasentare." See also Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 275.
[68] Mary Carruthers draws a distinction between what she calls "mimetic" and "temporal" models of representation to argue that representation was a temporal concept in ancient and medieval philosophy. Jean-Pierre Vernant draws a similar distinction between mimetic or "figural" representation and temporal "presentification" in his discussion of ancient Greek statuary. See: Carruthers, *The The Book of Memory*, 275; Vernant, *Mortals and Immortals*, ed. Froma I. Zeitlin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 151-185. For a critique of Vernant's arguments about the birth of images in Ancient Greece, see Richard Neer, *The Emergence of the Classical Style in Greek Scultpure* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 14-19.

ways that we experience writing and other representational forms phenomenologically in time.

Understood this way, writing activates multiple temporalities that do not always sit comfortably together: memory creates temporal folds in the narrative, introducing *aporia* in the narrative sequence of the *Faerie Queene* by drawing scenes, events, and characters together atemporally across the text. And when mnemonic time disrupts narrative time—when the past suddenly erupts into the present—we experience the temporal dislocation, phenomenologically, as forgetfulness. To re-member the text—to reassemble it in memory—is to set these two temporal structures of the reading experience in opposition, since every act of remembrance requires that we forget, momentarily, the text's narrative construction of time. Put simply: if narrative time is a line, mnemonic time is a loop. Thus where Teskey understands the strangely circular logic of allegorical representation as an effect of the variance between incommensurable levels of meaning—literal and metaphorical—I would propose instead that it is an effect of the variance between two, incommensurable temporalities: when mnemonic time interrupts narrative time, a temporal loop is generated, creating a temporary lapse in our experience of the narrative's causal sequence of events which we experience as a kind of narrative forgetfulness.

It might be useful to pause for a moment here to reconstruct what a mnemonic reading of the *Faerie Queene* would look like in practice. Through allusion to other key passages in the *Faerie Queene*, I argue, the episode in Eumnestes' chamber encourages us to alter the space-time of the *Faerie Queene* by re-membering the text in new ways—that is, by collecting passages into a commonplace of memory by hunting after patterns

of mnemonic association already embedded in the poem. Only by forgetting the logic of narrative sequence, organizing events around patterns of association rather than cause and effect, can we begin to re-member the text anew. The Proem to Book II refers to *The Faerie Queene* as an "antique history" (II.Proem.1.2)—the kind of book that we should expect to find in Eumnestes' library—and while the poet worries it will "of some th'aboundance of an ydle braine" "iudged be" (II.Proem.1.2-4) he insists the text before us presents "matter of iust memory" (II.Proem.1.5) in clear reference to Eumnestes and his "auncient booke[s]" (II.ix.59.6). Eumnestes' books, "from auncient times deriued" (II.ix.57.7), recall the "antique history" in the Proem to Book II, the "antique rolls" in the Proem to Book I (I.Proem.2.4), the "records of antiquitee" in Book IV (IV.xi.10.4), and the "historical fiction" of the "Letter to Raleigh" (*LR*, 715)—but the antiquity-motif forms part of a larger argument, presented in the Proem to Book II about reading and recollection. It appears in the context of a rather sophisticated set of puns that associate the search for "faery lond" with the art of memory:

> Of faery lond yet if he more inquyre
> By certein signes here sett in sondrie place
> He may it fynd; ne let him then admyre
> But yield his sence to bee too blunt and bace
> That no'te without an hound fine footing trace. (II. Proem. 4)

When the Proem warns that readers will "no'te [not] without an hound" be able to "trace" or track the poet's "fine footing"—a pun on the poem's metered verse—it invokes the common mnemonic trope of the hunt, which figures recollection as a process of hunting after memories: "within his memorial forest, a trained student, like a knowledgeable

huntsman, can readily find the places (*loci*) where the rabbits and deer lie."[69] The trope of the hunt figures memories as fish, rabbits, deer, or other game, whose tracks or "traces" readers must note or record in memory to be able to "fynd" again later. The mnemonic trope of the hunt, Carruthers suggests, "informs the common metaphorical extension in Latin of the word *silva*, 'forest,' to mean a mass of unrelated and disordered material."[70] By comparing the reader's path through the *Faerie Queene* to the huntsman's path through the forest and thus to the orator's path through the forests of his memory, the Proem to Book II presents itself as a memory scheme, complete with "signes" or images "sett" in ordered locations or "sondrie place[s]."

The hunting trope also recalls Redcross Knight's misadventures in the Forest of Error and thus serves as a bridge between the first and second books of the *Faerie Queene*: "the metaphor in the word *error*, both error and wandering, is an aspect of this same idea," Carruthers argues, "for one who wanders through the *silva* (meaning both forest and disordered material) of his untrained and inattentive memory is one who has either lost the footprints (*vestigia*) that should lead him through, or never laid them down properly in the first place."[71] Redcross Knight repeatedly encounters examples of "error" after the battle with Error and repeatedly fails to recognize them as such. The reference to the trope of the hunt indirectly reminds us of Redcross's wanderings at the opening of Book I, but recontextualizes this erring as a failure to recollect what he knows about Error.

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[69] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 78. Carruthers explains that Quntillian, "defining the places of argument laid down in memory, likens a skillful orator to a huntsman or fisherman who knows exactly the habits and haunts of his game"; "metaphors of fishing, hunting, and tracking down prey are also traditional for recollection," and are used by Aristotle, Albertus Magnus, and "elaborately, by Quintilian" (Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 324).
[70] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 324.
[71] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 324.

Retrospectively, the Proem to Book I completes the argument of the Proem to Book II by suggesting that the *Faerie Queene* is itself a mnemonic scheme fashioned after the book of memory trope. The description of Eumnestes' "immortall scrine" echoes the Proem to Book I, in which the speaker implores his unnamed muse, a daughter of Mnemosyne, to

> lay forth out of thine euerlasting scryne
> The antique rolles, which there lye hidden still. (I.Proem.2.3-4)

The Proem to Book II insists that the very "antique history" before us, the *Faerie Queene* itself, contains "matter of iust memory," which as Stewart and Sullivan point out puns on the meaning of Eumnestes' name; the usage recalls the Proem to Book I, which characterizes the *Faerie Queene* as contained in "antique rolles" "hidden" in the Muse's "scryne."[72] Readers will similarly recognize the poet's own "endlesse worke" (IV.xii.1.1) in Book IV as a reference to Eumnestes' "endlesse exercise" (II.ix.59.2) in the chamber of memory, which provides important context for Spenser's claim in the "Letter to Raleigh" to "delight[]" his readers with "plausible and pleasing…historicall fiction"—"not such as of an Historiographer" but of a "Poet historical" who, like Alma's three sages of Prudence, "recoursing to the thinges forepaste, and diuining of thinges to come, maketh a pleasing Analysis of all" (*LR*, 715-17). The episode in Memory's chamber reflexively figures Spenser, a self-described "Poet historicall," as a Eumnestes-like memory artificer who has fashioned the *Faerie Queene* itself using the art of memory.

Taken together, the wordplay connecting Eumnestes' chamber to the "Letter to Raleigh," Book IV, and the Proems to Books I and II would seem to suggest that the art of memory is foundational to Spenser's ethical project of fashioning gentle readers. By

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[72] Sullivan and Stewart, "'Worme-eaten, and full of canker holes,'" 218.

recounting how memory came to serve as the common link between ethics and aesthetics in the medieval tradition and thus how it came to serve as a guarantor of poetry's cultural value as an instrument of ethical fashioning in the early modern period, the episode in Eumnestes' chamber serves to remind us of the conventional links in classical, medieval, and early modern thought between memory and ethics. Medieval readers saw the practical methods for constructing locational memory systems described in the *Ad Herennium* as a kind of appendix to its proper place under the study of ethics as one of the parts of prudence in Cicero's *De Inventione*.[73] The integration of the Herennian mnemonic within Aristotelian faculty psychology accounts for Spenser's superimposition of Cicero's three prudential virtues from the *De Inventione* onto Aristotle's three psychological faculties: the three sages of Alma's Castle correspond not just to the three scholastic faculties of imagination, judgment, and memory, but also to Cicero's three prudential virtues of foresight, intelligence, and memory.[74] As Guyon and King Arthur walk through the three chambers in sequence, they witness the physiology of Aristotelian memory formation: the raw sensations that enter through the senses pass first through the

[73] Frances Yates and Mary Carruthers both document a radical shift in the classification of memory during the medieval period: the art of memory classically fell under the study of rhetoric, but in the thirteenth century memory became associated with ethics. Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas reintroduced the *Ad Herennium* to the art of memory by using it in their commentaries on Aristotle's *De Anima* and *De memoria et reminiscentia*. Medieval readers mistakenly attributed the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* to Cicero, which led to a persistent association between the *Ad Herennium* and Cicero's *De Inventione*; together, they became known as the "first and second rhetorics" of "Tullius." This integration took place specifically in reference to Prudence. In "The Poet as Master Builder," Carruthers explains that "Albertus Magnus initiated the full-scale revival of the Greco-Roman architectural mnemonic in comments that brought together Aristotle's *On Memory and Recollection* and the memory section of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. These are in a section of a treatise 'On the Good' devoted to the virtue of prudence" (Carruthers, "The Poet as Master-Builder," 893). See also: Yates, *The Art of Memory,* 57; Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 153-55.

[74] Jerry Leath Mills has argued that "Spenser superimposes upon the psychological allegory a visual emblem of the cardinal virtue of prudence" ("Prudence, History, and the Prince in *The Faerie Queene*, Book II," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 41, no. 2 [1978]: 85). See also Lynette Black, "Prudence in Book II of *The Faerie Queene*," *Spenser Studies* 13 (1999): 65-88.

imagination, where they register visually as images; these images are then assessed by the faculty of judgment before being stored or recorded in memory. But those sensations that register in the memory as images also play a central role in Ciceronian prudence: the ability to reason in the present about the future depends on recollection—the ability to find relevant examples from past experience in the treasury or "scrine" of one's memory. Guyon and Arthur are thus also reminded that the Aristotelian sensory-cognitive model of memory formation provides a requisite foundation for the exercise of virtue through prudence.

The connection between Ciceronian ethics and Aristotelian cognition offers new insight into what Spenser might mean by claiming to "fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline" (*LR*, 714). By focusing on the purely discursive technologies of rhetorical self-fashioning, traditional sociological accounts of self-fashioning in early modern culture overlook the physiological, embodied, material practices thought to give rise to eloquence and right action.[75] Only by examining the relationship between sensation and memory can we begin to theorize the relationship between memory and ethics. And the art of memory in fact provided early modern poets with a materially grounded model for the translation of embodied sensation into ethical action. Just as Eumnestes' "endlesse exercise" "tossing and turning" the books of his memory implies physical training, the fashioning of the soul through memory training is described in dramatically physiological terms as impressing or stamping ethical commonplaces onto the soul. In the *De Anima*, Aristotle defines sensation as the power to "receiv[e] the sensible forms of things without the matter, in the way in which a piece of

[75] Stephen Greenblatt's account of self-fashioning is emblematic of this approach. See Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

wax takes on the impress of a signet-ring without the iron or gold."[76] The form of an object remains in the soul the way that an impression left by a seal remains in wax. By defining sensation as the moment when the soul "receiv[es] the sensible forms of things without the matter," Aristotle seeks to explain how the world of material things gives rise to the world of immaterial ideas: simply put, in Aristotle's account we experience material reality, cognitively, through images. Those images, according to the *De memoria*, are then stored in memory, thus the wax seal (a variation of the mnemonic trope of the wax writing tablets) functions, rhetorically, as a hinge between Aristotle's theory of sensation in the *De anima* and his theory of memory-formation in the *De memoria*. By comparing the sense-images stored in the memory to the "seal," character, or mark of a signet ring, Aristotle's metaphor of the wax seal emphasizes the material, embodied, physiological processes underlying memory formation.

The physiological nature of memory images figures so importantly in classical, medieval, and early modern discussions of the art of memory because the physical stamping, impressing, or marking of the soul functions as the basis of character formation: the cultivation of memory, as Carruthers writes, "was considered to be the prerequisite for character itself."[77] "Character" in Greek (χαρακτήρ) refers specifically to "the impress or stamp on coins, seals, etc." and only by extension to a "mark…impressed on a person or thing, a characteristic or distinctive mark."[78] The word "character" retains this original sense in early modern English: it refers to letters of the alphabet, which in

[76] Aristotle, *De Anima*, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 1 of 2, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 674.
[77] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 224.
[78] *Liddell and Scott*, s.v. "χαρακτήρ."

the age of print implies stamping or impressing letters onto paper.[79] The logical leap from letters impressed or stamped on paper to memory images impressed or stamped on the memory is a small one, as Thomas Wilson's observation that "the places of memory are resembled unto Waxe and Paper" onto which "Images are counted like unto Letters or a Seale," quoted earlier, attests. To fashion an artificial memory was tantamount to fashioning one's ethical "character" both because the habits developed in memory construction created a person's *habitus*—"demeanor," "manner," "bearing," "character," or "constitution"—and also because the formation of character occurs through a process of literally stamping or impressing ethical knowledge onto the memory the way a signet ring or seal impresses a "character" or "mark" onto wax.[80]

The relationship between memory and ethics accounts for the almost universal association of ethics and aesthetics in early modern culture: without a memorably aestheticized treasury ("scryne/scrine") of mnemonic images with which to fashion one's ethos—one's habits and *habitus*—the translation of ethical principles into practical, moral action was thought to be impossible. But Eumnestes' equivocal status as a figure for both Good Memory and No Memory would seem to undermine the ethical grounds for poetry's defense, as Spenser and his contemporaries understood it. It is important to remember that neither Spenser's methods nor his stated goal of fashioning readers in "vertuous and gentle discipline" are entirely his own. There are reasons to suggest that as much as poets like Sidney and Spenser want to believe in the truth of this common line of

[79] OED, s.v. "character."
[80] *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. "habitus."

defense, they cannot help questioning it.[81] The intractability of Spenser's doubt, which is perhaps one of his text's most enduring qualities, is registered nowhere more fully than in Guyon's uncertain triumph over Acrasia.

IV. Protestant Iconoclasm and the Bower of Bliss

Critics have long identified Guyon's destruction of the Bower of Bliss in Book II as a scene of religious iconoclasm.[82] Most recently, Jennifer Summit has read Guyon's destruction of the Bower as a scene of religious biblioclasm: by ridding the text of Acrasia's "fryvolous fables and lies,"[83] Guyon seeks to "correct and purify a source of corruption"—not just moral but also textual corruption.[84] As Ernest Gilman also reminds us, "'iconoclasm' is something that can happen *to* texts and *within* texts written during this period."[85] Summit's and Gilman's turn to biblioclasm points us in the right direction, but I think it is worth asking what kind of book Guyon encounters at the end of Book II. As Summit rightly points out, there is nothing overtly religious about the scene. Guyon is faced with a "false and fabulous"[86] poetic landscape but one constructed out of the remnants of ancient myth—not England's recent religious past. If the destruction of the Bower figures as a scene of iconoclasm (or biblioclasm), this is because it dramatizes the

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[81] Jeff Dolven, for example, has argued that Sidney's and Spenser's "skepticism or even despair" about their own humanist training is typical of their generation. See *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), esp. 3 and 171.
[82] Jennifer Summit cites Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 189; Harry Berger Jr., *The Allegorical Temper*, 218; and Alan Sinfield, *Literature of Protestant England, 1560-1660* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble Books, 1983), 37. To this list, I would add Kenneth Gross, *Spenserian Poetics*, 182.
[83] This phrase is taken from John Bale's *The Laboriouse Journey and Serche of Johan Leylande, for Englandes Antiquitees, Geven of Hym as a New Yeares Gyfte to Kyng Henry the viii* (London: 1546) quoted in Summit, 10.
[84] Summit, "Monuments and Ruins," 25.
[85] Ernest B. Gilman, *Poetry and Iconoclasm in the English Reformation: Down Went Dagon* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1986), 11. My emphases.
[86] This phrase is taken from a marginal note left by John Bale in the margins of book in response to a description of a monk's dream vision, quoted in Summit, 12.

destruction of poetic images. As a kind of *florilegium*, a garden or collection of poetic "flowers" that reads like a commonplace book of familiar mythological scenes from Homer's *Odyssey*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and Virgil's *Aeneid*, the Bower of Bliss is an allegorical figuration of the art of poetry. Book II offers a defense of poetry against the iconoclasts of Protestant England, who by the 1580's had begun to direct their attention toward poetry and theater.[87]

The fact that protestant iconoclasts were able to pivot so easily from images in churches to images in poetry and theater testifies to the fact that iconoclasm is never simply a religious reaction to the threat of idolatry: iconoclasm is, first and foremost, a theory of aesthetic representation that privileges words over images. Histories of the Protestant Reformation now take it as a given that the ideological warfare between Protestantism and Catholicism was waged, by proxy, as a war between words and images—that is, as a war between verbal and visual arts. Understood this way, the Protestant Reformation codifies an aesthetic program organized around the relationship between words and images and whose reverberations have shaped the history of aesthetics since the eighteenth-century. Edmund Burke, G.E. Lessing, Ernst Gombrich, Nelson Goodman, C.S. Peirce, Roland Barthes: all, Mitchell has argued, subscribe to an aesthetics of the image which takes the distinction between the visual and verbal arts as

[87] What Jonas Barish writes about Protestant antitheatricalists is true of attitudes toward poetry more generally (*The Antitheatrical Prejudice*, [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981]). Stephen Gosson, a contributor to the pamphlet warfare of sixteenth century antitheatricalists, connects the standard antitheatrical rhetoric explicitly to poetry—it is in response to Gosson, who dedicated the *School of Abuse* to Philip Sidney, that Sidney writes the *Defence*. Gosson calls poems "the cuppes of Circes, that turne reasonable Creatures into brute Beastes… no marueyle though Plato shut [poets] out of his Schoole, and banished them quite from his common wealth, as effeminate writers, unprofitable members, and btter enemies to vertue" (*The schoole of abuse* [London: 1579], 3).

its starting point.[88] Mitchell traces this framework to the sister-arts tradition in the Renaissance, which as Ernest Gilman has argued became a site of theological conflict during the reformation: "no longer affectionate sisters given at times to gentle competition," Gilman writes, painting and poetry "become, in some versions of reformed thought, mortal enemies on the battle-field of salvation."[89] Mitchell's account of the history of aesthetics, which he explains began as an attempt to outline "a valid *theory* of images," tellingly "became a book about the *fear* of images."[90] It is the "*fear*" of images that has, however subtly, guided the history of aesthetics from Burke to Barthes: in the iconoclastic battle cry of the Protestant reformer—*sola scriptura*—we find the groundwork not only for our understanding of the role of memory images in Spenser's allegorical project but for much of modern aesthetics.

To understand Spenser's engagement with Reformation aesthetics, we have to begin with Guyon's encounter with Eumnestes. By taking up and reading "*Antiquitee* of *Faery* lond" in Eumnestes' library, Guyon fails to recognize the library as a figure for Eumnestes' memory. And in mistaking Eumnestes' memory image for the thing imaged—the image of a book for an actual book—Guyon stumbles into a paradox associated in the pre-modern world with *trompe l'oeil* painting: "when the birds peck at the grapes in the legendary paintings of Zeuxis," Mitchell argues, "they are not seeing images: they are a seeing…real grapes—the things themselves, not the images."[91] In order to draw a distinction between the image and thing imaged, one has to see the image

[88] This is one of the major premises of *Iconology*, which works backward from Nelson Goodman, Ludwig Wittgenstein, C.S. Peirce, and Roland Barthes to Lessing and Burke in the eighteenth century.
[89] Mitchell, *Iconology*, 48-49; Gilman, *Poetry and Iconoclasm*, 32.
[90] Mitchell, *Iconology*, 3.
[91] Mitchell, *Iconology*, 17.

as such, which involves "a paradoxical trick of consciousness, an ability to see [something] as both 'there' and 'not there' at the same time." Understood this way, the image names a habit of perception rather than a material object: Mitchell's account emphasizes visualization rather than vision—what Sidney calls the inner "sight of the soul."[92] In premodern terms, this perceptual image is stored in the memory as a memory image. Because Guyon mistakes the images of books for real books, he fails to understand the relationship between an allegorical image like Eumnestes and the idea that he allegorically personifies.

Guyon's inability to distinguish between images of books and actual books dramatizes the same representational error that leads the idolater to mistake representations of Christ for Christ's real presence: like a bird pecking at Zeuxis' painted grapes, the idolater sees Christ himself where he should see merely an image of Christ; Guyon similarly sees actual books where he should see merely memory images. Instead of making past knowledge available in the present, Eumnestes' books are made to stand-in for absent knowledge. Guyon's actions thus imply a theory of representation that depends on the spatial logic of presence and absence—the very representational logic at work in idolatry. Distinguishing iconoclasm from Protestantism is crucial if we are to understand what is at stake in Spenser's critique of iconoclasm: Spenser is a Protestant poet whose critique of iconoclasm should be understood as the defense of a Protestant poetics that insists on the power of images to move the soul toward virtue. In opposing iconoclasm, Spenser argues not against the project of Protestant reform in England but against ham-fisted policies that reinforce the very habits of thought they seek to obliviate.

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[92] Sidney, *Defense*, 16.

That the iconoclast is guilty of the same literal-mindedness as the idolater is one of the fundamental insights constituting Spenser's defense of poesy in canto twelve of Book II.[93] Spenser's critique of iconoclasm implies, at the same time, a defense of images that relies on a theory of aesthetic representation drawn from the art of memory. Defenders of images, Protestant and Catholic alike, had long argued that words and images are functionally equivalent because as representational forms, they make present something that is otherwise temporally inaccessible.[94] Representations of Christ do not (as the idolater believes) make the absent deity present; rather, they allow us to experience Christ's past sufferings in the present through an act of commemorative recollection. Spenser appropriates this conventional defense of imagery from religious discourse in his

[93] The exchange between Carol Kaske and H.L. Weatherby points to the difficulty in using religious imagery in the *Faerie Queene* as an index for Spenser's own, personal religious commitments. The argument I present here tries to shift the center of the debate from religion to aesthetics. We cannot equate iconoclasm with Protestantism for two reasons. In the first place, the treatment of images was a topic of heated debate within the Protestant community, as Luther's disagreements with Zwingli attest. And in the second, iconoclasm has a deep and complicated history within the Catholic tradition—Erasmus' rhetoric against the abuse of images reminds us that this debate was alive and well in the Catholic church during the Reformation. By presenting us with a protestant reader, one who prefers to have "good discipline deliuered plainly in way of precepts, or sermoned at large" rather than "thus clowdily enwrapped in Allegorical deuises," as Spenser puts it in the "Letter to Raleigh," and who actively forces "misconstructions" onto the text because of a preexisting aesthetic assumption about the relationship between pleasure and virtue, Spenser is presenting us with a defense of poetry against an aesthetic that we now associate with the Protestant Reformation but which cannot be equated with it (714). The iconoclasm of the Bower of Bliss episode, which unlike Kirkapine's destruction of church images in Book VI is not overtly religious, should be understood as a statement of aesthetic rather than religious commitments on Spenser's part. See H.L. Weatherby, "Holy Things," *English Literary Renaissance* 29 (1999): 422-42; and Carol Kaske, "The Audiences of *The Faerie Queene*: Iconoclasm and Related Issues in Books I, V, and VI," *Literature and History* 3 (1994): 15-35.

[94] Eamon Duffy, in his account of sixteenth-century iconoclasm, cites, for example, the Royal Injunctions of October 1538, which affirm that ritual ceremonies "put us in *remembrance* of higher perfection," an argument which echoes the standard doctrinal position later reaffirmed by Pope Pius IV in December 1563, that as Margaret Aston summarizes, allowed images to function "as *reminders* of the benefits bestowed by Christ." "Instruction, *recall*, [and] devotion" formed a "familiar threefold justification" that defenders of images, especially during the reign of Henry VIII, had drawn on in their debates with iconoclasts. See Margaret Aston, *England's Iconoclasts: Volume One, Laws Against Images* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1988), esp. 43-46 and 149-150; and Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 411. For the mnemonic function of images in traditional Catholic doctrine, especially with reference to iconoclasm, see Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 274-77.

defense of poetic images—a defense which answers the charge of idolatry by appealing to the role of memory in the representational arts.

But instead of presenting a positive case for the value of memory within the visual aesthetics of allegorical poetry, canto twelve offers a dystopian picture of what allegorical poetry looks like through the eyes of an iconoclast. Stanza 42 describes the Bower as a

> place pickt out by choyce of best alyue,
> That natures worke by art can imitate. (II.xii.42.3-4)

And yet "the art, which all that wrought, appeared in no place" (II.xii.58.9). Our inability to distinguish art from nature in the Bower evokes the kind of confusion engendered by *trompe l'oeil* painting: the apocryphal battle between Zeuxis and Parrhasius reminds us that the more successfully art imitates nature, the more difficult it is to recognize the image as such. Spenser emblematizes this dilemma in the figure of the Ivory Gate of False Dreams, a "worke of admirable witt," ekphrastically "ywritt" with the "famous history" of Jason and Medea (II.xii.44.2-4). But whether "the waues were into yuory, / Or yuory into the waues were sent" (II.xii.45.3-4) one cannot tell—the "painted forgery" (II.Proem.1.4) of the Bower's "art" which "appeared in no place" confuses the distinction between material artifact, the Ivory Gate, and the poetic images "ywritt" on it. This description of the Gate of False Dreams anticipates the more sinister confusion engendered by its porter, "Genius," who like the gate itself presents a "semblaunce pleasing, *more then naturall*" (II.xii.46.5, my emphasis).

The Genius of Acrasia's Bower is patterned after Genius in the *Tablet of Cebes*, a popular and widely read text that was used to teach ancient Greek using a simple type of

artificial memory scheme.[95] The Genius of the *Tablet of Cebes* is an "old man," who stands at the threshold of the Gate of Life, holding a "scroll in one hand" as he "prescribes" what new souls "must do upon entering into Life; he shows them what kind of path they must take if they are to be saved in Life." And opposite Genius sits a woman "who is counterfeit in character and yet persuasive in her appearance, with a cup in her hand"—she is called "Deceit," "the one who leads all mankind astray."[96] As Guyon and the Palmer walk through the outermost gate to the Garden of Pleasure, the Ivory Gate of False Dreams, they find on the "Porch" of the gate

a comely personage of stature tall,
And semblaunce pleasing, more than naturall,
That traueilers to him seemd to entize" (II.xii.46.4-6)
…
They in that place him *Genius* did call:
Not that celestiall powre, to whom the care
Of life, and generation of all
That liues, perteines in charge particulare,
Who wondrous things concerning our welfare,
And straunge phantomes doth lett vs ofte forsee,
And ofte of secret ill bids vs beware (II.xii.47.1-7)
…
…this same was to that quite contrary,
The foe of life, that good enuyes to all,
That secretly doth vs procure to fall,
Through guileful semblants, which he makes vs see.
He of this Gardin had the gouernall,
And Pleasures porter was deuizd to bee… (II.xii.47.2-8)

The true Genius that Spenser describes here is Genius from the *Tablet of Cebes*: a "celestial powre to whom the care of life…perteines in charge particulare," who reveals

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[95] William Engel has argued in "Spenser's Places of Memory: Revisiting the Double Threshold in *Cebes Tabula*" that Spenser would have encountered the *Tablet of Cebes* while studying under Richard Mulcaster at the Merchant Taylor's school. Engel cites Radcliffe and Todd, who have already commented on the *Tablet of Cebes* as a source for Spenser. See David Hill Radcliffe, *Edmund Spenser: a Reception History* (Columbia SC: Camden House, 1996), 63; and H.J. Todd, *The Works of Edmund Spenser* vol. IV of V (London: 1805), 207 esp. footnote to stanza 47.

[96] *The Tabula of Cebes*, ed. and trans. John Fitzgerald and L. Michael White (Chico: Scholars Press, 1983), 67.

"wondrous things concerning our welfare" by urging new souls to remember what they "must do upon entering into Life." But the Genius Guyon encounters is "to that" Genius "quite contrary": like Deceit, whom the *Tablet of Cebes* describes as "persuasive" in "appearance" but as "one who leads all mankind astray," the false Genius of Acrasia's Wandering Isle appears to be a "comely personage" but "secretly doth vs procure to fall."

How are "traueilers" to know the difference between true and false Geniuses? The Deceitful Genius who presides over the threshold to the Garden of Pleasure holds not a scroll but "a mighty Mazer bowle of wine…Wherewith all new-come guests he gratyfide" (II.xii.49.3-5): Genius holds Deceit's "cup" in his hand, a mnemonic image that identifies the false Genius as false by recalling to mind the description of Deceit in the *Tablet of Cebes*. By overthrowing Genius' bowl of wine, Guyon destroys the one mnemonic marker that would associate the false Genius of Acrasia's Bower with Deceit. In thus seeking to disarm Acrasia's Deceitful Genius of his "guileful semblants," Guyon ironically conceals from future travelers that which would disabuse them of the Porter's deceptions. It is worth noting that the phrase "guileful semblants," which Spenser uses to describe the false Genius of Acrasia's Isle, evokes George Puttenham's definition of "allegory" as a "Figure of False Semblant or Dissimulation": a "courtly figure" by which "we speak one thing and think another," which "is a kind of dissimulation, because the words bear contrary countenance to the intent."[97] Without those markers associating him with Deceit, Genius becomes more fully a figure of "false semblants/semblaunce," one whose "words bear contrary countenance to the intent": he is "comely," "pleasing," and "entiz[ing]"—an allegorical embodiment of poetry "delightfull and pleasing to commune

[97] George Puttenham's, *The Art of English Poesy*, Ed. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 2007), 270-1.

sence" but now devoid of "profitable" and "gratious" "doctrine" (*LR*, 716). Thus confronted with a poetic landscape that, Guyon thinks, delights readers with false and deceitful spectacles of erotic fascination rather than offering "good discipline, deliuered plainly in way of precepts, or sermoned at large" drives him to an iconoclastic fury (*LR*, 716):

> But all those pleasaunt bowres and Pallace braue,
> *Guyon* broke downe, with rigour pittilesse;
> Ne ought their goodly workmanship might saue
> Them from the tempest of his wrathfulnesse,
> But that their blisse he turn'd to balefulnesse:
> Their groues he feld, their gardins did deface,
> Their arbers spoyle, their Cabinets suppresse,
> Their banket houses burne, their buildings race,
> And of the fayrest late, now made the fowlest place. (II.xii.83)

What we are left with at the end of canto twelve is a ruined text. And this is precisely what Spenser fears will happen to his "darke conceit" (*LR*, 714). The final canto of Book II offers a picture of what allegorical poetry looks like to readers who, like Guyon, forget the mnemonic purpose of allegory—namely, a false and fabulous landscape that can offer nothing but sensuous pleasure, since a hermeneutic that denies allegorical poetry its mnemonic function denies readers the "profite of the ensample" (*LR*, 715). Such an aesthetic recognizes poetry's power to delight but not to teach.

What Guyon does not recognize is that it is his own method of reading that turns allegory into a figure of "False Semblant or Dissimulation." The emblematic tokens which associate allegorical figures like Grylle, Eumnestes, or Genius with the concepts they personify, now destroyed, leave us with a text full of enigmatic ciphers. Guyon has circuitously turned allegory into a figure of concealment where no concealment previously existed. Rather, it is retroactively rewritten into the text: only by concealing

ambiguity can Guyon compel other figures in the text to signify univocally—a compulsion that consistently takes the form of iconoclastically destroying or erasing imagery which associates other characters with the ideas they personify. Grylle, both beast and man, becomes a "m[a]n indeed" when Guyon and the Palmer restore him to human form; Eumnestes, both remembrance and forgetfulness, becomes Oblivion when his books are made to stand-in for the past rather than recall it; Acrasia's Deceitful Genius, divested of his cup of wine, becomes a "celestiall powre" who watches over our general "welfare." The problem of concealment is thus revealed to be a consequence of Guyon's iconoclastic hermeneutic—not of the text itself. And it is this hermeneutic which gives poetry over to Acrasia—to the vitiating indulgence of sensual pleasure—since it denies poetry's power to edify the soul through delightful fictions. Understood this way, Guyon personifies the threat iconoclasm poses to a didactic poetics premised on recollection.

Chapter Three

The Theatrical Image: Ben Jonson's Memory Theater

I. Introduction

This chapter seek to challenge several scholarly commonplaces about Ben Jonson. First, that he was sincere about the ethical power of satire in particular and theater more generally to reform audiences. Second, that he was a staunch and consistent defender of neoclassical principles, such as the Aristotelian unities. Third, that he asserted an opposition between page and stage, poetry and performance to establish poetry's status as art by contrasting it to the spectacles of popular entertainment, thereby articulating in nascent form an opposition that continues to inform the relationship between drama and performance studies today. And finally, that Jonson grounds his defense of theater in the authority of the poet, an authority he helped establish through the carefully supervised printing of his plays and masques. Such assessments of Jonson's character and place in literary history are true, but only partially true. Sensitive to satirical attack but aggressively critical of his contemporaries, paradoxically anti-histrionic but fiercely defensive of theater, fluent in the idiom of classical humanism but skeptical of its received wisdoms, Jonson's often contradictory creative impulses defy generalization. In an effort to make sense of Jonson, this chapter takes the Poets' War or War of the Theaters as an entry-point into the defining paradoxes of his career: the exchange between *Henry V*, performed in the spring of 1599, and *Every Man Out*, performed later that fall, represents one of the earliest exchanges of "paper bullets" in the controversies of

what Dekker would later call the *poetomachia*.[1] It was in the War of the Theaters that Jonson articulates questions and anxieties facing the theater, and in conversation with fellow playwrights, Shakespeare, Dekker, and Marston that he transformed literary defense into dramatic criticism.

The first studies of the *poetomachia* tended to mischaracterize as a popularity contest what was in fact a serious debate among poets over the competing principles, spaces, and voices of legislative authority in the dramatic arts. True though it may be that the War of the Theaters took the form of individual satire, the stakes of the *poetomachia*, as recent scholarship by James Bednarz has demonstrated, were more serious.[2] Indeed, Bednarz has compellingly argued that "despite the personal tone of Jonson's quarrel with Shakespeare, Marston, and Dekker, the Poets' War was, on its most abstract level, a theoretical debate on the social function of drama and the standard of poetic authority that informed comical satire."[3] Bednarz, however, exemplifies the critical apotheosis of personality into the author function *per se*, which remains an implicit narrative structure for much of the best scholarship on Jonson: his account of Jonson's critical position focuses on authorial figures in the comical satires—Asper, Criticus, and Horace; but Jonson's comical satires tend to refract dramatic authority across several characters. In *Every Man Out*, for example, critical discourse about the principles of dramatic representation finds expression in not one but three figures—Asper, Cordatus, and Mitis. The play's critical scene is, as Cordatus remarks of the play itself, "full and relieu'd with

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[1] James P. Bednarz, *Shakespeare and the Poet's War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 2.
[2] For a review of scholarship on the *poetomachia*, see Bednarz 3-10. See also Roslyn Knutson, *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare's Time* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Knutson challenges the very notion of a Poets' War, and while she rightly disputes the myth of personal animosity common in much scholarship on the Poets' War, the fact that Jonson and Shakespeare, in particular, frequently allude to and critique each other's work seems indisputable.
[3] Bednarz, *Poet's War*, 7.

variety of speakers."[4] Following recent accounts of Elizabethan theater's corporate organization, which have helped to decenter the author as both a heuristic framing device and an object of critical obsession, I attend to Jonson's construction not of the poet or author but of criticism: there is a structural homology between *Every Man Out*'s critics, whose voices, combined, resist the location of critical authority in any one figure, and the *poetomachia* itself, which brought together many competing authorial voices together into a single discourse about the principles of drama. Instead of reading Cordatus, Mitis, Asper, and other choral figures in Jonson's plays as embodiments of the playwright's classical dogmatism, I read them as formal experiments in characterization that defined the structure of literary criticism. The choruses of the early modern stage resemble the choruses of Greek tragedy, which traditionally acted as ethical interpreters of the performance, didactically enforcing appropriate ethical and affective responses to the action on-stage.[5] But the choruses of early modern theater, while aware of and participating in this longer history of choral instruction, instead functioned primarily to create a space for critical dialogue between and among plays. Jonson's choruses call into existence a space where fictional characters engage in the genre of defense writing, which, I argue, constitutes a proto-aesthetic discourse eventually codified as aesthetics proper during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Each section that follows retraces a series of connections between the art of memory, the commonplace book, and Jonson's theatrical practice. Together these three

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[4] Ben Jonson, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. David Bevington, Marting Butler, and Ian Donaldson, vol. 1, 1597-1601 (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2012), II.ii.321-4. All references to Jonson's works are to this edition.

[5] Helen Ostovich, for example, argues that Jonson's Grex functions as a "model or guide" that "forces the audience to participate more fully in making social and aesthetic judgments." See Ostovich, "'To Behold the Scene Full': Seeing and Judging in Every Man Out of His Humour," in *Re-Presenting Ben Jonson: Text, History, Performance*, ed. Martin Butler (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 81.

historical forces acted as a kind of conceptual alembic, through which distinctly early modern concepts of style, representation, and literary criticism pass to become recognizably modern. Section one focuses on the transformation of the characters of style into the style of characters—a transformation of style which involves an extended critique and redefinition of judgement as an aesthetic rather than ethical practice. Section two focuses on the space-time of theatrical experience to argue that Jonson's transformation of scene and plot from stage to page deploys a representational logic drawn from the art of memory, specifically its principles for constructing *loci*. And finally, the last section focuses on how the transformation of style and representation from their early modern into their modern forms hinged on Jonson's refashioning of literary defense into literary criticism through his repurposing of the chorus in early modern drama.

Because Jonson's choral figures anticipate aesthetic discourse in ways Jonson himself could not have foreseen, the transformation of defense writing into literary criticism can only be understood as the byproduct of a more immediate concern: disagreement among poets over the nature and mechanisms of theatrical illusion. In previous chapters I discuss *trompe l'oeil* as a recurring trope in early modern poetry that served as a figure for the distinction between image and thing imaged—as a heuristic for understanding the strange perceptual phenomenon of seeing-as. Here, I argue, the theater becomes an object and engine of a similar kind of illusion. The paradox of theatrical illusionism comes into focus most clearly when, for example, an audience, instead of

seeing an actor playing Cordatus, sees, simply, Cordatus.[6] To see an actor as Cordatus is to perceive fiction as reality, and to forget, momentarily, the difference. In this sense, stepping into theater is like stepping into a *trompe l'oeil* painting: characters, like images, are both "there" and "not there"—Cordatus, the character, is both "there" on-stage, and yet "not there," since it is not Cordatus but an actor who stands before us.[7]

Jonson writes *Every Man Out* to explore the strange ontological status of character, which is itself a specifically theatrical iteration of poetry's more general concern with the nature and status of images in the representational arts. The memory theater, I argue, provides Jonson with a heuristic framework for conceptualizing the dilemma of theatrical illusion: like the art of memory, theater demands skilled acts of vivid visualization—what rhetoric handbooks called *enargeia*.[8] To be memorable, countless rhetorical handbooks tell us, images must be vivid—they must have the quality of *enargeia*—a requirement often achieved by giving ideas personated form. The theater originally supplied ancient memory technicians with an architectural metaphor that translated the choreography of bodies on stage into a structural model for the organization of ideas in memory. But where theater classically functioned as a model for memory, memory functions as a model for the theater in Jonson's work. By flipping the direction of the metaphor, Jonson

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[6] For a discussion of the "double vision" of theater that focuses on the phenomenology of the theatrical image, see Bert O. States, *Great Reckonings in Little Rooms* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 31.

[7] I gloss Bert States' account of the theater's double vision, here, with W. J. T. Mitchell's account of the image's ontological instability. See Mitchell, *Iconology*, 17.

[8] For a thorough discussion of *enargeia* in ancient rhetoric, see Ruth Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination, and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009). The Greek rhetorical term *enargeia* (ἐναργής) has no equivalent in Latin, but is typically associated with a range of terms and expressions that involve visualization, including *descriptio*, *evidentia*, *demonstratio*, *repraesentatio*, brining things *sub aspectum subiectio*, etc. For rhetorical accounts of visualization in Latin, see: Ps. Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, trans. Henry Caplan, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964), IV.lv.68; Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator* ed. James M. May and Jakob Wisse (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 287; and Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H.E. Butler Loeb Classical Library 126 (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), VIII.iii.61-9.

is able to redefine elements of the memory arts as devices of theatrical illusion: memory images become characters, and memory places, which serve to organize the spatial and temporal order of characters' actions, become scene and plot.

But Jonson's reception of ancient locational mnemonics was complicated by the intervening history of book-based mnemonic technologies. The locational mnemonic techniques developed by ancient mnemotechnicians originally responded to the demands placed on rhetoricians during oral performance, but the rise of literate culture and invention of the codex saw new applications of old practices. Memorization and recollection in the newly literate world of medieval religious culture required that readers visualize the text, and by leaving actual images of animals, flowers, and human figures, *bas-de-page* narrative scenes, and other decorative elements in the blank spaces of books, medieval readers and illuminators sought to solve the representational dilemma of seeing-as: the visual aesthetics of medieval books habituated readers to the practice of visualizing text as image. From this perspective, the decorative elements of medieval books form part of a complex and richly theorized phenomenology of reading—one in which text and image, as mnemonic aids that facilitate the imprinting of knowledge onto the memory, cannot be functionally distinguished. The humanist commonplace book inherits this model of reading, but just as the book came to support memory practices originally designed for an oral context, so the commonplace book came to serve as a material support for cognitive processes typically performed by the imagination: instead of imagining a book onto which one could arrange excerpted text for memorization, the memory artist could record *sententiae* under organized headings in a real book. John Willis's *Mnemonica* (1618), for example, recommends using one's commonplace book as

a mnemonic prompt or cue: he instructs readers to carry a commonplace book on one's person to learn *sententiae* by rote during moments of leisure.[9] Understood not just as a reference tool but also as a mnemonic aid, the commonplace book serves to facilitate the visualization of *sententiae* for memorization.

Jonson exploits the existing formal continuities between page and stage embedded in the history of the memory arts to transform the book-based mnemonic technology of the commonplace into a theater-based mnemonic technology of characterization: Jonson's characters collect and organize memorable *sententiae* under a single "head." The fact that "character" originally denoted letters of the alphabet has led to a narrow focus, in criticism on the history of character, on the relationship between inscription and subjectivity, presence and absence, surface and depth—character has been treated by Alex Woloch and Deidre Lynch, for example, as part of the semiotics of narrative structure.[10] But character has to do with writing in a more obvious, historical sense: Aaron Kunin helpfully defines "character" as "a formal device that collects every example of a kind of person" under a single heading—what we would, in early modern parlance, call a *locus communis*.[11] "Characters," understood this way, act as "heads" for "collect[ions]" of commonplaces; indeed, Jonson's characters could be described as walking, talking collections of aphoristic *sententiae*. And not just *sententiae* from classical plays and poetry, but also *sententiae* or textual fragments from marginal

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[9] For a discussion of John Willis, see Chapter 2. I am using "commonplace" to refer to two phenomena: first, to the commonplace heading, which can appear at the top of each page in a commonplace book, in the margins of any book, or in an *index locorum communium* (typically in the front or back), and similar paratextual materials; second, I use it to refer to specific *sententiae* or aphorisms excerpted and recorded either in a commonplace book or in the book of one's memory, to be cited (or recited) again after the fact.
[10] Alex Woloch, *The One vs. The Many: Minor Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Deidre Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
[11] Aaron Kunin, "Characters Lounge," MLQ 70, no.3 (2009): 291.

commentaries: Asper and Cordatus, for example, are the names of classical commentators of Terence; Jonson's choral figures in *Every Man Out* are, as Matthew Steggle has argued, the theatrical equivalents of marginal commentary.[12] It comes as no surprise that the first instance in English of "character" in the modern sense—"mental or moral constitution" or individual "personality"— occurs in Jonson's *Every Man Out*.[13]

Jonson's elaboration of the humanist concept of character from page to stage forms part of his larger intervention in the genre of defense writing in English poetics, which conventionally grounded its justification of the representational arts in ethics. To argue, as Sidney does, that poetry can make "many Cyruses" is to figure poetry's ethical imperative as a process of printing or minting virtuous readers: it subtly calls upon the familiar book of memory trope, which figures the memorization of virtuous *sententiae* as a process of impressing or stamping knowledge of virtue on the soul.[14] Sidney's many Cyruses extend the mimetic force of poetry beyond the relationship between brazen and golden worlds to the relationship between real and imagined persons: the ethical arguments which undergird the humanist promise of fashioning virtuous readers through the mnemonic technology of the commonplace figures the relationship between not only poetry and nature but also between text and reader as one of mimesis.[15] It is the humanist conception of mnemonic self-fashioning, in other words, that turned "characters"—letters

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[12] Matthew Steggle, *Wars of the Theaters: The Poetics of Personation in the Age of Jonson* (Victoria, BC: English Literary Studies, 1998), 24.
[13] OED, s.v. "character" II.9a. *Every Man Out* includes a list of "characters" in both the quarto and folio editions' prefatory paratexts.
[14] Philip Sidney, "The Defence of Poesy" in *Sidney's 'The Defence of Poesy' and Selected Literary Criticism*, ed. Gavin Alexander (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 9.
[15] Sidney's own skepticism toward this line of defense is important. In the *Old Arcadia*, for example, it is not at all clear that humanist training in the poetic arts guarantees virtuous behavior. But his argument nevertheless exemplifies a standard defensive strategy developed by humanists who sought to justify the inclusion of poetry within their pedagogical regime on ethical grounds.

of the alphabet, stamped or impressed onto the soul in the form of commonplaced *sententiae*—into "character." Jonson seizes on this slippage to transform what was originally an ethical question of right action into a formal question of aesthetic representation: beginning with Jonson, "character" is something fashioned within poetry rather than through poetry.

II. From Memory Image to Character

"Language most shewes a man," Jonson writes in the *Discoveries*: "speake that I may see thee. It springs out of the most retired, and inmost parts of us, and it is the Image of the Parent of it, the mind. No glasse renders a mans forme, or likeness, so true as his speech" (1439-41).[16] This passage, copied from Erasmus' *Apophthegmata*, introduces a passage from Vives on the characters of style. It develops a familiar, classical metaphor that likens language to the human body, but the somatic metaphor serves specifically to elaborate another recurring trope in English poetics that has received less critical attention: the notion that artful language turns words into images, that poetry is an art of image-making. Jonson's assertion that language gives rise to an "image" of the speaker assumes a tacit familiarity with theories of visualization in ancient rhetoric. And it is through his engagement with rhetorical theories of visualization that Jonson is able to concentrate the double-vision of theatrical illusion in character: just as ordinary speech figures forth an image of the speaker, so by the same logic does the player's performative speech figure forth an image of the character he plays.

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[16] Jonson, *Discoveries*, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson* ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson vol. 7 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 567.

Previous approaches to character in Jonson's plays have recognized Jonson's debt to the Theophrastian tradition of the character sketch, which rose to new prominence in the early seventeenth century. Richard A. McCabe makes the important observation that Jonson's *Every Man Out*, which predates Joseph Hall's *Characters of Vertues and Vices* (1608) and Thomas Overbury's *New and Choice Characters* (1614), is the earliest vernacular example of the Theophrastian character to appear in England after Isaac Casaubon's landmark 1592 Latin translation.[17] Jonson models his "characters" in *Every Man Out* after those of Theophrastus, but his reception of the *Ethical Characters* would have been informed by rhetorical discussions of *enargeia*. McCabe, Benjamin Boyce, and Peter Womack draw the connection between Jonson and Theophrastus, but fail to consider the Erasmian context of Theophrastus' reception: the *Ethical Characters* is mentioned as early as 1512 in Erasmus's *De Copia*, where it informs the discussion of *enargeia*, that quality which renders a description "visible" or "manifest to the mind's eye."[18] Erasmus' *De Copia*, one of the most important sources on rhetoric in Renaissance humanism and the clearest account of the method of commonplacing, defines character, or "the description of persons," as a form of *enargeia*, which "we employ," Erasmus explains, "whenever, for the sake of amplifying or decorating our passage…we fill in the colors and set [our subject] up like a picture to look at, so that we seem to have painted

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[17] Richard McCabe, "Ben Jonson, Theophrastus, and the Comedy of Humours," *Hermatheia* 146 (1989): 26. Several incomplete Greek editions of Theophrastus' *Ethical Characters* were printed in Nuremburg, Basel, and Paris between 1527 and 1557. According to Benjamin Boyce, Theophrastus' *Characters* only surfaces in English literary culture after Casaubon's Latin edition enters circulation in 1592: Joseph Hall publishes Characters of Vertues and Vices in 1608 and Thomas Overbury publishes New and choice characters in 1614 (Benjamin Boyce, *The Theophrastian Character in England to 1642* [Boston: Harvard University Press, 1947], 54).

[18] Peter Womack, *Ben Jonson* (New York: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1986), 53. Erasmus, *De Copia* in *Collected Works of Erasmus* Vol. 24, ed. Craig R. Thompson (Buffalo: Toronto University Press, 1978), 577. See also Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, s.g. "ἐναργής." Although Erasmus cites Theophrastus by name in the *De Copia*, I have been unable to trace how Erasmus would have accessed the *Characters*.

the scene rather than described it, and the reader seems to have seen rather than read."[19] *Enargeia* turns vison—reading words on a page—into visualization; it turns poetry into a "scene," "paint[ing]," or "picture to look at." Erasmus points to the stage as a model for the art of *descriptio personae* or characterization: the best examples come from ancient comedy, and, Erasmus adds, "we have extant Characters, supposedly by Theophrastus, which provide material for the sort of characterization we find in comedy."[20] Character, filtered through Erasmus, becomes an instrument of visualization, a representational device which creates the same type of illusion or double vision in theater that it does in reading—namely, the experience of word as image.

Erasmus reworks what his classical sources—above all, Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*—say about the topic of *enargeia* in ways that highlight existing, albeit implicit, connections between memory, imagination, and language. In both the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, *enargeia*—"a speech which brings the subject matter…before the eyes" "in such a way that it seems to be actually seen"—names the paradoxical trick of consciousness whereby the verbal registers as visual.[21]

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[19] Erasmus, *De Copia*, 577.

[20] Erasmus, *De Copia*, 583. Erasmus identifies two rhetorical terms under the "description of persons" whose interchangeability implicitly link the art of character-writing to theatrical performance: προσωποποιία (*prosopopoeia*)—"dramatization," which he defines as "the putting of speeches into one's own or another's mouth"; and προσωπογραφία (*prosopgraphia*), a post-classical compound of πρόσωπον, "face, person," and γραφή, "representation by means of lines," or writing. By electing to ignore the distinction between these terms, Erasmus elides, also, the distinction between performance and writing, rendering theater and commonplace book commensurate technologies of representation (*De Copia*, 582-87).

[21] Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, VIII.iii.61-69. This is the definition of *enargeia* given in an anonymous Greek rhetorical treatise of the Roman empire, which as Webb points out, defines *enargeia* using the exact verbal formula used by other Greek rhetoricians in their definitions of ekphrasis. Ekphrasis and *enargeia* are thus often treated interchangeably by Greek sources. Because ancient authors treat words—read or spoken—as sound, the classical assumption that vivid description should ekphrastically "bring about sight through sound" implies a sensory-cognitive paradigm different from our own (*Ekphrasis*, 58). Bruce Smith has demonstrated that the public playhouses of early modern England were thought of "as instruments for the production and reception of sound." Early modern audiences went to "hear" plays, not see them (Bruce Smith, The Acoustic World of Early Modern England [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999], 207). The aural residue of early modern theater persists in our use of the word "audience," but the multi-modal

Enargeia appears in discussions not just of descriptive speech but also of memory images: *enargeia* refers to vivid, detailed visualization; for speech to have the quality of *enargeia*, it must activate those underlying imaginative processes associated with the construction and manipulation of memory images. As Ruth Webb has argued, the range of rhetorical terms in ancient Greek and Latin used to describe the visual aesthetics of persuasive speech (*enargeia*, *ekphrasis*, *descriptio personae*, etc.) assume a basic familiarity with classical theories of cognition—of which memory was the foundation.[22] To this collection of terms, Erasmus adds allegorical personification and the character sketch, which are thus made to participate in the already familiar cognitive machinery of mnemonic visualization. Examples of *descriptio personae* in the *De Copia* include "Famine, Envy, and Sleep…presented as if they were persons": "to this type belongs the personification of Virtue and Pleasure"—in other words, allegory. But Erasmus also includes character types or stock-characters: "characterization is the name given to the depiction of a lover, rake, miser, glutton, drunkard, sluggard" and so on.[23]

Characters and allegorical figures remain distinct forms of typification or generalization, but by collecting both forms of typification under the single topic of *descriptio personae*, Erasmus begins to articulate a theory of classification that encompasses a wide range of literary forms. Characters, Erasmus explains, "have more relation to reality" than allegory: the principal distinction between allegorical personification and dramatic characterization is that the stock-character admits of

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sensory model of pre-modern cognition—the transformation of all sensory experience into images—suggests that even as an "instrument for the production and reception of sound," the theater was principally an instrument of visualization. "Theater," does, after all, derive from the Greek θεασθαι, "to behold."

[22] Webb, *Ekphrasis*, 25.

[23] Erasmus, *De Copia*, 583.

"individual characteristics even within these general types," "otherwise, representatives of the various types would all be indistinguishable from each other."[24] If allegory teaches us how to find unity in plurality—while there may be many envious men, there can be only one Envy—characterization, by contrast, teaches us how to find plurality in unity: to recognize Macilente as an individuated instance of Envy reminds us of the plurality subtending the abstract idea or form. Yet while Erasmus distinguishes allegory from character, he presents them as mutually constitutive forms of typification, instructing readers to "characterize" allegorical figures, to give them "real," "vivid," or individual characteristics emblematic of their type: "Philosophy with firm and authoritative face, the Muses wholesome and winning, the Graces holding hands with robes flowing free, Justice with straight and unflinching gaze, and so on—must be derived from the nature of the thing alluded to."[25] Vivid details of dress, expression, action, etc. bring the persona "before the eyes," turning words into images which can be stored in the places of one's artificial memory; as a form of *enargeia*, Erasmus establishes characterization as a method for giving personae vivid and thus memorable characteristics.[26] Underlying

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[24] Erasmus, *De Copia*, 584.
[25] Erasmus, *De Copia*, 585.
[26] Erasmus, *De Copia*, 582-87. That character and allegory are mutually constitutive rather than mutually opposed typifying logics helps clarify a center of tension in recent work on the history of character between realism and allegory, or "realistic" (*De Copia*, 582) and "non-real characterizations," as Erasmus calls them (*De Copia*, 585). Standard accounts of realism—which see allegory and realism as opposite and even mutually exclusive representational modes—insist that allegorical figure is to allegory what character is to realism. But as Aaron Kunin has argued, character shares certain formal affinities with allegory that challenge the tidiness of this scheme. The idea that allegory falls away with the rise of character in the history of realist aesthetics, Kunin argues, is simply incorrect. Ian Watt, for example, once argued for a correlation between the fall of allegory and the rise of realism by focusing on character: Watt cites as evidence for the historical shift from allegory to realism the "shift from significant names" (like Justice) "to ordinary names" (like Jane) in the history of the novel (Kunin, "Characters Lounge," 307). And yet, Kunin argues, "significant names" persist in nineteenth- and twentieth-century novels, which suggests that allegory not only survives but is in fact a key ingredient in realist aesthetics. Allegory and realism cannot be so clearly separated because character is still an ideal abstraction—"if anything," Kunin writes, "characters are designed to collect both historical and fictional examples, just like generic types" ("Characters Lounge," 308). In other words, both allegory and character serve as representational technologies for mediating between specific persons and general types. Alex Woloch's work on character

Erasmus' suggestion that readers collect examples of characterization from the stage—"the sort of characterization we find in comedy"—is the suggestion that plays be treated as poetry, as authoritative representations of virtue and vice to be copied into a commonplace book under not only "Famine," "Envy," "Sleep," and "Philosophy," but also "Lover," "Rake," "Miser," "Glutton," and so on. Erasmus thus prepares the way for Jonson by describing a method of characterization drawn from comedy and adapted to the purposes of writing that uses the commonplace to connect book-based mnemonic practices—the imaging of virtues and vices as allegorical personifications—with theater-based mnemonic practices—the imaging of vicious and virtuous character types in comical satire.[27]

Jonson takes up Erasmus' method in *Every Man Out*, where we find characters characterizing each other on stage. Cordatus characterizes Sogliardo as "a tame rook" (I.ii.5) and instructs Mitis to "note this gallant" (I.ii.3); "tame rook" echoes the folio's prefatory character sketch, which describes Sogliardo as an "essential clown," and

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in the nineteenth-century realist novel resonates with Kunin's sense that allegory persists in realist aesthetics: Woloch argues that the logic of allegory continues to govern the representation of secondary characters; the further secondary characters are pushed into the margins of the narrative, the more "allegorical" they become. For Woloch, as for Kunin, allegory and realism remain mutually constitutive rather than mutually opposed aesthetic modes of representation.

[27] The tendency to treat allegory and character as mutually opposed representational modes partly explains the tendency among scholars to treat Jonson's private masques separately from the public plays, when in fact Jonson's experimentation with character cuts across genres: the early comical satires, *Every Man Out of His Humour* and *Cynthia's Revels* in particular, employ a range of allegorical forms that anticipate Jonson's later work on the masques. These allegorical personifications have, however, been "characterized" or individuated in exactly the way Erasmus requires. *Every Man Out* uses classical and Italianate puns that associate characters with allegorical vices: Asper, the critical satirist, means "sour" or "bitter" in Latin; Macilente, the melancholic scholar, is associated with Envy; Deliro, "madness" or "delirium," remains convinced of his wife, Fallace's (pronounced "fallacy") fidelity. The quarto version ends with a figure representing Queen Elizabeth purging the acerbic Macilente/Asper of his "cruel" and sour humor, effectively turning the events leading up to this final scene into an anti-masque, indicating, again, a less decisive distinction between allegory and character, masque and play than the scholarship implies. Jonson's interest in allegorical form and his experiment with conventions typical of the masque blur the distinction between social type and allegorical figure, suggesting a career-long interest in the range of representational strategies that fall under "the description of persons."

Cordatus' "gallant" echoes the sketch's "enamoured of the name of a gentleman," (257) reminding us that character sketches are not only part of the play's textual apparatus but also part of the original performance. The play's choral figures—Asper, Mitis, and Cordatus—act as a bridge between page and stage by giving personated, theatrical form to the literary tradition of the character sketch. The art of characterizing is, however, also staged as an art of commonplacing. Cordatus' instruction to "note" Sogliardo's character alludes to the practice of noting or copying commonplaces in a commonplace book, reminding Mitis to "note" or set down the character of Sogliardo in the book of his memory. The play stages the relationship between characterization and commonplacing even more directly in the opening dialogue between Sogliardo and Carlo Buffone, which is in fact a dialogue commonplaced from Erasmus' satirical colloquy, "The Knight without a Horse, or Faked Nobility."[28] By staging Erasmus' satirical character sketch or *descriptio personae* of "Faked Nobility" in the form of a commonplaced dialogue, Jonson not only reminds us that characters function on the early modern stage as personated collections of commonplaces or *sententiae*, but also puts this performance in direct dialogue with Erasmus' humanist theory of character. The performance of Erasmus' method by Jonson's characters thus crucially indicates how the commonplace finds its way into theater: where once it was the ethical task of an educated courtier to draw on commonplaces of the "lover," "glutton," or "miser" to characterize those around him, it becomes the aesthetic task of Jonson's characters to characterize each other's stock-type.

[28] This reference is noted by the editors on 279. Erasmus' satirical character sketch attacks a long-time adversary, Heinrich Eppendorf, but stylistically imitates the Plautine character type of the *miles gloriosus*. See Erasmus, "The Knight without a horse, or Faked Nobility" in *The Collected Works of Erasmus* vol. 40, ed. and trans. Craig Thompson (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 880-890.

In the shift from page to stage emerges a new concept of style—an iteration of the rhetorical "characters of style" that takes "character" quite literally. *Every Man Out* helps to invent character as a term of dramatic art, but the word which Asper uses to describe his guiding conceit is "anatomy" not "character": the play of humours refers to contemporary medical discourse, and it is in this context that he promises to

> oppose a mirror
> As large as the stage whereon we act,
> Where they [the audience] shall see the time's deformity
> Anatomized in every nerve and sinew. (Induction, 116-19)

If "no glasse renders a mans forme, or likeness, so true as his speech," no speech render's men's forms or likenesses so true as theatrical dialogue. To picture forth the "time's deformity"—what Jonson will later refer to as the "image of the times" in the Folio of *Every Man In* (Prologue, 23)—Asper proposes to "anatomize" the affected habits of the play's characters. What is worth noting is how Asper's conceit reproduces both the language and logic of the passage from Vives cited earlier:

> No glass renders a man's form or likeness so true as his speech. Nay, it is likened to a man; and as we consider feature and composition in a man, so words in language: in the greatness, aptness, sound, structure, and harmony of it. Some men are tall and big, so some language is high and great. …The middle are of a just stature. There the language is plain and pleasing, even without stopping, round without swelling; all well-turned, composed elegant, and accurate. The vicious language is vast and gaping, swelling and irregular… And according to their subject, these styles [high, middle, and low] vary, and lose their names; for that which is high and lofty, declaring excellent matter, becomes vast and tumorous, speaking of petty and inferior things… Would you not laugh to meet a great councillor of state in a flat cap, with his trunk-hose, and a hobby-horse cloak, his gloves under his girdle, and yond haberdasher in a velvet gown, furred with sables? (*Discoveries*, 1439-59)

The passage continues to describe the "stature" or "figure and feature" of language, the "skin and coat" of diction, and finally the "flesh, blood, and bones" of style—in short, Jonson offers a lengthy anatomy of the human body from the outside-in that elaborates

the standard classical terms of rhetoric into anatomical terms. The passage ends on the "sinewy" or "*nervos*" style—terms which Asper echoes in the prologue (1460-80).

In short, *Every Man Out* stages the theory of style which Jonson records in the *Discoveries*: the effect is a transformation of the characters of style into the style of characters. Just as we would laugh at a councilor of state dressed as his servingman so we laugh at Sogliardo dressed as a gentleman—one extravagantly out of sync with the protocols of decorum. Sogliardo's ridiculous and newly fashioned habits of speech, gesture, and dress not only enact the character of faked nobility, they also enact a theory of style that becomes the basis of Macilente's "device" to put Saviolina out of her humour. Fastidius Briske describes Saviolina to Macilente as "such an anatomy of wit, so sinewized and arterized… Oh, oh, oh!—I cannot express'em, believe me" (III.i.89-93). The reference to anatomy—the arteries and sinews of wit—however, focuses the climactic interaction between Sogliardo and Saviolina around the relationship between character and style established as the basis of the play by Asper, using, again, the same terms Jonson recorded in his commonplace book. Puntarvolo and Briske tell Saviolina that Sogliardo is a man of high standing, well travelled, and skilled in the art of characterization—it is his humor to play the character of a rustic so convincingly as to deceive those around him at court. Saviolina claims such expertise in recognizing the character of gentility—the "carriage of his eye, and that inward power that forms his countenance"—that not even Sogliardo can fool her: "you might perceive his counterfeiting as clear as the noonday," she declares (V.ii.59-61). The joke is on both Sogliardo and Saviolina: Sogliardo's ignorance of the codes of conduct that govern the expression of gentility is satirized by Macilente and Puntarvolo; Saviolina's error is more

profound, however, since she fails to recognize that character is, at its core, premised on the paradox of theatrical illusion. Sogliardo is a rustic playing the part of a gentleman playing the part of a rustic—the illusion of character relies on tricks of perception that make it impossible to distinguish art (the affected humors of courtiers) from nature (the hidden dispositions which give rise to behavior). Saviolina's critical posture serves, of course, as a foil for Asper's: Saviolina mistakes illusion for reality; Maciltente/Asper exploits her mistake for theatrical effect.

Every Man Out reveals style to be a descriptive code—a form of characterization; character thus turns style—something ostensibly learned through the art of commonplacing—into an embodied form. Understood this way, the play's obsession with style of dress is an extended metaphor for style of speech. *Every Man Out* was written and performed at a time when the relationship between social status and sumptuous clothing was anything but stable—a point which Stubbes' *Anatomie of Abuse* (1583) makes clear. Stubbes' obsession with the "abuse" of apparel—more contemptuous than "pride of the heart" or "pride of the mouth" because it leaves a "print or Character behind them to offend the eyes withal"—exemplifies anxieties about the disintegration of the social order pictured by Jonson.[29] One could even characterize Asper's anatomy of the "time's deformity" as a staged production of Stubbes' *Anatomie of Abuse*; but Asper takes the conceit further by extending the critique of sumptuary impropriety to a critique of indecorous speech. Asper's complaint, it is worth emphasizing, is against the abuse of

[29] Philip Stubbes *The Anatomie of Abuse* (1583) ed. Margaret Jane Kidnie (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2002), 67. As Robert Matz explains, "sumptuary legislation, which primarily governed apparel, began in 1336 but reached its peak during the later sixteenth century, and became increasingly complex as the relationship between rank and wealth became more ambiguous" (*Defending Literature in Early Modern England* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000], 37).

the *word* "humour"; the play's satirical criticism of social vice stages the transformation of clothing into rhetoric, a transformation of "style" which humanists earlier in the century, labored to establish and which Jonson registers in his parodic critique of the social vices identified by Stubbes. Fashion, speech, and gesture transform the art of commonplacing into an art of characterization, which becomes the basis for a newly articulated, newly visible theory of literary style.

III. From Memory Places to Scene and Plot

The places of Jonson's comical satires—places like St. Paul's Walk—were already recognized by contemporaries as memory *loci*, real places that functioned as sites for collecting and recollecting character types and which thus helped map London's social typologies onto its topography. Stephen Mullaney's *The Place of the Stage*, one of the most valuable studies of place in Elizabethan drama, details the theater's relationship to the city of London. Place, in his study, operates at the level of landscape or cityscape—the opening chapters think less about space in the abstract, especially in relation to the space of the stage, in the way that, for example, Robert Weimann does. Instead, Mullaney makes it possible to think of the stage as one among many "places" that constitute the cityscape, which is itself, in Mullaney's words, "a dramatic and symbolic work in its own right, a social production of space."[30] Inhabitants of London engaged collaboratively in the "social production of space" through ritual performances—accession day progresses, Lord Mayor's shows, Rogationtide processionals etc.—which constituted "both the social

[30] Steven Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage: License, Play, and Power in Renaissance England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988), 10.

hierarchy and the communal landscape in which it was reflected."[31] Like the public gathering spaces of Greece and Rome—actual places after which, according to Quintilian, the rhetorical commonplaces of memory were fashioned—the public spaces of London, like St. Paul's Walk or Bartholomew Fair, also functioned as common places, repositories of communal memory whose traces materially shaped the topography of the city.[32]

The comparison between the common places of London and the commonplaces or *loci communes* of the art of memory is not an idle one. Royal progresses, for example, transformed the common places of London—Gracechurch and Fleetstreet, to use Mullaney's examples from Elizabeth's ascension day—into actual repositories for commonplaced *sententiae*. At Fleetstreet, according to one eyewitness account, "'the void places of the pageant were filled with pretie sentences" on the nature of good council "the topic of that locale": "on such an occasion," Mullaney observes, "the city and its common places unfolded before the eyes of the knowing spectator to become an extensive emblem or commonplace book."[33] The *locus communis* or common-place, as an organizational heuristic or "structure of thought" to use Ann Moss's formulation, ordered memory, book, and city in ways that rendered them coextensive sites of

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[31] Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage*, 14.

[32] Quintilian explains that while the most common location is a house, the same technique "can equally well be done in connection with public buldings" (*Institutio Oratoria*, XI.ii.21).

[33] Richard Mulcaster, *The Quene Majestie's Passage* in *Elizabethan Backgrounds: Historical Documents of the Age of Elizabeth I*, ed. Arthur F. Kinney (Hamden, CT: Archon, 1975), 7-40; quoted by Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage*, 12. As Michael Bath has argued, emblems and emblem books appear, also, to have originally served a mnemonic function in Renaissance culture. It is worth noting that emblems originally referred to descriptive *sententiae*, not visual illustrations—the printing of emblem books with illustrative images is a later development in the emblem tradition. Indeed, his monograph on the history of emblem books involves a detailed account of their relationship and overlap with commonplace books. See Michael Bath, *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture* (New York: Longman, 1994).

meaning-making through ritual acts of commemoration.[34] "Through repetitive performance and mnemonic association," Mullaney concludes, the "city's image of itself" was fashioned and put on display: the city became "a living memory of the cultural performances it both witnessed and served to embody."[35] John Stow's *Survay of London* (1598), a chorographic account of London's wards which imaginatively walks readers through the same places that Elizabeth followed on her accession day, makes the relationship between memory, book, and city explicit, unfolding before readers "a vast memory system, an extensive memory theater" organized by the common places of London itself.[36] Mullaney focuses on Shakespeare, whose work offers little in the way of direct engagement with the city of London. But city comedy, a genre Jonson all but invented, intentionally and explicitly takes London city-life as its subject. If the city functioned as a vast memory theater, Jonson's interpolation of its commonplaces to the stage in *Every Man Out* literalizes Stow's metaphor, thereby redefining the theater not as one among many places comprising the London cityscape but as *the* place where the city's image of itself was most authoritatively fashioned.

The kinds of rituals Mullaney has in mind—the Lord Mayor's shows, Royal processions, and other community-defining acts of inscription, interpretation, and commemoration that negotiated power relations at the same time that they constituted them—are not the only rituals that perform the kind of imaginative and ideological work Mullaney describes. Rituals of dress, speech, gesture, etc.—rituals that constitute the

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[34] Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1996).
[35] Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage*, 13.
[36] Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage*, 16. See John Stow, *A Survey of London* ed. Charles L. Kingsford (New York: Oxford Clarendon Press, 1908), xl-xli. Stowe was a personal acquaintance of Jonson's.

lived experience of St. Paul's Walk, for example, as a projection of the city's emerging capitalist values—also enact and reinforce social order. Ben Jonson calls these rituals "humours": habits that have the power not only to form but also to deform the character of the city and its inhabitants. And it is the theater that makes these everyday rituals of social observance visible as structuring practices that organize London life. By staging London's common places, as in the St. Paul's Walk scene of *Every Man Out*, Jonson makes the city participate in the play's art of characterization. When Shift enters the stage in Act III, Cordatus explains to Mitis that he is "one, for whose better illustration we must desire you to presuppose the stage the middle aisle in Paul's" (III.i.1-2); the place of St. Paul's serves to "illustrate" the character of Shift, whose commonplace qualities are communicated as much by his favorite haunts as by his style of dress and speech. Jonson appropriates the mnemonic palimpsest of associations collected and recollected in the actual common places of London's cityscape as part of the performance of characterological humour.

By the end of the sixteenth century, London's centrally located St. Paul's Cathedral housed what Helen Ostovich has called a "sprawling urban marketplace."[37] Formerly a site of Catholic ritual and ceremony, and thus a place of communal identity formation, St. Paul's served in Jonson's day instead as a monument or memorial to England's recent religious violence and upheaval. The rituals of economic exchange, enacted in the once sacred space of the cathedral, become saturated through mnemonic association with religious overtones: St. Paul's walk transfigures religious into economic rituals of identity formation—a process which Jonson was anxious to make visible to his London

[37] Helen Ostovich, "'To Behold the Scene Full,'" 78.

audiences. The St. Paul's Walk scene in *Every Man Out* visualizes the metaphorical dance of London's emerging capitalist economy, staging new secular rituals of social observance: forming groups of twos and threes, characters walk, saluting each other as they pass, changing partners, circling the stage in a climactic "masterpiece of ensemble choreography."[38] Ostovich compares the slow-moving concentric circles of dancing couples to a pavane, Fungoso's brief entrance with his tailor, framed by the slow clockwork of the dance, to a capering galliard, and Shift's entrance to a "sword dance."[39] As characters leave, one by one, the pavane dissolves into a final bergomask: Shift dances with Sogliardo as he negotiates the terms of his employment as a tobacconist.[40] The scene enacts Alva Noë's analysis of the relationship between dance and choreography, which functions as a paradigm for the relationship between art and culture more generally: the choreography of the scene in St. Paul's Walk puts on display the organizing forms of the real St. Paul's Walk marketplace, giving embodied expression to the social and economic instability caused by the flow of capital into London's emerging middle class.[41]

The scene in St. Paul's indicates the importance of place to the management of theatrical illusion: the intersection of real and theatrical mnemonic places in the St. Paul's Walk scene of *Every Man Out* gives birth to the "scene" as a representational device. Echoing Mullaney's account of London's common places, Ostovich describes St. Paul's as "a rhetorical *locus communis*" (78)—an "urban site" that "invokes [] traditional cultural values" at the same time that it makes visible the "encroachment on those values

[38] Ostovich, "'To Behold the Scene Full,'" 84.
[39] Ostovich, "'To Behold the Scene Full,'" 86 and 88.
[40] Ostovich, "'To Behold the Scene Full,'" 88.
[41] Alva Noë, *Strange Tools: Art and Human Nature* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2015), 11-18.

by the burgeoning unruly city as it overflows its limits, opens channels for the upwardly mobile and their hangers-on, and inundates its original structures" (79). As the unruly and upwardly mobile crowds "inundate" the "original structure" of St. Paul's Cathedral, it's "overflow" spills into the city's liberties—into, that is, the theaters, London's marginal estuaries of both physical and ideological excess. Clove and Orange best exemplify the "overflow" which Ostovich and Mullaney describe: Cordatus characterizes them as "mere strangers to the whole scope of our play; only come to walk a turn or two i' this *Scene* of *Paul's*, by chance" (III.i. 17-18).[42] Their "chance" entrance into the "*Scene* of *Paul's*" suggests that they have mistaken the staged St. Paul's for the real St. Paul's—pointing to the ways in which the theater functioned as a repository for London's social detritus. What separates the "*Scene* of *Paul's*" from the real St. Paul's is, simply, its "scene" or location—the theater's own position outside the city of London. The logic of theatrical scene reproduces the logic of the cityscape by acting as a boundary between the real and the staged: the scenic division between St. Paul's and the "*Scene* of *Paul's*" creates the possibility for the theatrical play of illusion—specifically, the illusion of realism. The "*Scene* of *Paul's*" plays an important role as both an object of critical reflection—a heuristic through which to reflect on the relationship between theater and city—and as a representational device, which leverages the logic of spatial division to create a discrete unit of dramatic action.

Scene makes visible a new set of possibilities or conditions of temporal organization: if scene organizes the representation of space by choreographing bodies into ensemble set-pieces, plot organizes the representation of time by sequencing scenes

[42] Italics original to the first printing.

in a particular order—together, scene and plot manage the space-time of theatrical performance. This may seem obvious to us now, but only because we take such conventions for granted. The medieval performance tradition did not represent linear time: the chronology of biblical cycle plays reflect the temporality of allegory not history, which is a consequence of attempting to accommodate divine eternity to the limits of human understanding. The stories of biblical cycle plays have a chronology, but like all myths, they stand outside of human time. Jonson's city comedies, by contrast, work with exclusively secular content. Because plays which deal with secular matters do not have to accommodate human experience to divine eternity, we see a shift in representational conditions, a shift which placed new demands on the theater to invent conventions for managing the representation of events experienced in spatially and temporally situated ways. In the case of Jonson's public plays, scholars have often described that shift in theatrical convention as a movement away from allegory and toward realism.

To isolate the extent of Jonson's singular ingenuity, it is helpful to survey the historical context in which Jonson experiments with scene. *Every Man Out* occupies an unstable position in relation to classical, medieval, and contemporary scenic traditions, which reflects, at the same time, the instability of "scene" itself as a spatio-temporal organizational device in the late sixteenth-century. Etymologically, the word σκηνή (*skene*) in Greek and *scaena* in Latin refer to the stage structure of ancient theater.[43] But beginning with Richard Pynson's late fifteenth-century printing of Terence's comedies,

[43] Bruce Smith explains that "scene" in the classical context refers to "not only the facade through which the actors made their entrances and exits but also the platform on which they stood as they spoke" ("Scene" in *Early Modern Theatricality* ed. Henry Turner [New York: Oxford University Press, 2013], 95).

scene refers to the division of a script into parts. Mitis remarks on this convention when he asks whether Asper "does observe all the laws of comedy in [*Every Man Out*]?"[44]

> COR. What laws mean you?
> MIT. Why, the equal division of it into acts, and scenes, according to the Terentian manner… (Prologue, 229-32)

Sixteenth-century playwrights, Bruce Smith has argued, were familiar with the classical conventions of Latin plays they encountered in school, but few of these conventions found their way, consistently, into printed vernacular plays. Instead, the spatio-temporal rhythms of Elizabethan drama are defined by the punctuation of continuous action with empty space—when the stage clears, the scene changes. The lack of scene divisions in printed vernacular plays reflects the influence of medieval drama, whose morality and biblical cycle plays present the action "within a single, continuous configuration of space and time, regardless of lapsed time and changes in location."[45] In short, the conventions governing the representation of space—the relative fullness of the stage, the movements of bodies on and off it, the coincidence of scene division with changes in place or setting—had not yet formed.

The art of memory plays an important role in Jonson's formulation of scene and plot as conventions for representing space and time in ways commensurate with human experience, which is always phenomenologically situated. As a built space designed for the performance of poetry, theater combines architectural and book-based mnemonic technologies in ways that allow Jonson to turn character, a technique of *enargeia* or vivid visualization, into an engine of theatrical illusion. By giving commonplaced *sententiae* personated form, the theater enacts one of the core principles of the art of memory: the

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[44] For a brief discussion of Pynson's Terence, see Smith, "Scene," 97.
[45] Smith, "Scene," 97.

extension or spatializing of abstract ideas, pictured as mnemonic images. Theater materializes the cognitive labor of giving spatial dimension and arrangement to mnemonic images by giving them real dimension and real arrangement on-stage in the form of characters. Just as the art of memory demands that images be "placed" in an imagined location, so the demarcation of space through scene divisions also puts demands on theater to order these discrete units in time: from scene thus emerges plot. Traditionally, scholarship has tended to view Jonson's realism through the lens of Aristotle's *Poetics*, and more particularly through the neoclassical doctrine of the three unities. Jonson habitually mocks the doctrine of unities, most famously in the *Alchemist*, which "parod[ies]" the naïve empiricism of neoclassical realism.[46] Jonson's attitude echoes that of Sidney, who asks, "what child is there, that coming to a play and seeing 'Thebes' written in great letters upon an old door doth believe that it is Thebes?"[47] If theatrical illusion depends on realism, its tools must be sought after elsewhere.

Jonson's interest in the *Poetics* focuses not on the unities of time, place, and action—*Every Man Out* is arguably the least "unified" of any play Jonson writes—but instead on the phenomenology of theatrical experience. Evidence suggests that Jonson read the *Poetics* not through the principles of Italian neoclassicism but through the principles of the classical memory tradition. In the fragment of an essay from the *Discoveries* titled, "Of the magnitude, and compass of any fable, epic, or dramatic," for example, Jonson has copied a passage from the *Poetics*, as it was translated by Daniel

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[46] Michael McKeon writes, for example, that "in maintaining the unities of time and place with utter scrupulousness early in the century, Jonson's *The Alchemist* had managed to parody, as naïvely confounding nature with sense impressions, both the theatrical and the laboratory versions of controlling for the senses" ("Drama and the Model of Scientific Method," *Eighteenth-Century Novel: Volume 6-7, Essays in Honor of John Richetti*, ed. Albert J. Rivero and George Justice [New York: AMS Press, 2009], 233).

[47] Sidney, *Defense of Poesy*, 34.

Heinsius in *De Tragoediae Constitutione*. This passage figures the construction of "The fable or plot of a poem"[48] as an architectural problem by comparing the spatial properties of poetic forms to the spatial properties of architectural edifices: "if a man would build a house, he would first appoint a place to build it in […] so in the constitution of a poem, the action is aimed at by the poet, which answers the place in a building; and that action hath his largeness, compass, and proportion" (1906-10).[49] The analogy establishes a symmetrical relation between the "constitution" of a building and the "consititution" of a poem—both require a "place to build […] in." And just as the "place" of a building must "compasse" the size and purpose of the edifice, so the "place" of a poem, its action, fable, or plot, must "compasse" its topic. Jonson/Heinsius then extends the metaphor to argue that the principle of decorum between poetic form and poetic action depends on proportion, the principle of decorum in architecture:

> as a court or kings palace requires other dimensions than a private house, so the epic asks a magnitude from other poems. Since what is place in the one, is action in the other, the difference is in space. […] so the space of the action, may not prove large enough for the epic fable, yet be perfect for the dramatic, and whole" (1910-19).[50]

By comparing the difference between a house and a palace to the difference between epic and dramatic poetry, Jonson/Heinsius can extend the principle of proportion from architecture to poetry.

Scholars have understood this passage as a straightforward analogy between poetry and Vitruvian architecture.[51] But there is more than one architectural discourse in the

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[48] This is the marginal gloss or commonplace set next to lines 1901-05 (*Discoveries*, 591).
[49] *Discoveries*, 592.
[50] *Discoveries*, 592.
[51] Jonson owned two sixteenth-century editions of Vitruvius' *De Architectura*, which A.W. Johnson has argued influenced Jonson's work on the court masques and which Henry Turner has argued also influenced Jonson's work in the public theaters. Vitruvius' *De Architectura*, Turner argues, provided Jonson with a geometrical idiom that could be used to describe the spatial relationships not just between parts of buildings

early modern period informing Jonson's conception of theatrical space-time: the edifice Jonson/Heinsius has in mind, is a mnemonic edifice—a memory theater.[52] Jonson was not the first poet to see poetry and architecture as co-constitutive spatial arts: the relationship between poetry and architecture was already established in the medieval *ars poetriae* tradition. Mary Carruthers traces the history of plot to locational mnemonics, especially in the English poetic tradition, which had long relied on architectural metaphors to describe the construction of memory places. The trope of the master builder or *architectus*, and the tools of his trade—the compass, perpendicular, measuring cords, stones, groundplot, elevation, perspective—were used to teach rhetoric and poetry in scholastic classrooms all over Europe, and especially in England, during the twelfth thirteenth centuries.[53] Jonson's interest in Vitruvian architecture deepens an existing relationship between poetry and architecture outlined by Hugh of St. Victor, Geoffrey of Vinsauff, Chaucer, and Spenser. The early modern tendency to think of books as buildings and buildings as books is less metaphorical than modern readers might suppose.

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but between parts or "modules" of dramatic action. Jonson's indisputable interest in mathematics, a de-materializing conceptual framework whose very abstractness allows it to extend into a wide range of discourses, can obscure the material, affective, embodied experience of space that governs both classical architecture and early modern theater. Vitruvius often defies straightforwardly mathematical conceptions of space: *entasis*, when columns are made to swell and taper to counteract the effect of foreshortening on *perceived* rather than absolute geometrical proportions, for example, reminds us that built space, under the Vitruvian model, is governed first and foremost by embodied sensory experience. Vitruvius never gives standard units of measure like inches or feet, but rather selects a *membrum* or part of the whole as a unit of measure. Vitruvius stresses in several instances the relationship between the human body and architectural edifices because the space of a building must correspond not just to the social and aesthetic needs of the community, but more fundamentally to the needs of human bodies. Its phenomenological conception of "space" as something constituted through visual-tactile modes of sensory perception (i.e. proprioception) explains why Jonson, in the *Discoveries*, would describe a poem as an architectural edifice: in poetry, as in architecture, the principle of proportion governs the spatial relations between parts of the whole. See A.W. Johnson, *Ben Jonson: Poetry and Architecture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 21; Henry Turner, *The English Renaissance Stage: Geometry, Poetics, and the Practical Spatial Arts 1580-1630* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 254; and Vitruvius, *Vitruvius: The Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1960), 14.

[52] Turner, *The English Renaissance Stage*, 275-8; Johnson, *Ben Jonson*, 28-31.

[53] Carruthers, "The Poet as Master Builder: Composition and Locational Memory in the Middle Ages" *NLH* 24.4 (1993): 881-904.

The overlap between edifices and edification, between architecture and poetics, derives from thirteenth-century interpretations of St. Paul's master builder in I Corinthians 3:10-17, which Hugh of St. Victor and Geoffrey of Vinsauf, both revolutionary figures in the history of university curricula whose influence continued well into the early modern period, interpreted as a mnemonic metaphor.[54]

It is worth recalling the *Ad Herennium's* rules for places because Jonson/Heinsius follows them closely in his paraphrase of Aristotle's account of plot in the *Poetics*. The "places" or loci must form a series and be remembered in order so that the mind can start from any place in the series and move backward or forward from it. Every fifth place should have a distinguishing mark (it gives an example of a golden hand for the fifth mark, a friend named Decimus greeting us at the doorway to the tenth), and each locus must be well-lighted and of moderate size.[55] A place that is too big will render the images too small and hard to remember, whereas a place that is too small will render the images too big and the rooms too crowded. During delivery, the orator imaginatively walks through each room, re-collecting his deposited images; the sequence of rooms organizes the sequence of images, which in turn remind him of the parts or *membrae* of his speech

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[54] Carruthers, "The Poet as Master Builder," *NLH* 24, no. 4 (1993), 890.

[55] The architectural mnemonic appears as a passing reference in *The Case is Altered*, when Fransisco Colonnia tells Phoenixella, "I will remain silent. Yet that I may serve / But as a decade in the art of memory, / To put you still in mind of your own virtues / When your too serious thoughts make you too sad…" (II.4.39-42). A.W. Johnson has argued that Francisco Colonnia is a thinly veiled reference to Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499), translated into English as *The Strife of Love in a Dreame* and printed in London in 1592. The *Hypnerotomachia*, a dream narrative which features architectural landscapes depicted in woodcuts that "intermingle hieroglyphs, triumphal scenes, architectural drawings, and risqué erotic images" (Johnson, *Ben Jonson*, 39), provided Jonson and Jones with an imaginatively rich model for the equally dreamlike scenery of the court masques. It is worth lingering over what Johnson calls "Colonnia's unusual proposal to act as a 'Decade in the art of memory' to Phoenixella" (Johnson, *Ben Jonson*, 44). Francisco's mnemonic "decade" echoes the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which tells us to divide our places into "decades" or tens, marked at each threshold by an image—our friend, "Decimus," for example. By connecting Colonna's emblematic architectural dreamscape to the art of memory, *The Case is Altered* reinforces the familiar association between architecture and the art of memory.

in perfect order.[56] In drawing a comparison between memory structures informed by the principles of architecture and the principles of dramatic composition, Jonson/Heinsius compares the kinds of embodied sensations we have in architectural spaces to the sensory-cognitive responses we have to dramatic poetry:

> For that which happens to the eyes, when we behold a body, the same happens to the memory, when wee contemplate an action. I look upon a monstrous giant, as Tityus, whose body covered nine acres of land, and mine eye sticks upon every part; the whole that consists of those parts will never be taken in at one entire view. So in a fable, if the action be too great, we can never comprehend the whole together in our imagination. Again, if it be too little, there ariseth no pleasure out of the object, it affords the view no stay; it is beheld and vanisheth at once. […] The same happens in action, which is the object of memory, as the body is of sight. Too vast oppreseth the Eyes, and exceeds the memory: too little scarce admits either. (1929-39)[57]

Jonson/Heinsius initially associates the action or fable (i.e. the plot) with the locus of an architectural edifice, which he illustrates in the comparison between palaces and epic on the one hand, houses and drama on the other. This passage completes the metaphor: the action, i.e. the locus or plot, is the "object of memory," because the action or fable of a poem orders our experience of its events just as places ensure the recollection of images in the right order. The rules for constructing an action follow the rules for memory places: if we select a location too big for its contents, the images placed there will be too small and utterly indistinct to the mind's eye, just as an action "too vast oppreseth the eyes and

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[56] The word *membrum* means "part" or "member," but can be used to refer to the parts of bodies, edifices, and texts—the word *membrum* creates a formal continuity between the *membra* of the human body and the *membra* of architectural edifices and, not coincidentally, the *membra* or parts of speech. Vitruvius plays on these ambiguities, for example, in his account of how to establish units of measurement. Vitruvius' apocryphal "ancients" used a human body part, the foot, as the *membrum* or fundamental unit of measure in constructing temples for the gods. Vitruivus points to the symmetrical proportions between parts of the human body to explain how a part or *membrum* can function as a unit of measure for a larger whole: "for the human body is so designed by nature that the face, from the chin to the top of the forehead and the lowest roots of the hair, is a tenth part of the whole height," just as "the distance from the soles from the feet to the top of the head" will equal the length of "the outstretched arms" (Vitruvius, *Ten Books*, 73)

[57] Jonson, *Discoveries*, 593.

exceeds the memory"; a location that is too small will make the images appear so big that the "eye sticks upon every part." The art of memory provides the framework through which Jonson/Heinsius adapts the principles of architecture to the construction of a poetic framework, i.e. the plot, which provides a space for the composition and ordering of scenes into ordered sequences of "actions" or events. Understood this way, Jonson's experiment with plot and scene demonstrates how the imaginative work of *enargeia*, or vivid visualization, has been off-loaded onto the representational machinery of the theater. The once interior space of the memory theater has become externalized: the art of memory is being used to structure the phenomenological space of the theater by turning what was originally a rhetorical technology of visualization into a theatrical technology of representation.

The adaptation of mnemonic *loci* to the stage addresses a representational dilemma which both Jonson and Shakespeare struggled to define and resolve, although in different ways: the management of theatrical space-time, what neoclassical critics had identified as the unities of time, place, and action. Jonson is among the first playwrights to consistently mark act and scene divisions, but these vary significantly from quarto to folio versions of *Every Man Out*.[58] Kevin Donovan has argued convincingly that Jonson's scene revisions from the quarto to the folio of *Every Man Out* reflect a shift from vernacular to classical conventions: scene breaks in the folio are marked with massed entries typical of printed classical plays, whereas in the quarto "scenes are divided according to the principle of the cleared stage customary in Elizabethan drama.

[58] "Aside from Ben Jonson," Smith concludes, "the whole business of marking acts and scenes seems not to have been truly assimilated to English printing practice before 1630" ("Scene," 101).

Usually this coincides with a shift in location."[59] Jonson's revisions point to an uncertainty about the representational affordances of scene as both a literary and theatrical device—an uncertainty reflected in the running debate between Cordatus and Mitis about the nature and status of "scene" in the play itself. Asper tells Mitis and Cordatus to

> Observe what I present, and liberally
> Speak your opinions upon every scene,
> As it shall pass the view of these spectators (Prologue, 153-5)

indicating the importance of "scene" as a subject for critical debate. "Scene" in *Every Man Out* refers both to the division of the script into parts (the "equal division" of the play into "acts, and scenes") and to the theatrical organization of bodies into sequences of coherent action (the "*Scene* of *Paul's*"), which encompasses the fictional place or setting, theatrical illusion, and length of action. In attempting to adjust the spatial organization of page and stage, Jonson reveals the extent to which these remained incommensurate representational media in Elizabethan England. Jonson recognizes the power of scene to coordinate script and performance as mutually constitutive representational media, but to what end? This is the crux of Mitis' and Cordatus' reflections on Shakespeare's scenic conventions:

> MIT. Me thinks, Cordatus, he dwelt somewhat too long on this scene; it hung i'the hand.
> COR. I see not where he could have insisted less, and t'have made the humours perspicuous enough.
> MIT. True, as his subject lies: but he might have altered the shape of his argument, and explicated 'hem better in single scenes.
> COR. That had been single indeed: why? be they not the same persons in this that they would have been in those? and is it not an object of more state, to behold the scene full and relieved with variety of speakers to the end, then

[59] Kevin Donovan, "Forms of Authority in the Early Texts of *Every Man Out of His Humour*" in *Re-Presenting Ben Jonson: Text, History, Performance*, ed. Martin Butler (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 67.

> to see a vast empty stage, and the actors come in (one by one) as if they were dropped down with a feather, into the eye of the audience? (II.ii.314-24)

The end or purpose of the scene as a theatrical device, according to Cordatus, is to give a "perspicuous" illustration of each character: perspicuity, from *perspicere*, to "see through" or "see clearly," stands in contrast with the blurred vision of Shakespeare's audiences, who have had the "scene" dropped into their eyes like ointment with a feather.[60] Shakespeare will revisit this image in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where Puck answers Cordatus' critique of romantic comedy's magical realism by figuring theatrical illusion as a form of blurred vision—an effect worked on audiences and characters alike by Puck's eye-ointment. If the length of a scene serves to illustrate character, and character serves to manage theatrical illusion, the criticism of scene length cannot center (as Mitis insists) on whether Asper has failed to adhere to classical convention but on whether (as Cordatus asserts) his use of scene responds effectively to the practical problems of vivid or "perspicuous" visualization.

IV. From Ethics to Aesthetics

Renaissance humanism operationalized educational reform by relocating medieval reading practices associated with the art of memory in a material artifact: the commonplace book. The theater continues the pattern of externalizing mnemonic techniques by staging the art of memory's newly literate form—commonplacing—as the art of characterization, creating structural continuities between cognition, on the one

[60] The Cambridge editors, citing Ostovich's edition of *Every Man Out*, note: "i.e. as if administered to the audience by a feather used as an eyedropper. […] The image suggests uncomfortable blurred vision" (n. to II.ii.324).

hand, and the spatio-temporal organizing forms of page and stage, on the other. The basic components of an artificial memory—images and places—which had determined the presentation of excerpts (whether associated with a visual image or visualized as text) on the "place" of the page, now also organized the stage into characters (visualized, personated collections of textual fragments), scenes (the representation of memory places), and plot (the temporal ordering of scenes into sequences of actions). The cognitive structures codified in mnemonic practice, in other words, find material expression in the theater, just as they had in the commonplace book. But the adaptation of a common mnemonic method to various material technologies must be understood as the response to a crisis in English poetics: as Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Jonson began to identify illusion as the defining formal feature of the representational arts, the need to define and understand the nature of illusion itself took on more urgency. Theories of the image in the art of memory provided a practical framework for understanding and manipulating the embodied experience of illusion common to both reading and theater-going.

I have already suggested the ways in which Jonson adapted and staged the art of memory to resolve the representational dilemma of vivid visualization or *enargeia*; what remains is an account of the crisis to which Jonson was responding and the effects his response had on the history of aesthetics. New Historicist and Cultural Materialist accounts of Renaissance poetics have tended to focus on the social, political, and historical conditions of poetry's separation from other sources of cultural authority.[61]

[61] For a review of New Historicist and Cultural Materialist criticism on the emergence of poetics as a distinct discourse, see Robert Matz, *Defending Literature in Early Modern England: Renaissance Literary Theory in Social Context* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), esp. 1-25.

While poets sought to situate poetry in relation to existing power structures, however, they also had to confront questions internal to their own practice. For literature to exist as a valued and distinct type of activity, poets had first to identify, define, and defend it. Jonson, more than any other poet in this period, recognized and responded to this need. At first glance, it might seem that Jonson simply deployed the same method of defense established by Sidney: Jonson's ethical defense of theater simply extends to theater earlier techniques Sidney had used to defend poetry. Jonson's moral didacticism has assumed the status of scholarly commonplace; indeed, his definition and defense of comical satire as a form of humoral therapy echoes Sidney's humanist argument for the salutary effects of poetry on the souls of readers. But the ubiquity of Jonson's ethical appeals should not obscure his awareness of their tragic failure: Jonson's repeated assertion of theater's power to reform audiences, his growing frustration with audiences who refused to submit to his satirical "physick," his turn to the masque and eventual marginalization from court, etc.—serve as reminders that the ethical defenses of poetry characteristic of earlier generations of humanist poets unsuccessfully negotiated poetry's cultural value.[62] In response to this failure, Jonson situates illusion at the center of his dramatic poetics. By embracing the ethical ambiguity of the image, Jonson asserts that the vexed and uncertain relationship between image and thing imaged—between appearance and reality—is a condition rather than failure of human perception. Shakespeare, who voices his own skepticism toward theatrical illusion, tends to figure the ethical ambiguity of illusion in the magical, fantastic, or purely imaginary devices of romantic comedy—in a realm outside ordinary experience; Jonson's skepticism is, in a

[62] See Matz, *Defending Literature*, 25-56.

sense, more radical because he figures the problem of illusion in the sociological realism of city comedy—brining art closer to nature, Jonson forces audiences to confront the possibility that illusion cannot be contained by theater, that it in fact lies at the bottom of ordinary perceptual experience. Reality turns out to be just another kind of fiction, a spectacle constructed as easily by the theater as by the church or state.

Jonson ultimately pushes back against the theater's marginal status not by submitting to the humanist ethical order—not by fulfilling the promise of the London liberties to purge the body politic of licentious behavior—but by demonstrating the theater's power to exercise liberties not granted by religious or political authorities. Because the moral claims Jonson makes for *Every Man Out* depend on its being "neere, and familiarly allied to the time" (F: 3.6.200)—on, that is, the perceptual ambiguity of Jonson's realism—theatrical illusion in fact serves to highlight a moral paradox characteristic of city comedy: namely, that it seems to celebrate the moral depravity it claims to correct. By organizing the dance of new and emerging social vices into a "celebratory ballet," Jonson paradoxically aestheticizes or beautifies the grotesque play of humoral excess which we are supposed to believe the play satirizes. City comedy's realistic representation of social vice, in other words, does not in practice perform the salutary work it claims to. Indeed, Asper/Macilente's disingenuous moralizing is as much an object of satirical critique as the other social vices represented on-stage. Understood this way, city comedy stages less a therapeutic critique of the city's social vices than a critical reflection on the theater's own status as a marginal spill-site for that which the city could not contain: players, parasites, puritans—malcontents of all stripes, righteous and reprobate alike. As Mullaney has demonstrated, shifts in the perceptual horizons of

London's inhabitants enacted shifts in the material cityscape. In demonstrating its ability to displace, challenge, and mock the increasingly fragile social order which the city had long failed to enforce, city comedy uses the perceptual logic of theater to reshape the cityscape—not by moving bricks but by "intervening" (as Rancière would say) in habits of perception which determine what is visible in the first place.[63] While church and state labored to maintain control over the conditions of visibility through sanctioned acts of ritual community formation, Jonson's *Every Man Out* forwards the proof of concept that art could authorize equally powerful acts of social formation.

One of the ways that Jonson exercises the theater's power to act in the social sphere outside theater is by relocating the authority of audiences, patrons, and censors to judge poetry in the figure of the critic; in doing so, Jonson folds poetic authority into the space of literary production, a move which lends greater autonomy to the literary and dramatic arts. The emergence of aesthetics coincides with the emergence of the critic as a social type, and as an early and pugilistic critic of early modern theater, who struggled to define the nature of representational art, Jonson figures importantly in this history. As Henry Turner has argued, Jonson's "larger purpose," above all in *Every Man Out* but arguably in the comical satires collectively,

> is to shift the terms of authority over dramatic production away from the audience, the play company, or the stage manager and toward a figure who was relatively new to the early modern literary field: not simply to the 'author' or 'poet,' as has been much discussed, but to the critic.[64]

The figure of the critic, I argue, takes shape first as a character-type in Jonson's theater before emerging as an actual social type in the field of cultural production: Cordatus,

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[63] Jaques Ranciere, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2000), 13.
[64] Turner, *The English Renaissance Stage*, 245.

Mitis, and Asper in *Every Man Out*, Cupid and Mercury in *Cynthia's Revels*, and Horace and Ovid in *Poetaster*—all choral critics—legislate the principles of aesthetic judgment and taste before Dryden, Shaftesbury, or Addison do. The literary critic, as a character type, precedes—and indeed creates the conditions for—the literary critic as a social type.[65]

The relationship between real and fictional critics suggests that Jonson's realism owes less to his mastery of empirical description than to his success in defining and legislating the social field through art: if Jonson's aesthetic is realist, this is because his fictions become realities—not (or not only) because he stages reality as fiction. To recognize a Carlo Buffone, Puntarvolo, or Macilente in the real St. Paul's Walk is to allow fiction to frame our perception of reality. In other words, realism's magic consists less in the author's ability to recreate the empirical experience of life outside the theater than to turn life outside the theater into an extension of the theater's fictional world. The value, for Jonson, of exploring character on-stage is its power to invent—both in the sense of "finding," from the rhetorical concept of *inventio*, but also in the modern sense of creating anew—the actual social processes subtending character-formation not just on-stage but also off-stage. Language functions, in Jonson's imagination, as a performative technology that both inside and outside the theater constitutes personhood, and the main thrust of Jonson's experimentation with character is to probe the extent to which

[65] It could be argued that the figure of the literary critic preexisted Jonson's choral figures—not least in such figures as Sidney. But I would argue that humanism is not self-consciously engaged in establishing literary criticism as an independent discourse—it may have been engaged in something we would call literary criticism, but only in the service of incorporating it into larger ethical discourses in education theory, not in the service of establishing the literary arts as an end in themselves. The word "critic" first appears in the late 1590's (OED, s.v. "critic"), among public playwrights like Shakespeare, Dekker, and of course Jonson, suggesting that the concept of the critic is partly a formation that emerges in and through the War of the Theaters.

language's fictional properties constitute the basis of real identity. I argue that by staging literary defense as a conversation among several critics on-stage, Jonson made literary criticism visible as a distinct category of discourse.

Jonson's formative role in reshaping defense literature into literary criticism helps explain why one of the founding documents of English aesthetics—John Dryden's *Essay of Dramatick Poesie* (1668)—would focus on Elizabethan drama, rather than, for example, Sidney's *Defence*, in its construction of English literary history. The dialogue begins as a defense of poesy: Eugenius and Neander defend the merits of modern poetry against the neoclassical criticisms of Crites and Lisideius. But because "poesy is of so large an extent" the interlocutors propose to limit the scope of their debate to "Dramatic poesie."[66] Conversation ranges through a number of aesthetic concerns, from the value of the three unities, to the nature of genre, to the propriety of rhyme in performed dialogue, but the standard against which each side measures the persuasive force of their arguments is realism: the point of disagreement tends to center on whether a given device brings art closer to nature or strains the integrity of the illusion. Indeed, the debate between Cordatus and Mitis over the status of scene finds its way into Dryden's dialogue: Crites, describing the unity of place, argues that "the scene ought to be continued through the play in the same place where it was laid in the beginning,"[67] to avoid what Eugenius refers to later as the "single scenes" of English drama—exactly the term Cordatus uses in his criticism of Shakespeare.[68] According to Crites, the French uphold the unity of place by managing the entrances and exits of actors: "that you may know it to be the same

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[66] John Dryden, *Essay of Dramatick Poesie* in *The Critical Tradition: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends*, ed. David H. Richter (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 165.
[67] Dryden, *Essay*, 168.
[68] Dryden, *Essay*, 172.

place, the stage is so supplied with persons that it is never empty all the time"—before one actor quits the stage, another enters to fill it.[69] Eugenius, however, argues that Crites has misdiagnosed the situation. Plays which fill the scene with variety of speakers achieve a pleasing coherence not because they maintain the unity of place but because the pacing of entrances and exits help "manage" the temporal sequencing of scenes into a beautiful "labyrinth of design"—a principle of coherence that Jonson had helped establish through his codification of scene and plot as organizational devices. The "well wrought scenes" of English drama, as Eugenius calls them, are not single after all. Neander explains:

> 'Tis evident that the more the persons are, the greater will be the variety of the plot. If then the parts are managed so regularly that the beauty of the whole be kept entire, and that the variety of become not a perplexed and confused mass of accidents, you will find it infinitely pleasing to be led in a labyrinth of design, where you see some of your way before you, yet discern not the end till you arrive at it.[70]

Jonson's "well wrought scenes" exemplify Eugenius's aesthetic standard: they are, as Cordatus had called them, "full and relieu'd with varietie of Speakers to the end." In other words, the dispute is not whether the scene should be "full" or "emptie"—Cordatus decided this question already. The question is whose scenes are more "full"—whose scenic conventions best maintain the integrity of illusion which the unity of place, in neoclassical poetics, and character, in Jonson's poetics, attempt to control. In other words, Dryden tacitly accepts illusion as the defining formal feature of the poetic arts and takes theatrical illusion as the paradigmatic poetic form for theorizing the nature of illusion.

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[69] Dryden, *Essay*, 168.
[70] Dryden, *Essay*, 182.

Figures on both sides of the quarrel revealingly cite Ben Jonson in support of their own position, which testifies not simply to Dryden's esteem of Jonson's plays but also to Jonson's ambiguous relationship to neoclassicism—Jonson, a consummate classicist, never expresses commitment either in theory or practice to neoclassical precepts. Dryden, too, as Richard Kroll has argued, "remains committed throughout to exploring rather than settling matters," and while he makes his own preference for the moderns clear, he ends the dialogue abruptly, before the speakers have reached consensus.[71] Dryden thus follows Jonson in form. But he also follows Jonson in content: Neander's impassioned defense of the moderns against the ancients culminates in an extended excursus on Ben Jonson's *Epicoene* as the "pattern of a perfect play."[72] It is worth noting that Neander's "examen" of *Epicoene* begins with a "character" or *descriptio personae* of Jonson himself, as "the most learned and judicious writer the theater ever had," "a most severe judge of himself as well as others," a "sullen" and "saturnine" humourist. Neander concludes: "something of art was wanting to the drama till he came."[73] Jonson becomes apotheosized not just as the preeminent playwright of the Elizabethan stage, but as a the progenitor of Dryden's own criticism: the *Essay* could be read as a choral exchange minus the apparatus of a play—as if Mitis, Cordatus, and Asper were finally granted a literary space all their own. And indeed, Dryden borrows the same literary techniques that Jonson develops in his comical satires: the use of quasi-allegorical names that allude to the nature of each character; the figuration of literary criticism as a choral dialogue which resists the location of aesthetic authority in any single voice; the placement of characters in a vividly

[71] Richard Kroll, *The Circle of Commerce* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 19.
[72] Dryden, *Essay*, 185.
[73]Dryden, *Essay*, 185.

illustrated scene—the Thames on the eve of the battle of Lowestoft—and the ordering of the dialogue in a plotted series of places along the river; and finally, the sociological realism of the fictional conversation, since each of the four critics alludes to an actual, historical person.

Crites—whose name recalls Jonson's Criticus in *Cynthia's Revels*—is often read by scholars as Sir Robert Howard, Dryden's brother-in-law and sometime collaborator, who wrote a critique of Dryden's *Essay* in the preface of his own *Duke of Lerma* in 1668. By responding to Dryden's fictional dialogue in his own voice, Howard makes it difficult to locate the line between fiction and reality: the distinction between Crites and Howard collapses as the debate between fictional critics, Neander and Crites, bleeds into the real aesthetic criticism exchanged between Dryden and Howard. Dryden responds in his own voice, too, in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, which he prints in the preface to the second edition of *The Indian Emperor*, also published in 1668, completing the transformation of art into reality. Dryden's reworking of Jonson's choral figures into literary critics—taking up the very questions Cordatus, Mitis, and Asper themselves had arbitrated on-stage almost a century before—points to the ways in which aesthetic criticism grows out of Jonson's debates with Shakespeare over the nature of realism and the relationship between art and culture.

In tracing the origins of aesthetic criticism to Jonson's transformation of literary defense into literary criticism, a transformation effected by the staging of criticism as a formal discourse among critics on-stage, I argue for a genealogy in the history of aesthetics that begins not with the seventeenth-century Quarrel between Ancients and Moderns but with sixteenth-century defense literature. The Quarrel remains a crucial part

of the story, primarily as an account of how and why the arts and sciences separated out over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as distinct spheres of knowledge production.[74] For such a separation to take place, I argue, the arts had to be recognized as such. While the arts achieved unity and coherence in part through their distinction from the sciences, this negative self-definition is a later development: the arts had already begun to achieve unity and coherence on their own terms, in debates among poets over the nature of representational illusion—poetic, dramatic, or otherwise. This chapter has provided a history of the arts' formation that can account for the conditions leading up to the Quarrel, when the arts would constitute a distinct part of the modern taxonomy of disciplines and when aesthetics would finally coalesce into The Aesthetic, as we now know it.

[74] See Michael McKeon, "Drama and the Model of Scientific Method."

Chapter Four

The Scientific Image: Francis Bacon's Idols and the Reformed Science

I. Introduction

Francis Bacon's Doctrine of Idols is one of the best known and most cited parts of his philosophy, but while thoughtful reflections on the terms "tribe," "cave," "marketplace," and "theater" populate academic literature, surprisingly little attention has been paid to Bacon's peculiar choice of the word "idol."[1] R.F. Jones, voicing what was until recently a commonplace of Bacon scholarship, once argued that Bacon insists on an "emphatic separation of science and religion."[2] In spite of recent efforts to reconceive Bacon's view of science as formatively shaped by his religious context, an attenuated form of Jones' assertion persists in general histories of science and religion, in which

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[1] Francis Bacon, "Novum Organum," ed. Graham Rees with Maria Wakely, vol. XI, *Oxford Francis Bacon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 82-91. Hereafter abbreviated as *NO* and cited parenthetically. Other references to Francis Bacon's works, unless otherwise specified, taken from *Works*, ed. James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis, and Douglas Denon Heath (London: Longman, 1857-1874). Hereafter *SEH* followed by volume and page number. Bacon identifies "four kinds of *Idols* which beset human minds": Idols of the Tribe, Idols of the Cave, Idols of the Market, and Idols of the Theater. Idols of the Tribe refer to errors "rooted in human nature itself," ranging from the "narrowness" of human intelligence to "the inadequacy of the senses," to the "contaminations of the affections" (89). Idols of the Cave allude to Plato's allegory of the cave and describe errors that belong to individual persons as a result of their bodily constitution, education, and experience (91). Idols of the Market include errors that result from social intercourse, especially the kinds of misconceptions that arise from the use of language. And finally, Idols of the Theater result from the misguided dogmas of philosophy, "for in my eyes the philosophies received and discovered are so many stories made up and acted out, stories which have created sham worlds worthy of the stage" (82).

[2] R.F. Jones, *Ancients and Moderns: A Study of the Background of the "Battle of the books"* (St. Louis: Washington University Studies, 1936), 63; for Bacon's comments on religion and science supporting Jones' reading, see Bacon, *Valerius Terminus*, *SEH*, III, 219 and *De Augmentis Scientiarum*, *SEH*, V, 112-13 and IV, 342.

Bacon still figures as a secular and secularizing force.[3] This persistence is perhaps nowhere clearer than in the tendency to regard Bacon's usage of the word "idol" as a form of metaphorical displacement from religious to secular discourse, which invariably represses its religious connotations: taken metaphorically, Bacon's idols have little or nothing to do with the Protestant critique of idolatry.[4]

But in the post-Reformation, iconoclastic context of late sixteenth-century England, "idol" is not a neutral term. There is no mistaking its religious import when Bacon contrasts "*Idols* of the human mind" with "ideas of the divine": in language evocative of Neoplatonic cosmology, Bacon implies that "ideas of the divine"—forms of nature conceived in the mind of God and left as traces or signatures of his divine authorship on "created things as we find them"—register as "idols" in the human mind, false appearances or distortions of perceived reality which falsely picture nature just as an idol falsely pictures deity (*NO*, 187). In the *Novum Organum* (1620) and *De Augmentis Scientiarum* (1623) Bacon draws on three separate but related meanings of the word "idol." We are used to thinking of idols as material objects associated with false worship—such artifacts as those destroyed during the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII.[5] Beginning with Maimonides in the twelfth century, however, Moshe Halbertal and Avishai Margalit have argued, the problem of false worship was understood to be symptomatic of a deeper metaphysical crisis in Judeo-Christian thought:

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[3] See, for example, Brad Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), 57. See also Markku Peltonen, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge Companion to Bacon*, ed. Markku Peltonen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 19.
[4] See Moshe Halbertal and Avishai Margalit, *Idolatry*, trans. Naomi Goldblum (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 242; and most recently, Perez Zagorin, "Francis Bacon's concept of objectivity," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 34 (2001): 387.
[5] See Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005) and Margaret Aston, *England's Iconoclasts: Volume 1, Laws Against Images* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

an image becomes an idol when the distinction between human and divine ontologies collapses—when, for example, representations of deity are mistaken for the real presence of the divine.[6] Idolatry, understood this way, is a kind of perceptual error: benighted souls seeking after the divine saw deity where they should have seen "stockes and stones," or so the argument goes in Thomas Cranmer's "Homile against peril of Idolatrie and superfluous decking of Churches" in 1576.[7] This way of defining idolatry—as a perceptual error that evidences a more fundamental metaphysical error—might seem strange but for a third and final meaning of "idol," a special, technical meaning in scholastic psychology. The Latin *idola* is a transliteration of the Greek word *eidolon* (εἴδωλον), "likeness" or "image in the mind,"; it refers to the mental images or visible *species* of scholastic sensory cognition.[8] *Eidolon*, from which the word "idol" in English derives, is cognate with *idea* (ἰδέα)—"idol" and "idea," in English, have a shared etymological root in Ancient Greek.[9] By drawing a contrast between human "*Idols*" and "ideas of the divine," Bacon plays on this etymology, activating a palimpsest of associations too often lost on modern readers: the "idols" of Baconian philosophy refer to cognitive errors that distort our perception of reality, but this perceptual distortion stems from a wrong understanding of the relationship between human and divine orders of being.

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[6] For a discussion of idolatry as metaphysical error, see Halbertal and Margalit, *Idolatry*, 108-36.
[7] Thomas Cranmer, "Homilie against peril of Idolatrie and superfluous decking of Churches," in *Certain sermons or homilies appointed to be read in churches* (London: 1576), 86.
[8] Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, revised by Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenszie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), s.v. "εἴδωλον."
[9] The Greek word *eido* (εἴδω), which means both "to see" and "to know" (Liddell and Scott, s.v. "εἴδω") is the etymological root for several foundational terms in ancient Greek philosophy, including: *eidos* (εἶδος), "form," "that which is seen," "shape" (Liddell and Scott, s.v. "εἶδος"); *eidolon* (εἴδολον), "image," "likeness," "image or portrait, esp. of a god"; and *idea* (ἰδέα), "form," especially in Platonic philosophy, "ideal forms, archetypes" (Liddell and Scott, s.v. "ἰδέα").

Bacon's philological wordplay touches on the interests of his humanist contemporaries, many of whom worked to turn the study of ancient languages into a new methodological tool for the recovery of scripture's original or "literal" sense in Ancient Greek and Hebrew.[10] When Bacon claims to have discovered a method for the "*Interpretation of Nature*" (*NO*, 51), when he compares the forms of nature to letters of the alphabet (*NO*, 181), and when he insists that "experience has yet to be made literate [*literata*]" (*NO*, 159), he aligns his project with a set of broader cultural concerns about reading, interpretation, and meaning. This chapter contributes to a growing body of scholarship on the relationship between early modern science and religion by recovering the religious context for Bacon's Doctrine of Idols. In what follows, I argue that Bacon transforms Luther's critique of scholastic theology into a critique of scholastic natural philosophy: just as the images of Catholic worship become idols in the new, reformed theology, so the mental images of scholastic sensory cognition—the *species* of medieval scholastic psychology—become "idols of the human mind" in Bacon's new, reformed science.[11] The iconoclastic rhetoric of Bacon's Doctrine of Idols brings ancient skepticism's critique of empiricism to bear against neo-Aristotelian theories of sensory cognition; the new method of induction, in turn, builds this skeptical critique into the epistemological architecture of Bacon's experimental philosophy. Both Bacon and Luther emphatically distance themselves from skepticism, and yet both employ its modes of critique: like Luther, Bacon turns skeptical paradox into a condition of meaning rather

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[10] See Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Renaissance* (Oxford University Press, 2002) and "Protestant allegory" in *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory*, ed. Rita Copeland and Peter T. Struck (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 177-90.

[11] Michael Kiernan uses the word "reformed" to describe Bacon's project although Bacon does not use it himself. See Francis Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, ed. Michael Kiernan (Oxford University Press, 2000). Hereafter abbreviated as *AL* and cited parenthetically.

than an impediment, which brings the "*Interpretation of Nature*" into alignment with the interpretation of scripture (*NO*, 29).[12] Skepticism, therefore, provides an important but largely unrecognized link between scriptural hermeneutics and science in the early modern period.

II. The Interpretation of Scripture

Scholars have long sought to find causal connections between the coincident rise of Protestantism and experimental philosophy in the early modern period. R.F. Jones's observation that Bacon insists on an "emphatic separation of science and religion" appears in *Ancients and Moderns*, which connects the rise of the new science with Puritanism in the seventeenth century. In the 1930's, Jones, Robert Merton, and Dorothy Stimson simultaneously and independently arrived at what Peter Harrison calls the "'Puritanism and science' thesis," otherwise known as the "Merton Thesis," which attempted to account for what seemed a disproportionately high number of Puritans among the ranks of scientists in the Royal Society.[13] While the search for a particular connection between Puritanism and seventeenth-century science has since been abandoned, the general premise that there was a connection between religion and science that could account for major innovations in the study of nature in the early modern period has become the basis for an entire subfield of study. Roughly two bodies of scholarship have taken shape in the wake of the Merton thesis, between which a peculiar gap has

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[12] For Luther's comments on skepticism, see "On the Bondage of the Will," in *Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation*, ed. E. Gordon Rupp and Philip S. Watson (Louisville: The Westminster Press, 1969), 105.

[13] Peter Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 5-8. See Bernard Cohen "Some Documentary Reflections on the Dissemination and Reception of the 'Merton Thesis'" in *Robert K. Merton: Consensus and Controversy*, edited by Jon Clark, Celia Modgil, and Sohan Modgil (New York: Falmer Press, 1990).

emerged with respect to Bacon. Forward-looking histories of secularism, most recently, Brad Gregory's *The Unintended Reformation*, tend to reinforce Jones's anachronistic picture of Bacon as presciently modern. Bacon's place in the history of secularism is indeed justified by his reception history, but Bacon himself never sought to defenestrate religion from science.[14] By contrast, histories of biblical hermeneutics emphasize continuity with the past rather than the future to suggest that science and religion are not so easily separated as Jones originally supposed—that, indeed, such separation characterizes Bacon's work least of all.[15]

Parsing out the distinctly modern bits of Bacon's thought from the residual idiom of late-medieval scholasticism in which he continued to express himself requires that we look to his past, not his future—to the conditions of Bacon's thought rather than its reception. Harrison, whose work on biblical hermeneutics and science provides the fullest account of these conditions, draws our attention to a foundational metaphor linking scientific to theological reform in early modernity: the twinned Books of Scripture and Nature.[16] The longstanding analogy between the Book of God's Word and the Book of God's Works inextricably tied the study of scripture to the study of nature. It is on the analogy of the two Books that Roger Bacon, who figures in traditional histories of

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[14] Gregory, *Unintended Reformation*, 57. See also Amos Funkenstein, *Theology and the Scientific Imagination: from the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

[15] On the relationship between biblical hermeneutics and early modern science, see Harrison, *The Bible*; Harrison, *The Territories of Science and Religion* (Chicago University Press, 2015); and *The Word and the World*, ed. Keven Killeen and Peter J. Forshaw (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). On Bacon and religion, see, Stephen K. McKnight, *The Religious Foundations of Francis Bacon's Thought* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006); Steven Matthews, *Theology and Science in the Thought of Francis Bacon* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2008); and Kristen Poole, "God's Game of Hide-and-Seek: Bacon and Allegory," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Early Modern Literature and Science* ed. Howard Marchitello and Evelyn Tribble (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 115-138.

[16] On the two books of divine expression, see also McKnight, *Religious Foundations*, 79-80; John C. Briggs, *Francis Bacon and the Rhetoric of Nature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989); and Poole, "Hide and Seek," 123.

science as an early proponent of experiment and mathematics, defends the pursuit of natural philosophy in the thirteenth century. Roger Bacon is typical in asserting that "the whole aim of philosophy is that the Creator may be known through the knowledge of the creature."[17] The literal sense of nature, he explains, discovers to its interpreters spiritual meanings consistent with those of scripture: "all sacred writers…in their expositions take a literal sense from the natures of things and from their properties, in order that they may bring out spiritual meanings through convenient adaptations and similitudes."[18] In this model, allegoresis provides a hermeneutic method for securing mutual consistency between the two Books of divine expression. According to Harrison, Protestantism effected a shift from allegorical to literalist methods of interpretation that was foundational to the shift from scholastic natural philosophy to modern science.[19]

Harrison is right to connect hermeneutics to science, but his argument rests on the now contested claim that Protestant hermeneutics displaces allegory as the foundation of scriptural interpretation. He is not alone in equating Protestant antagonism toward the scholastic, four-fold method of interpretation (literal, anagogical, allegorical, and tropological) known as the *Quadriga* and its renewed emphasis on scripture's literal sense with a denial of allegory. But the exact nature of the literal sense and the role it played in both theological and scientific reform remains open for debate. Recent work on Protestant allegory suggests that traditional methods of allegorical interpretation persist in Protestant hermeneutics. As Brian Cummings explains, the literal sense was made to absorb the figural senses of scripture proscribed by the *Quadriga*: in moments "when

[17] Roger Bacon, *Opus Majus*, trans. Robert Belle Burke, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1928), 49.
[18] Roger Bacon, *Opus Majus*, 50.
[19] Harrison, *The Bible*, 8.

Scripture itself intends the allegory, the literal meaning *is* the allegorical meaning."[20] Understood this way, Protestantism is less concerned with the distinction between literal and allegorical senses of scripture than between "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" allegory: allegories which appear in scripture are "intrinsic" and thus require interpretation; allegories invented by the exegete to clarify scripture, by contrast, are "extrinsic" and off-limits.[21] Protestant antagonism, according to this line of thought, is directed at "extrinsic" allegory, or "imposed" allegory; the interpretation of "intrinsic" allegory generally continued to follow traditional protocols. That allegorical interpretation persists in Protestant reading culture is a point well taken, but I am wary of carrying the matter too far in this direction. While it is true that Protestant hermeneutics cannot be so facilely summed up as a "denial of allegory," neither were Protestant readers asserting a distinction without a difference. Luther's emphasis on the "literal sense" did more than narrow the field of allegorical interpretation to a specific type of allegory: it effected a gestalt shift in the metaphysical implications of the doctrine of accommodation, centered, as always, on disagreement over the epistemological license afforded by scripture's use of allegory. It is this shift in the metaphysical picture of deity, I argue, that entailed a shift in the metaphysical picture of nature in Bacon's philosophy.

Because the Protestant Reformation spread to England primarily through Calvin and Tyndale, recent work on the English Reformation tends to avoid discussing Luther,

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[20] Cummings, "Protestant Allegory," 179 and 182; see also Poole, "Hide and Seek," 121.
[21] For the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic allegory, see Cummings, "Protestant Allegory," 179; Scott Hendrix, "Luther Against the Background of the History of Biblical Interpretation" *Interpretation* 37 (1983): 222-39. See also James Douglas Flemming's related distinction between "intension" and "extension" in "Making Sense of Science and the Literal: Modern Semantics and Early Modern Hermeneutics," in *The Word and the World*, esp. 48.

who played a very limited role in the English context.[22] Significantly, however, Luther features prominently in the way Bacon construed his own historical genealogy. Bacon, who never cites Calvin or Tyndale by name, remarkably credits Luther with founding both Protestantism and Humanism in the *Advancement of Learning* (1605). It was Luther, according to Bacon, who revived the ancient authors of "Diuinitie" and "Humanitie" and who "dr[e]w on a necessitie of a more exquisite trauaile in the languages originall," wrongly attributing the methods of earlier humanists, like Erasmus, to Luther (*AL*, 21). Bacon does this, in part, to align his own project for the advancement of learning with Luther's: Bacon characterizes Luther's efforts at religious reform as motivating a more general reform of learning; and Bacon, who like Luther finds himself in "no waies ayded by the opinions of his owne time" (*AL*, 21), self-consciously takes up Luther's project for the advancement of learning by endeavoring, in the study of nature, to "make a partie against the present time."[23]

As an unforeseen consequence, however, Luther's original motivation for resurrecting ancient authors—namely, the "better understanding of those Authors" and the "languages originall, wherein [they] did write"—gave way to what Bacon calls the first "distemper of learning": a "vain" and "idle" "excesse" in the imitation of ancient style, an "affectionate studie of eloquence, and copie of speech" (*AL*, 22). Bacon's

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[22] See James Simpson, *Burning to Read* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), esp. 23-8.

[23] Thomas Sprat, writing in the seventeenth century, confirms Harrison's thesis: Sprat retrospectively characterizes the new, reformed science as an extension of reformed theology. In the *History of the Royal Society*, Sprat affirms that both the Royal Society and Church of England "may lay equal claim to the word *Reformation*; the one having compass'd it in *Religion*, the other purposing it in *Philosophy*…" Just as reformed theology introduced new methods for the interpretation of "*Scripture*," so reformed science introduced new methods for the interpretation of "the large Volume of the *Creatures*" (Thomas Sprat, *History of the Royal Society* [London: 1667], 371). The Protestant Reformation entailed a reformation not just of theology but also of natural philosophy.

version of history calls attention to an important irony in the misguided reception of Luther's philologically informed approach to scripture—namely, the idolization of elocution among Ciceronians and Atticists, whose slavish imitation of ancient authors Bacon compares to "*Pigmalions* frenzie": "It seems to me that *Pigmalions* frenzie is a good embleme or portraiture of this vanitie: for wordes are but the Images of matter, and except they haue life of reason and inuention: to fall in loue with them, is all one, as to fall in loue with a Picture" (*AL*, 23). Pygmalion's idolatrous love for a statue of his own making emblematizes the "affectionate" attentions lavished on ancient texts by such figures as Erasmus, Orsinus, and Sturm. But the "idle" study of words that Bacon describes in the *Advancement of Learning* also punningly prefigures his later account of the "Idols of the Marketplace"—that species of "idle/idol" that leads men into "controversies about words and names" (*NO*, 93). Bacon's history of Humanism closes with a familiar refrain that will echo throughout the body of his work: just as the "pride" of schoolmen "enclined" them to "leaue the Oracle of Gods word," so in the study of Nature have they abandoned "the Oracle of Gods works," which Bacon explicitly characterizes as a form of idolatry—the "ador[ation]" of "deceuing and deformed Images, which the vnequall mirror of their owne minds […] did represent vnto them" (*AL*, 25).

In fact, Bacon's association of Protestantism with Humanism was not far off the mark: Humanism, formerly a byword for secularism in nineteenth- and twentieth-century discourse, has recently been reclaimed by historians of religion and theology as a key ingredient in sixteenth-century religious reform (Protestant and Catholic alike). Luther's monumental revision of the sense of "justification" in Romans 1:17, for example, owed

as much to the new philology as it did to divine revelation.[24] But Humanism is something of a red herring in isolation from the wider context of sixteenth-century skepticism: in Luther's hands, humanist philology becomes a weapon of skeptical critique. Luther's commitment to the "literal sense" of scripture, while motivated in part by philological interests, is symptomatic of a more fundamental theological crisis: his rejection of the "rule of faith"—the principle which codified the Catholic Church's institutional authority as the ultimate arbiter of meaning in matters of scriptural interpretation.[25] By denying the rule of faith, Luther "eliminated the sole basis for testing the truth of a religious proposition," which introduced to early modern religious culture a version of the skeptical argument of Greek Pyrrhonism known as "the problem of the criterion of truth."[26] Richard Popkin has argued that Luther served as one of the "main avenues through which the skeptical views of antiquity entered late Renaissance thought," not because he read or cited Sextus Empiricus' *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, but because he prepared the way for its reception.[27] The reintroduction of the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* to the Latin-speaking world in 1560 fomented Luther's crisis of faith into a widespread epistemological crisis—what Popkin calls the "pyrrhonian crisis" of the sixteenth century.[28] From Francis Bacon's position, at the turn of the century, Sextus Empiricus and Martin Luther would appear retrospectively to belong to the same skeptical tradition.

But the problem of the criterion is just one of several skeptical paradoxes that Luther introduced to early modern religious culture. It is his much remarked upon

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[24] Cummings, *Literary Culture*, 88-101.
[25] Richard Popkin, *The History of Skepticism from Erasmus to Spinoza* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 1.
[26] Popkin, *Skepticism*, 1.
[27] Popkin, *Skepticism*, 1.
[28] Popkin, *Skepticism*, 1.

penchant for paradoxes, in general, that places him firmly in the skeptical tradition.[29] The "literal sense" of scripture takes on singular importance in Luther's hermeneutics because it generates in readers a state of *aporia* or confusion, which necessarily attends the confrontation with Christian theology's defining metaphysical paradox: the otherness of deity. The incoherence of scripture's literal sense, Luther argues, formally enacts the immeasurable ontological distance between divine and human orders of being. The contradictory and anthropomorphic ways that scripture personates God—as both jealous and loving, wrathful and merciful, omnipotent and ineffable yet entering into covenants with his creatures, etc.—present readers with an apparent conflict, a paradox. Such contradictions in Scripture's depiction of deity embarrassed readers like Erasmus, for whom extrinsic allegory provided an escape from the dilemmas endemic to scripture's literal sense.[30] By contrast, Luther sees such inconsistencies not as the natural consequence of scripture's obscurity but as a tragic consequence of human perversity: when the letter disagrees with our own sense of justice we seek to make it say something other than it appears to—we turn it into allegory.[31]

This is the familiar argument against extrinsic allegory. Intrinsic allegory, too, remains of central importance to Luther, but not in the way that recent criticism on Protestant hermeneutics imagines. Allegory always appears in moments when scripture is straining against the paradoxical nature of accommodation—representing things divine in human terms—which as Victoria Silver has argued, necessarily "involve[s] a sort of

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[29] For Luther's use of skeptical paradox, see Erasmus, "On the Freedom of the Will," in *Luther and Erasmus: Free Will and Salvation*, 41-2; Cummings, *Literary Culture*, 97-8; and Simpson, *Burning*, esp. 4-6.
[30] Erasmus, "On the Freedom of the Will," 72; See Cummings, 180.
[31] Luther, "On the Bondage of the Will," 298. See Victoria Silver, *Imperfect Sense* (Princeton University Press, 2001), 25-6.

catachresis, a 'wrenching of words.'"[32] According to Silver, Luther demonstrates his method of reading scripture's metaphors catachrestically in a sophisticated analysis of Paul's use of allegory in Galatians 4:22-31. Paul turns the old testament story of Sarah and Hagar into a typological allegory for the relationship between new and old covenants in Galatians. These verses had long played an important role in exemplifying the four levels of Catholic allegoresis: "Jerusalem" refers, literally, to the historical city, allegorically, to the church militant, tropologically, to the soul, and anagogically, to the heavenly city of God or church triumphant. Luther notices a strange asymmetry in Paul's allegory that crucially undermines the traditional four ways of interpreting "Jerusalem." Paul figures God as Abraham, the old covenant as Hagar, and the new covenant as Sarah, then associates Hagar with not one but two allegorical referents: Mt. Sinai, where Moses received the laws of the old covenant, but then, paradoxically, also with Jerusalem—the "earthly Jerusalem"—where Jesus held the Last Supper.[33] If we were to follow the apparent symmetry of the relationship between old and new covenants, personified as Sarah and Hagar, then Paul should associate Sarah with Jerusalem: "Just as Paul made Sinai into Hagar earlier, so now he would like very much to make Jerusalem into Sarah; but he neither dares nor is able to do so. Instead, he is compelled to associate Jerusalem with Mt. Sinai."[34] Paul makes Sarah not into the physical Jerusalem, but into "the spiritual and heavenly Jerusalem." The slippage between earthly and spiritual Jerusalems

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[32] Silver, *Imperfect Sense*, 127. For an early modern definition of catachresis, see George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, ed. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 2007), 262.

[33] Luther, "Lectures on Galatians," in *Luther's Works*, vol. 26, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and assoc. ed. Walter Hansen (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), 440. My reading of Lutheran hermeneutics, especially Luther's "Lectures on Galatians," follows that of Victoria Silver: see Silver, *Imperfect Sense*, esp. 117-24.

[34] Luther, "Lecture on Galatians," 438.

creates an important asymmetry: by associating Hagar with both Sinai and Jerusalem, physical places locatable on a map, Paul creates the circumstances for a new figure that disrupts the scheme. The heavenly Jerusalem does not fit into the geographical metaphor that the story initially seems to set up between Sarah and Hagar on the one hand and Sinai and Jerusalem on the other.

Luther sees Paul's allegory as a form of catachresis, a twisting or abuse of the figure that disrupts a convenient symmetry that would turn the story of Sarah and Hagar into a figure of transcendent revelation. Once this new term, "heavenly Jerusalem," which catachrestically does not fit the symmetry established by the metaphor, emerges, Luther performs a similar operation in reading Paul that Paul had performed in reading the story of Abraham: "you must not interpret" the significance of the heavenly Jerusalem "anagogically, as the sophists do, applying it to what they call the church triumphant in heaven; you must apply it to the church militant on earth."[35] The apparent symmetry between the earthly and heavenly Jerusalem would imply symmetry between things material and spiritual, seen and unseen, human and divine. But Luther, following Paul's example, uses this as an opportunity for lateral rather than vertical movement: the term "heavenly" simply refers to the immateriality of the church militant, which is immaterial not in any transcendental sense, but in the way that any institutional organization is; the "church militant" consists of "believers scattered throughout the world, who have the same Gospel, the same faith in Christ, the same Holy Spirit, and the same sacraments."[36] It is still earthly, but it has no single geographical location. In short, Luther uses catachresis to defy a transcendental reading of "heavenly Jerusalem," which

[35] Luther, "Lecture on Galatians," 439.
[36] Luther, "Lecture on Galatians," 439.

refers to the physical world of human experience rather than to the transcendent, spiritual world to come.

This catachrestic reading of Paul's allegory demonstrates Luther's key difference from the hermeneutic regime in which he was originally trained to read allegory: by moving laterally, rather than vertically, Luther shows how scripture's use of figural language always turns back on the reader—it is always an expression of the relation between man and deity and is not to be mistaken for transcendent knowledge of God himself. To give a simpler example, expressions like "the hand of God" draw us into relation with God by figuring man as the *imago dei*. But God does not literally have hands. The metaphor tells us nothing about the nature of deity. Unless understood as an "abuse" not only of our understanding of deity but of language itself, such instrumental figurations of things unrepresentable and therefore unknowable would constitute an act of idolatry.[37] By calling attention to its own failure to establish a symmetrical relationship between terms, catachresis enacts at the level of literary form a fundamental point of reformed theology: the absurdity of scripture's accommodations forces us to acknowledge the ineffability of the divine; and the absurdity of scriptural expression is most apparent when taken literally.

The traditional doctrine of accommodation, in Luther's estimation, licensed an intractable desire to turn scripture's catachrestic language into metaphor, giving allegorical exegetes the freedom to construct an image of deity commensurate with our own, incorrigible notions of justice, righteousness, and grace. The failure of allegory to resolve the metaphysical dilemma of knowing an unknowable God motivates a gestalt

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[37] George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy: A Critical Edition*, ed. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 262.

shift—a conversion—in our metaphysical picture of deity. Luther's hermeneutic, understood this way, promises to break the idols of scholastic theology—the metaphors, analogies, allegories, and other figures of symmetry and correspondence between things human and divine, visible and invisible—by insisting on the literal sense. This, I argue in the next section, is precisely what Bacon proposes to do with his new method for the "*Interpretation of Nature*," except that in this case, it is the scholastic idols of natural philosophy that will be subject to catachrestic reading. Just as Luther points to skeptical paradoxes in scripture to initiate a conversion from scholastic to reformed methods of biblical interpretation, so Bacon uses skeptical paradoxes to effect a similar conversion from scholastic to reformed methods of interpreting nature. Bacon's Doctrine of Idols creates the need for a new a hermeneutic in the study of nature analogous to Luther's reformed scriptural hermeneutic: both see the "conflict of appearances"—the lapses or incongruities either in scripture or in the phenomena of nature, in the book of God's Word or the book of God's Works—as central to a reformed understanding not just of scripture but also of nature.[38]

III. From Image to Idol

Bacon's Doctrine of Idols lays the groundwork for new methods in the "*Interpretation of Nature*." It offers a new account of human sensory-cognition that challenges and seeks to replace the dominant account formulated and popularized by the scholastic natural philosopher Roger Bacon in what became known as the Doctrine of *Species*. But to understand Francis Bacon's critique of the Doctrine of *Species* we must

[38] The phrase "conflict of appearances" comes from Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Scepticism*, ed. Julia Annas and Jonathan Barnes (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 14.

look first at how perception came to be regarded as veridical in scholastic psychology. The densely visual vocabulary of late medieval and early modern epistemological discourses provides important historical background linking Aristotelian optics to the Doctrine of *Species*. Mary Carruthers has observed that "it was common in Greek, medieval, and early modern psychology to think of perception as a visual process, whatever the particular source of data": the image, originally associated with vision, came to signify the "final product of the entire process of sense perception, whether its origin be visual or auditory, tactile or olfactory."[39] According to the Greek cognitive paradigm, all sensations register as images because theories of vision provide a model according to which all the other senses operate.

The Greeks and their scholastic commentators articulated their theories of knowledge in and through visual metaphors that imply a metonymic relationship between knowledge and visual sensory experience. A set of interlocking terms, etymologically derived from the verb εἴδω (*eido*), which means both "to see" and "to know," manifest the total integration of vision and knowledge in the architecture of Aristotle's philosophy. In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle creates a fundamental, ontological distinction between totally inert matter (ὕλη) and form (εἶδος or μορφή).[40] Form inheres in matter to produce the objects of material reality. The *De Anima* extends this ontological distinction to the mechanics of sensation by defining sensation as the body's capacity to take on the form of an object "without the matter."[41] The conceptual relationship between form and image

[39] Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), 27.
[40] For a discussion of Aristotle's terms, see Antonio Perez-Ramos, *Francis Bacon's Idea of Science and the Maker's Knowledge Tradition* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1988), 71.
[41] Aristotle, *De Anima*, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, vol. 1 (Princeton University Press, 1984), 424a.

is etymologically preserved in the linked terms εἶδος (*eidos*) and εἴδωλον (*eidolon*) which both derive from the verb εἴδω (*eido*): εἶδος (*eidos*), in the *De Anima*, refers to an object's form as distinct from its matter, but literally translated, εἶδος (*eidos*) means "that which is seen." The word εἴδωλον (*eidolon*) means "image in the mind," or "idea."[42] Thus the εἶδος (*eidos*) or "form" of an object registers cognitively as an εἴδωλον (*eidolon*) or "image."

The etymological unity of Aristotle's vocabulary becomes attenuated in the Latinized vocabulary of his scholastic commentators, but the basic conceptual unity remains intact: the term *species* still implies a close connection between vision and cognition. It derives from the verb *specio*, "to see," and translates variously as "outward appearance," "outward form," "image," "mental picture," or "impression."[43] Taking up Aristotle's definition of sensation as the capacity to take on the form of an object "without the matter," Roger Bacon defines the visible *species* of Neo-Aristotelian sensory cognition as the forms of objects transmitted to the "inner senses" through sensation.[44] The *species* or form of an object radiates or multiplies through the object's surrounding medium, where it intersects with and becomes actualized in the organs of sense; the *species* then multiplies through the tissues of the human body, to the intellectual faculties, where it finally registers experientially as an "image" or idea. In this model, Katherine Tachau argues, "concepts are not merely linked to perceptual processes, but are deposited by them as residual images like, or *similar* to their object by virtue of a shared nature."[45]

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[42] Liddell and Scott, s.v. "εἴδω," "εἶδος," and "εἴδωλον."
[43] *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. "*species*."
[44] See Katherine Tachau, *Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham: Optics, Epistemology, and the Foundations of Semantics* (New York: Brill, 1988), 4; Robert Pasnau, *Theories of Cognition in the later Middle Ages* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 12.
[45] Tachau, *Vision and Certitude*, 16.

The emphasis on verisimilitude was of paramount importance to scholastic theories of sensory cognition because it justified what we would now recognize as a form of naïve epistemological realism in the study of nature. Aristotelian optics provided Roger Bacon with a cognitive basis for collapsing the distinction between what a thing is and the way that it appears.

The naïve correspondence between appearance and reality established by the Doctrine of *Species* allows Roger Bacon to turn what was originally a sensory-cognitive theory of optics into a theory of physical causation. "*Species*" are not just images formed during cognition when the radiated form of an object activates the potential of the sense organ to take on the image or likeness of the object; they also now referred to the physical "effect of any agent" on the objects around it. Roger Bacon makes this move explicit in his preface to the *De multiplicatione specierum* (c. 1267):

> …the principles and universal bases defined by authors of [works on] vision and aspects can and ought to be applied to the other senses—and not only to the other senses, but to all the matter of the world altered by the *species* and powers of all agents whatsoever. And therefore the entire action of nature and the generation of natural things take their bases and principles from the aforementioned optical authors.[46]

Optics can serve as a paradigm not just for all forms of sensation, but for "the entire action of nature." In optics, Roger Bacon sees a complete system of natural philosophy. The word *species* continues to denote "the likeness of any object, emanating from the object," since "the *species* is, of course, the similitude of the object from which it emanates." But, as David Lindberg explains, "it is more than that; it is the force or power by which any object acts on its surroundings."[47] The Doctrine of *Species* becomes, in

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[46] Roger Bacon, *De Multiplicatione Specierum*, ed. David Lindberg (New York: Clarendon Press, 1983), vii.
[47] Roger Bacon, *De Multiplicatione*, lv.

Roger Bacon's *De multiplicatione specierum*, a theory of natural causation, a physics modeled after the mechanics of vision. And this is only possible because the Doctrine of *Species* guarantees that things are as they appear, that sensory experience gives us direct access to nature.

There is good evidence to suggest that Francis Bacon was familiar with Roger Bacon's medieval Doctrine of *Species*: in his description of the relationship between reason, imagination, and will, Francis Bacon writes that the "sense sends all kinds of images [*idola*] over to the imagination [*phantasia*] for reason to judge of; and reason again when it has made its judgment and selection sends them over to imagination before the decree be put into execution."[48] Sensations register as images in the imagination, the faculty through which reason and will communicate with one another. Graham Rees points to Roger Bacon's Doctrine of *Species* as the origin of this concept, but if Francis Bacon knows and seems to operate within the scholastic model of visual, sensory cognition, why does he use the term *idola* rather than *species*?[49] Roger Bacon offers a list of synonyms for the term *species*, whose use and meaning depend on context, including "idol," which, he explains, refers to the kinds of *species* that appear in mirrors.[50] Francis Bacon draws directly on this usage when he figures the human mind as a mirror: "the human intellect is to the rays of things like an uneven mirror which mingles its own nature with the nature of things, and distorts and stains it" (*NO*, 79). Bacon's "uneven mirror" evokes the underlying metaphor of Roger Bacon's *De multiplicatione specierum*,

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[48] *SEH*, IV, 406.
[49] See Rees's note: *NO*, 507. For further evidence of Francis Bacon's knowledge of Roger Bacon's philosophy, see Herbert Hochberg, "The Empirical Philosophy of Roger and Francis Bacon," *Philosophy of Science*, 20 (1953): 321.
[50] Roger Bacon, *De Multiplicatione Specierum*, 3 and 5.

which figures *species* as mental images that accurately reflect the real qualities of objects of perception the way that a mirror reflects reality as we perceive it, but for a radically different purpose.

The principle of similitude, which secures the veridicality of sensory perception in Roger Bacon's *De multiplicatione specierum*, renders perception a process of exact representation: the species is like its agent because the mind mirrors the real qualities of objects. Francis Bacon materializes the scholastic principle of similitude in the figure of the mind as a mirror, but the mirror motif serves as a vehicle of critique in the *Novum Organum*. Francis Bacon's "idols of the human mind" turn the rhetoric of iconoclasts into a critique of the Doctrine of *Species* by returning to the original Aristotelian term, εἴδολα (*eidola*), which he transliterates as *idola* or "idols." Indeed, the word used in the Greek New Testament for "image of a god" or "idol," in the religious sense, is the same word Aristotle uses for "image in the mind"—εἴδολα (*eidola*).[51] The Doctrine of Idols exploits this philological ambiguity for rhetorical effect.

Bacon rails against what he considers the anthropomorphism of scholastic natural philosophy in his discussion of the idols in the *De Augmentis Scientiarum*: he points to the attitude that "Man is as it were the common measure and mirror of nature. For it is not credible (if all particulars be gone through and noted) what a troop of fictions and idols the reduction of the operations of nature to the similitude of human actions has brought into natural philosophy; I mean, the fancy that nature acts as man does."[52] The

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[51] Εἴδωλον originally referred to an "image," "likeness," or "image in the mind," and only later to "image of a god, idol." The first references for this latter meaning in Greek are from I Kings 17:12 and 1 Corinthians 12:2. See Liddell and Scott, s.v. "εἴδωλον." The order is reversed for the English word "idol." See OED, s.v. "idol."

[52] *SEH*, IV, 432.

"Anthropomorphites," he explains, "bred in the cells of gross and solitary monks," idolatrously supposed that "nature acts as man does."[53] This is what the Doctrine of *Species* does: it collapses the distinction between the mind and nature by inventing a physics of natural causation modeled after human sensory cognition—it supposes that "nature acts as man does." Instead of discovering in nature the "true signatures and impressions" of the ideas of the divine, scholastic methods of interpretation invent *idols*—"empty opinions" of the human intellect, which "work so as virtually to enslave and surrender the world to human thought" (*NO*, 109). The scholastic paradigm, by arguing for direct correspondence between appearance and reality, flattens any distinction between representation and thing represented and thus commits the same cognitive substitution error that defines idolatry during the Reformation.

Bacon's catachrestic figure of the mind as a bent mirror enacts at the level of literary form the same point that Luther makes in his catachrestic reading of Paul's allegory in Galatians: catachresis disrupts the symmetry implied by allegory, analogy, and metaphor, and thus becomes a figural technique for circumventing the tendency to use the visible, material world as a vehicle for knowledge of the hidden, spiritual world. Analogy and metaphor become the figural manifestations of idolatry in the eyes of reformers because they help us imagine an otherwise hidden God in ways still commensurate with the apparent, knowable world of human existence. And it is this idea of access, penetration, or transcendence that Bacon so violently resists—the false notion or "idol" that we can penetrate the veil of appearances by constructing analogies between things human and divine, visible and invisible, apparent and real. Understood this way,

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[53] *SEH*, IV, 432-3.

Bacon's idols describe exactly the kind of metaphysical error that Luther ascribes to scholastic theology and which his hermeneutics seeks to reform: allegory and metaphor tend to collapse the distinction between incommensurate orders of being; to think that our senses give us full and direct knowledge of the real qualities of objects is no different from thinking that scripture gives us full and direct knowledge of deity. The substitution of *idola* for *species*, as part of the mirror motif, forms part of a larger skeptical critique of the naive verisimilitude accepted by scholastic optical theory, and by extension a critique of the natural philosophy modeled after the mechanics of vision.

V. The Interpretation of Nature

Bacon's catachrestic troping of the mirror forms part of a larger argument in the *Novum Organum* about the vulnerability of human sensory cognition to error. He writes that "the sense is by nature a weak and wandering thing"; that "the greatest hindrance and distortion of the human intellect stems from the dullness, inadequacy, and unreliability of the senses" (*NO*, 87); and that "the very information of the sense is both defective and deceptive" (*NO*, 37) because "it either deserts or deceives us" (*NO*, 33). He repeats this refrain several times, concluding that because "the impressions of the very sense itself are faulty," "the whole process leading from the sense and from things to axioms and conclusions is treacherous and ineffectual" (*NO*, 109). His critique of the senses is meant to refute the naïve assumption central to the Doctrine of *Species* that appearances correspond to reality.

But Bacon criticizes the senses not because he desires, in Cartesian fashion, to abandon them. He repeatedly asserts that his philosophy provides "helps for the sense, in

order to make good what is lacking and put right what deceives" (*NO*, 33). This "help" as he calls it is provided by induction. The preface to the *Novum Organum* describes induction as a method designed to "open up and lay down a new and certain pathway from the perceptions of the senses to the mind" (*NO*, 53). "*Induction*," as Bacon defines it, is "that form of demonstration which upholds the senses" (*NO*, 31); it is from the testimony of the senses that "all natural knowledge should, unless we prefer madness, be derived" (*NO*, 35). For this reason, he extravagantly refers to himself in the preface to the *Instauratio Magna* (1620) as the "high priest of sense" and "a learned interpreter of its oracles": "whereas others merely claim to watch over and cherish the sense, I do so in fact" (*NO*, 35). Bacon critiques the senses to undermine the naïve assumption that things are as they appear, not to "undermine" the "credit and authority" of the senses themselves: "as I said at the start and constantly maintain," he writes, "the authority of human sense and intellect should not, for all their weakness, be despised but furnished with help" (*NO*, 107).

Just as allegory—or rather the failure of allegory to adequately represent deity—is central to Luther's reformed hermeneutic, so the senses—or rather their failure to adequately represent the real qualities of objects—become the foundation of Bacon's theory of forms and method of induction. Bacon deploys a unique epistemological criterion (what I call here, the phenomenalist criterion) of certainty best demonstrated, paradoxically, by the skeptic, Sextus Empiricus, in the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*. The *Outlines* advances positive criterion for certainty grounded not in empirical observation but in a logical tautology: we can be certain that an object appears the way that it does without claiming that it is as it appears—"no-one, presumably, will raise a controversy

over whether an existing thing appears this way or that," according to Sextus; "rather, they investigate whether it is such as it appears."[54] In other words, every object appears the way that it appears—of this we can be absolutely certain because it is formally rather than contingently true. This claim, crucially, amounts to a positive definition of knowledge: it defines knowledge as the knowledge of appearances rather than the knowledge of real qualities. Because Sextus embeds this seemingly trivial constructive argument in series of negative rhetorical exercises, it has been overlooked, but if we take it seriously as an epistemological criterion, we can trace a series of non-trivial consequences for the study of nature. By proposing a new criterion for certain knowledge, a knowledge not of ontological essences but of phenomenal appearances, Sextus Empiricus' *Outlines* helps establish the logic behind Bacon's theory of forms and new method for the "*Interpretation of Nature*": Bacon asserts that "the sense in its primary objects at once apprehends the appearance of the object"—the appearance of the object not its real qualities—"and consents to the truth thereof," which is simply to say that we can be certain about the way a thing appears, whether it is as it appears or not.[55] By focusing the study of nature around appearances, Bacon can guarantee absolute certainty, even in questions of empirical observation.

Rhetorically, the *Outlines* serves as a handbook or manual that demonstrates how to refute any argument using two sets of skeptical tropes or modes. The goal of skepticism is to create a "conflict of appearances": the Pyrrhonian tropes aim to demonstrate that for every true experience, it is possible to have a false experience that is

[54] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines*, 9.
[55] *SEH*, IV, 428.

indistinguishable from it.[56] The creation of a "conflict of appearances," i.e. the construction of skeptical paradoxes, reduces the skeptic to a state of ἀπορία or "confusion," and until we can provide justifiable grounds for deciding between alternative accounts, we must "suspend judgment" (ἐποχή). Three argument types function as the philosophical core of Sextus Empiricus' skepticism, and they reappear as central features of Baconian induction: the critique of the senses, the problem of the criterion, and the critique of deductive reasoning.

Because skepticism depends on identifying appearances as such, the senses figure centrally across modes. Arguments that depend on the unreliability of the senses appear frequently in Sextus' expositions of the other modes because "it is the differences among the most important parts of the body, especially those which are naturally fitted for deciding and perceiving, which can produce the greatest conflict of appearances."[57] The examples that he cites derive from everyday experience: "that the senses disagree with one another is clear. For instance, paintings seem to sight to have recesses and projections, but not to touch"; "the same tower appears round from a distance and square from nearby"; etc.[58] Because the senses give conflicting testimony regarding the same objects they offer a quick and easy way of generating a "conflict of appearances." After describing the mode "deriving from the differences among senses" Sextus concludes that "more cases than these can be given; but so as not to waste time…we should say this:

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[56] I take the wording of this formulation from Stuart Clark, who in describing the reception of Pyrrhonian tropes in the Renaissance writes: "taken together, the tropes turned every aspect of visual experience, correct and incorrect alike, into something relative, not absolute. They established the principle that for every visual experience deemed to be true it was always possible to have a deemed-to-be-false visual experience that was indistinguishable from it"(*Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2007], 4). The Pyrrhonian tropes described by Sextus Empiricus are not predominantly visual, but the principle remains the same.

[57] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines*, 14.

[58] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines*, 11.

Each of the objects of perception which appears to us seems to impress us in a variety of ways… It is unclear then, whether in reality it has these qualities" or whether the qualities it seems to have "depend[] on the different constitution of the sense-organs[.]"[59] In other words, the critique of the senses directly refutes the kind of naïve epistemological assumption characteristic of the Doctrine of *Species*, that the qualities an object appears to have are its real qualities.

It is important to emphasize that the critique of the senses does not demonstrate the accuracy or inaccuracy of the senses in relation to the external world, as when, for example, Plato invokes the visual sensory illusion of a straight stick that appears bent in water.[60] Plato's example demonstrates the unreliability of the senses by contrasting what we already know to be the case against what appears to be the case. But examples of this type ignore an important paradox: how can we know that the stick is straight to begin with? In other words, when confronted with a "conflict of appearances," how do we know which appearances correspond to the object's real qualities? The question of accuracy implies some access to the real qualities of an object that might inform us of sensory error. But as Stuart Clark explains, "what matter[s] in the Pyrrhonian tropes [is] no longer the accuracy or inaccuracy of sensory experiences when compared to the external world, but their *difference* when compared to each other."[61]

The argument that Sextus makes is therefore more radical: there is no way to compare sensory experiences against what is really the case because all of our knowledge depends on our senses. Sextus demonstrates this most clearly when he rehearses a then

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[59] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines*, 26.
[60] Plato, *Republic*, in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), X.602d.
[61] Clark, *Vanities*, 4.

familiar argument to demonstrate that "snow is black": "we oppose…the view that snow is white" by observing that "snow is frozen water and water is black," "therefore, snow is black."[62] This argument, which depends on a conflict in visual sensory experience, does not aim to prove that snow is black; rather it calls attention to the fact that we can only assert with certainty the fact that snow *appears* white when it is frozen, while holding in suspense whether it actually *is* white. This example is designed to remind us that our only access to the qualities of objects is through our senses: by pointing to the discrepancies between sensory experiences—e.g. observing that water appears white when frozen but "black" at room temperature—Sextus undermines the very possibility of deriving some external criterion by which we might judge the true nature of, in this case, snow. In other words, the examples do not point to the unreliability of the senses so much as the limits of human knowledge. The question of accuracy or error is beside the point because without some criteria for establishing one sensory experience as the "real" or "true" one, we can only say that the appearances conflict—we have no grounds for preferring one set of appearances over the other except arbitrarily.

By demonstrating the impossibility of deriving some criterion for judging false from true appearances, the critique of the senses leads naturally into a description of what historians of skepticism refer to as the problem of the criterion. The problem of the criterion becomes an important argument type for Sextus because it points to the impossibility of deriving a standard by which we can judge whether appearance corresponds to reality and thus whether an argument is sound. Sextus explains that anyone who offers a criterion will need to provide a logical proof justifying it, which will

[62] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines*, 12.

depend on another criterion, which requires another proof, and so on *ad infinitum*.[63] The skeptic need only invoke the problem of the criterion to demonstrate that deductive reasoning can only guarantee the validity, not the soundness of an argument. This is the argument type that, Richard Popkin argues, Luther employs when he rejects the Catholic rule of faith.

The solution to the problem of the criterion is clear: limit the inquiry to what *appears* to be the case rather than what *is* the case. On a rhetorical level, the critique of the senses functions as a negative attack on the naïve epistemological identification of an object's phenomenal qualities with its real qualities, but it serves a constructive epistemological purpose as well. The skeptical epistemology identifies a new standard of absolute certainty by providing a self-warranting, self-evident because tautologous criteria for certain knowledge: things always appear the way that they appear. Skeptical paradoxes therefore function not to create radical doubt about appearances but to point to the limits placed on human understanding by the senses. By "[suspending] judgment about external existing objects,"[64] the skeptic turns the investigation away from the real qualities of objects and toward the way that objects appear: "we say, then, that the standard of the Skeptical persuasion is what is apparent[.]"[65]By limiting his knowledge to "what is apparent," the skeptic avoids affirming or denying anything outside the scope of his own qualitative experience. Sextus thus describes the skeptic as one who "[reports] descriptively on each item according to how it appears at the time," while holding in suspense knowledge concerning "external fact."[66]

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[63] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines*, 30-1.
[64] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines*, 31.
[65] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines*, 9.
[66] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines*, 3.

In the "Plan of the Work," Bacon asserts that "the very notions of the mind" on which the study of nature depends "are ineptly and recklessly abstracted from things," drawing a contrast between appearances ("notions in the mind") and reality ("things") (*NO*, 31). He repeats this distinction almost verbatim in Aphorism 69, but tellingly substitutes "the impressions of the senses" for "things": "notions are abstracted badly from the impressions of the senses, and are indeterminate and confused" (*NO*, 109). By substituting "impressions of the senses" for "things," Bacon implies a phenomenalist attitude toward the study of nature: he thinks of "things" as "impressions of the senses"—as bundles of sensory qualities. Indeed, Bacon makes this claim explicitly in his discussion of gold:

> For instance, in gold these things come together: that which is yellow; that which is heavy up to such and such a weight; that which can be beaten or drawn out to such and such an extent; that which cannot become volatile, or lose mass by fire; that which can flow to such and such a degree; that which can be separated or dissolved by this or that means; and so on for the rest of the natures that come together in gold. Thus an axiom of this sort brings the matter down to the forms of simple natures. (*NO*, 207)

Because we can only have certainty about appearances, Bacon reduces objects to bundles of phenomenal qualities—"simple natures"—which in turn entails a new definition of "form." That Bacon associates "form" with "simple natures" rather than objects marks the key difference between his understanding of "form" and that of Aristotle or Plato: for Aristotle and Plato, we can still speak of the forms of objects—the form of Justice, or more mundanely, the form of a tree or the form of a table. The example of gold suggests that while we can speak of the forms of yellowness, ductility, weight, etc.—the phenomenal qualities or "simple natures" of gold—we cannot speak of the form of gold itself in Bacon's paradigm because as an object, gold has no single form. It is a

"compound form" or "complex of simple natures" (*NO*, 225). Gold is the contingent manifestation of an aggregate of simple natures, which are limited in number, but combine to generate all the phenomenal properties of "concrete bodies" (*NO*, 207).

By attaching the concept of form to the simple natures of objects rather than to objects themselves, Bacon makes possible a reversal in the way that he organizes his method for the discovery of forms. Because, in the scholastic tradition, form attaches to the object, not its apparent qualities, the inquiry into forms depends on abstracting the form from many examples of an object as it exists in nature. To identify the form of a tree, the argument goes, we must imagine all the kinds of trees that exist and abstract their common qualities to arrive at an essential definition, i.e. form, of "tree." Bacon's new method reverses this process by enumerating not instances of the same kind of object but instances of the simple nature across a widely disparate set of objects: "the investigation of forms goes like this: …for a given nature, we must submit to the tribunal of the intellect all known instances which share that same nature, though they occur in very different materials" (*NO*, 217). Attaching the concept of form to the phenomenal qualities of things rather than to things themselves allows Bacon to situate appearances at the core of his experimental epistemology.

Where the example of gold serves to redefine "form" by attaching it to "simple natures" rather than objects, the example of heat demonstrates how to discover the "forms of simple natures" through the process of induction, which is, simply put, a method of creating skeptical paradoxes by cataloguing conflicting phenomena. The "conflict of appearances" generated by induction reminds us not to mistake operational knowledge of nature for transcendental knowledge of nature: it establishes principles of regularity

between input and output without accounting for why such regularities exist. Bacon constructs tables of affirmative instances, negative instances, instances of degree, and "of exclusion or rejection." After collecting affirmative and negative instances of heat, the table of exclusion performs of the work of induction by eliminating simple natures which do not always or for the most part correlate with the nature under investigation. For example, sunlight and the light emitted by flames associate the manifestation of heat with light, but boiling water exhibits the nature of heat without emitting light and the moon emits light without heat. Bacon can thus rule out light as the simple nature which when present gives rise to the simple nature of heat. Light cannot be the form of heat, in other words. The tables thus formally acknowledge that the senses give conflicting "testimony" about the world.

By systematically recording the conflicting ways in which heat manifests across a variety of phenomena, Bacon's tables create the conditions under which a "conflict of appearances" can emerge, and it is only when the appearances conflict, i.e. when the senses give conflicting "testimony," that they can be made to "testify to their own errors" (*NO*, 33). The phenomenalist criterion grounding Bacon's theory of forms is central to his concept of experiment because the goal of the experimenter, like the goal of the skeptic, is to create a "conflict of appearances." Bacon's method for creating a skeptical "conflict of appearances" by making the senses "testify" to their own errors extends the reformers' scriptural hermeneutic to the study of nature by treating lapses and incongruities in sensory perception as instrumental in reforming our desire to see symmetry and correspondence where we should see contradiction and incommensurability. As Bacon explains in his summary description of the idols, "the

human intellect is constitutionally prone to supposing that there is more order and equality in things than it actually finds" (*NO*, 83).[67] The intractable desire for symmetry and correspondence invites the rhetoric of transcendence, whether in the study of things divine, where we purport to transcend the visible order of human existence by asserting a metaphysical correspondence with things divine, or in the study of nature, where we purport to transcend the appearances by "saving" them—by construing the phenomena of nature to reflect our own presuppositions about how nature works. Bacon's idols name the misguided desire for direct access to nature's hidden operations through analogy between things visible and invisible, known and unknown, which, in the study of nature, flattens or collapses the distinction between appearance and reality. Thus where the scholastic paradigm treats sensory error as a lapse or incongruity that demands a careful reconstitution of the phenomena to preserve a one-to-one correspondence between appearance and reality, Bacon's reformed science treats sensory error as instrumental to a proper understanding of nature's hidden operations.

In other words, Bacon's theory of forms presents a metaphysical picture of nature whose hidden forces, properties, and operations remain exactly that—hidden. Operative knowledge discloses how to manipulate nature's forces without having a total picture of how they work. This explains why the "source of being" which gives rise to a given simple nature across a variety of phenomena "remains better known to nature than the form itself": the "form" or principle of regularity which guarantees that the same operation will give rise to the same simple nature all or most of the time can be known only through its effects; the "source of being"—the reality behind the appearances—

[67] On "saving the appearances," see also *NO*, 175 and 97. See also *SEH*, IV, 432.

remains hidden, known to nature but not to man (*NO*, 205). Thus, just as the reformed scriptural hermeneutic sees the contradictory ways that scripture figures deity as partial and contingent revelations of divine being—deity as *exterius*, *apparens*, or *in ordine ad hominem*—so Bacon sees the simple natures as partial or contingent revelations of nature's occult operations. The hiddenness of God necessitates both a new scriptural hermeneutic that maintains the gap between things human and divine and a new method of interpreting nature that maintains the gap between appearance and reality.

Thus when Bacon compares "human *idols*" to the "*ideas* of the divine" his choice of words is important: the "signatures and impressions" of the divine are "stamped" onto creation just as scripture is "stamped" or printed on the pages of the Bible. By attaching the notion of "form" to the simple natures of objects rather than to objects themselves, Bacon's theory of forms reconstitutes the language in which the Book of Nature was written, which in turn demands a new method for, as he calls it, "the *Interpretation of Nature*." The "forms of simple natures," Bacon explains, "stand in the same relation to things and works as the letters of the alphabet do to speech and words which, though useless in themselves, are still the fundamental elements of all discourse" (*NO*, 41). The "forms of simple natures" constitute the alphabet of the Book of Nature, and the method of induction functions as a new method for interpreting that book correctly.

Peter Harrison has argued, rightly, that among the many factors precipitating the emergence of the new science, "the Protestant approach to the interpretation of texts," was by far the most significant. But it is misleading to characterize the shift in interpretive methods as a shift away from allegorical and toward literal interpretation, since these are mutually constitutive rather than mutually opposed reading logics in

Lutheran hermeneutics. Allegory remains foundational to Luther's catachrestic reading of scripture because it appears in moments when scripture is struggling to accommodate human and divine orders of being. By insisting on the "literal sense" of scripture in these moments, Luther insists that readers confront the full force of the contradiction because it is the apparent incoherence of scripture's "literal sense" that reminds us not to turn its images of God into human idols—not to mistake representations of deity for deity himself. By the same logic, Bacon reconceives of sensory error as foundational to natural philosophy. It is the failure of the senses to adequately represent the real qualities of objects which forms the foundation of Bacon's new method for the "*Interpretation of Nature*": only by reminding us not to mistake appearances ("idols of the human mind") for reality ("ideas of the divine") can the new reformed science begin to search in the Book of Nature for the true "signatures and impressions" of its author.

V. Baconian Aesthetics

When Baumgarten coined the term "aesthetics" in 1735, he meant to designate an independent field of philosophical inquiry strikingly similar to the kind of philosophy Bacon had earlier sought to establish: "aesthetics," according to Baumgarten, names "'a science of how things are to be known by means of the senses,' a definition he later refined to 'the science of sensitive cognition."[68] It is in this sense that, as Michael McKeon has argued, "'aesthetics'…and the empirical sciences have always been closely associated."[69] Before the turn of the seventeenth century, the representational arts shared

[68] Michael McKeon, "The Dramatic Aesthetic and the Model of Scientific Method in Britain, 1600-1800," *The Eighteenth-Century Novel: Volume 6-7*, ed. Albert J. Rivero and George Justice (New York: AMS Press, 2009), 197.
[69] Michael McKeon, "The Dramatic Aesthetic," 197.

a single, common unit of expression: the image. They emphasized the power of vision to secure formal, abstract knowledge using the image as a middle term between the particular and the general, between sense and reason. That the image functioned as a fundamental unit of representation in the visual arts is perhaps obvious, but the literary arts, too, were understood to be a visual as much as verbal aesthetic form in the Renaissance. The visual aesthetics of early modern poetry became a liability after the skeptical crisis: the Protestant Reformation fomented the Lutheran crisis of faith into a widespread epistemological crisis, and as Stuart Clark has argued, the skeptical crisis of the sixteenth century found expression in predominantly visual terms. Optical illusions, which were originally seen as exceptions to the otherwise reliable mechanisms of veridical visual experience suddenly seemed to challenge the traditional association between seeing and knowing, vision and epistemological certainty. Religious iconoclasm helped reverse the cultural value of images by developing an idiom of visual mendacity, an anti-mimetic and anti-theatrical rhetoric that gradually shifted in focus away from churches and toward poetry and theater. The earlier parts of this chapter describe Bacon's engagement with the Protestant critique of idolatry—his adoption of the rhetoric of iconoclasm—from within the familiar framework of religious reformation and the shifting metaphysics of allegorical representation. But, as I have argued in earlier chapters, iconoclasm is not simply a religious reaction to the threat of idolatry; iconoclasm is, first and foremost, a theory of aesthetic representation which, in the sixteenth century, used the terms and methods of ancient skepticism to destabilize the long-standing epistemological association between vision and certainty. Out of the ruins of visual sensory aesthetics arose a new media-based theory of the aesthetic, one which

abandons the distinction between image and form and articulates, in its stead, a theory of representation based on the distinction between words and images. What I want to emphasize in this chapter is the extent to which Protestant reform destabilized the aesthetic foundations of premodern epistemology: the iconoclastic critique of vision as a source of knowledge had profoundly troubling implications for the study of nature.

Bacon's appropriation of the rhetoric of iconoclasm shows us how the concept of form comes to be defined in seventeenth-century science out of the decidedly anti-visual rhetoric circulating in religious debates over the role of images in the visual and literary arts. The new science was thus deeply influenced by the Protestant Reformation's critique of images: the Doctrine of Idols translates the iconoclastic attack on the representational arts into an iconoclastic attack on traditional philosophy, distancing the new science from the old through the new anti-visual idiom of religious reform. Paradoxically, Bacon's experimental philosophy—grounded in a critique of the senses, particularly vision—gave rise not only to science but also to aesthetics. McKeon has argued that "the aesthetic was…formulated as a sub-category of empirical epistemology"—aesthetics, like experimental science, concerned itself "not, as traditionally with the nature of the beautiful object but with the singular way we know it, with our perception of, our somatic response to, and our subjective attitude toward, aspects of experience that we deem aesthetic."[70] It was in the mid-seventeenth century that the arts and sciences pulled apart from one another: the arts, unlike the sciences, do not admit of improvement; the Quarrel introduced a distinction between those areas of knowledge which the ancients had perfected and those which they had not, and out of this

[70] McKeon, "The Dramatic Aesthetic," 198.

distinction arises the concept of the fine arts as distinct from the sciences. But before aesthetics was defined in opposition to science, the arts and sciences shared a common resistance to the authority of antiquity. R.F. Jones' account of the Quarrel in *Ancients and Moderns*, cited in the opening of this chapter, compliments McKeon's: in its initial stages, both McKeon and Jones argue, the Quarrel provided the discourses of both aesthetics and science with a rhetorical idiom for self-definition, articulated, initially, not in opposition to one another, but in mutual opposition to scholasticism. As the first and most important formulation of the modern position in the Quarrel between Ancients and Moderns, Bacon's philosophy can be understood as the origin point not just for science but also for aesthetics.[71]

Michel Baridon adds an important qualification: he distinguishes between French and English aesthetic traditions, arguing that the English Baconian sciences led specifically to theories of taste in English aesthetics. Baridon's account of the relationship between science and aesthetics in the eighteenth century is modeled after Kuhn's account of the mathematical and experimental traditions. Kuhn recognizes not one but two revolutions in science. The scientific revolution of the seventeenth century was a revolution of the mathematical sciences: astronomy, optics, statics, harmonics, and geometry; in this camp fall Descartes, Galileo, Kepler, Newton and others. The experimental tradition encompasses what Kuhn calls the "Baconian sciences": magnetism, electricity, chemistry, etc.—all which underwent a revolution in the

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[71] The Quarrel names a defining crisis in the earliest phases of the literary critical tradition—one which remapped the boundaries between the representational arts and other activities in the field of cultural production by making them newly visible and thus distinct from philosophy and ethics—that fatefully demarcated the arts as separate from the sciences. Jones views aesthetic and philosophical responses to the Quarrel as part of the same continuum: "...ancient authority persisted longer in the esthetic than in the scientific world..."(*Ancients and Moderns*, 22) but the discourse of aesthetics does eventually adopt the same attitude toward the declension narrative as proto-scientists like Gilbert and Bacon.

nineteenth, not seventeenth century. Baridon has argued that the mathematical sciences, especially geometry and optics, find their aesthetic counterpart in the neo-classicism of French criticism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Citing William K. Wimsatt and Cleanth Brooks, Baridon argues that the "'the geometric urge' of the French neo-classical critics" responds directly to Descartes' innovations in geometry and optics.[72] The experimental tradition of Baconian science, by contrast, finds its counterpart in the English aesthetic tradition: where French neo-classicism emphasizes classical prescription, taking the part of the ancients in the Quarrel, English aesthetes, like Addison and Burke, emphasize taste—the English aesthetic tradition emphasizes, as Bacon had, the role of sensory cognition in judgment. But Baridon, whose account focuses on the "Baconian Sciences" rather than Bacon himself, tells the story of experimental science's relationship with the rise of aesthetics through Locke, whose theory of sensory cognition in the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* became the basis for the theory of taste in such figures as Addison, du Bos, Hutcheson, Burke, and Lessing. If Locke and Bacon can be said to have anything in common, it is their shared interest in grounding all knowledge in the senses, and it is here, I think, that Bacon does play an important role in the history of aesthetics. If Baridon is right that the English aesthetic tradition is an outgrowth of a radically new theory of sensory cognition in the English scientific tradition—and it is this theory of sensation, as I take it, that McKeon means by "empirical epistemology"—then Bacon's Doctrine of Idols can be understood to inaugurate not just modern science but also modern aesthetics. By grounding the

[72] Michel Baridon, "Science and Literary Criticism," in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: Volume IV, The Eighteenth Century*, ed. H.B. Nisbet and Claude Rawsome (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 781.

"empirical epistemology" of the new science in an iconoclastic aesthetic—the Doctrine of Idols—Bacon had the effect of helping foment a shift from vision to taste in aesthetic discourse.

Baridon's Kuhninan account of the two traditions in science and aesthetics is helpful, but the story remains incomplete without understanding how serious a challenge iconoclasm posed to theories of knowledge leading up to the seventeenth century. Seventeenth-century rationalists, like Hobbes and Descartes, respond by associating vision with mendacity, developing touch, instead, as the sensory mode most closely associated with knowledge. Descartes' *Optics* paradoxically compares the mechanics of vision to a blind man who walks with a stick to feel his way around his environment. Descartes' tactile optics reduces all sensory knowledge to a form of touch in order to describe empirical relations between observers and the natural world.[73] Hobbes's somatic analogy in the *Leviathan* similarly debases vision by associating eyes with spies in the body politic, who provide uncertain if not downright false information. Power, originally figured metaphorically in the penetrating sight of the monarch—the King's gaze—is refigured by Hobbes as the body politic's nervous system: skin, the organ of touch, distributes power through the members of the body; touch, not vision, becomes the basis of political community formation.[74] The association of touch with knowledge accorded well with the increasing popularity of mechanist cosmological theory, which emphasized contact, collision, and kinesis. Seventeenth-century empiricists, like Boyle and Hooke, by contrast, held fast to vision—they continue to emphasize witnessing, observation, and

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[73] Rene Descartes, *Optics* in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes* Vol. 1 trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 154.
[74] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes*, ed. Sir William Molesworth (1839; repr., Elibron Classics, 2005), 231.

spectatorship—and to do so, developed the concept of probability as a standard of experimental knowledge.[75] Probabilism, as an epistemological standard, answered the problem of radical doubt introduced by errors of sense by suggesting that seeing the same thing, over and over, could grant at least provisional authority to visual sensory experience.

The breakdown of premodern visual epistemologies, achieved in no small part through the iconoclastic attack on the visual aesthetics of representation in the arts, led to a refracted epistemological landscape in the seventeenth century—to a field of competing epistemological standards, each articulated through a different set of sensory metaphors. The competing claims of vision and touch in science helps explain why Joseph Addison is of two minds when it comes to the sensory modes of aesthetic experience. In his essays on the pleasures of the imagination, as McKeon has noted, Addison associates vision and imagination with aesthetic pleasure: when we "*compar*[*e*] the Ideas that arise from Words with the Ideas that arise from the Objects themselves," a space is opened up between sense and imagination, between "impressions of the senses" and "notions" derived from them, as Bacon would say, that gives rise to aesthetic pleasure.[76] It is in the "conflict of appearances"—in the gap or rift opened by different ways that the same object appears to us—that Addison locates the experience of aesthetic pleasure. But when it comes to the question of judgment, Addison shifts sensory registers. *Spectator 409* associates aesthetic judgment with taste, which he defines as "that faculty of the soul, which discerns the

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[75] See Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985) and Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994).
[76] Joseph Addison, "No. 418 Monday, June 30, 1712 Paper VIII: On the Pleasures of the Imagination" in *The Spectator: a New Edition, Carefully Revised in Six Volumes* Vol.5, ed. Alexander Chalmers (New York: Appleton and Company, 1853), 68.

beauties of an author with pleasure and the imperfections with dislike."[77] It is acquired through a process very similar to Bacon's method of inducing from experience a formal principle which describes how to make or do something: "A man of fine taste in writing will discern, after the same manner, not only the general beauties and imperfections of an author, but discover the several ways of thinking and expressing himself, which diversify him from all other authors…"[78] The man of taste can distinguish the beauties and imperfections of another's writing because he himself is a writer. The man of taste's knowledge of beauty and imperfection derives from practice—from doing and making, from observing the effects without necessarily understanding the causes.[79] But why figure this kind of knowledge as a form taste rather than vision?

The association of aesthetic judgment with taste was already an established metaphor in the sixteenth century—notably, in Michel Montaigne's *Essais* and Ben Jonson's *Every Man Out of His Humour*—but it gains new traction with Addison. In Jonson's early comical satire, *Every Man Out*, Asper and Cordatus, the play's two choral figures, are, as Matthew Steggle has argued, the theatrical equivalents of marginal commentary. Asper, whose name means "sour," explains in the induction that the play is meant "to give these well-spoken times some *taste* of their abuse of this word 'humour'"(77-78): Asper's name does double work, not only alluding to an ancient literary critic of Terence, but also associating criticism with a "sour" "taste."[80] The association between aesthetics and taste manifests, here, with specific reference to satire,

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[77] Joseph Addison, "No. 409 Thursday, June 19, 1712," in *The Spectator*, 20.
[78] Joseph Addison, "No. 409 Thursday, June 19, 1712," in *The Spectator*, 20.
[79] Addison's standard of aesthetic judgment is a version of the "maker's knowledge idea type," as Perez-Ramos calls it, that Bacon had articulated in his theory of form.
[80] *OLD* s.v. "asper."

whose asperous or "rough-tasting" criticism leaves a bad taste in the mouth. The word "satire" refers, originally in Latin, to a type of dish that offered a medley or variety of foods. Jonson thus constructs an elaborate gustatory metaphor, that associates satire—both a genre of literature and a genre of food—with Asper's "sour" "taste." A similar association between taste and judgment had long informed the essay. We are by now familiar with the Latin etymology of "essay"—to try or attempt—but a later meaning (possibly derived from the French, *assai*) associates the "essay" with taste: "essay" means "the trial of anything by taste, tasting" and, in medieval English usage, the "cup of assay" refers to a cup of wine tasted by an assayer to test it for poison before the King drinks.[81] Montaigne, who dedicates his *Essais* to Henri III plays on this etymology: Montaigne makes assays into a range of topics, which he presents in digested form to the heir presumptive to the throne of France; a literary assayer exercises judgment or "taste" on behalf of the monarch. Jonson consolidates the association of taste and aesthetic (i.e. sensory) judgment in the genre of satire, as Montaigne before had done with the essay—taken together, both figures prepare the way for the eighteenth century's notion of aesthetic taste with respect to literature, and more specifically to literary criticism. Because you are what you eat, the consumption of literature places special demands on the assayer or critic to exercise good taste on behalf of literary gourmands.

It is into this tradition that Addison asserts himself in *Spectator 409*, itself part of a collection of essays—exercises of taste in which he develops a theory of aesthetic judgment and pleasure. What distinguishes Addison from his earlier counterparts is the broader context in which touch and vision were gradually opposed to each other as

[81] *OED* s.v. 3 "essay" and 12b "assay."

sensory modes associated with different standards of knowledge: taste is, of course, a species of touch; together, taste and touch had been classified, since Aristotle, as the two "immediate" senses. Bacon's Doctrine of Idols succeeds in replacing the Doctrine of *Species* as the dominant paradigm of sensory cognition. It is this focus on the relationship between sensation and knowledge which Baumgarten would later call "aesthetics." Among the various responses to the critique of the image as a vehicle of knowledge about both art and nature, for which Bacon's iconoclastic rhetoric was partly responsible, was the theory of aesthetic taste. Like Protestants struggling to cope with the problem of solipsism in the assertion of individual conscience as a criterion or standard of judgment in soteriology, aesthetes would struggle with the problem of solipsism in the assertion of individual taste as a criterion or standard of aesthetic judgment later in the eighteenth century.

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