UNRULY LINES: POETIC MEASURE AND DRAMATIC CONVENTION IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

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Unruly Lines argues that writers in early modern England use the figure of the line as a tool in developing new modes of representation, and that their written lines are an index for political, aesthetic, and epistemological issues surfacing in the period. Asserting that textual materiality and the technical practices of playing were crucial to the development of literary form, this dissertation proposes that the poetic line and the line of dialogue find literary art reflecting broad early-modern cultural assumptions. By looking beyond literature to discourses as varied as the visual arts, mathematics, architecture, and law, the project offers a variety of different ways to see the written line anew. Examining moments wherein lines introduce ways of meaning distinct from verbal semantics, this project claims that early modern writers began perceiving in the written line a means to challenge and disrupt habituated strategies for apprehension.

Evenly divided into sections on poetry and drama, this project proposes that the inventiveness and self-reflexivity for which the early modern period's literature is known stem from the line's ability to challenge ordered systems of representation—to contest the presumed "rules" of art. The first two chapters, which consider poetry by King James, John Donne, and William Shakespeare, argue that the shape and structure of verse lines mark poetry as a specialized mode of discourse capable of figuring forth

ideas unattainable in other media. Visually ragged, uneven, or blatantly artful and ornamental lines, I argue, start to diagrammatically supplement and juxtapose vivid verbal images. The second half of the project then considers how players use lines of dialogue, and focuses on works by John Lyly, George Peele, and Shakespeare. These chapters explain how lines drawn into individual actors' parts (indicating their cues) function as technical devices for building—and breaking up and challenging—the limits of theatrical space.

As each chapter demonstrates, poets and playwrights take advantage of the verbal line's inability to offer only semantic meaning by cultivating self-consciously disruptive and unruly representations. These texts take into account the experiences of readers and audiences, and strive to actively build, rather than simply report, knowledge.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Adhaar Noor Desai graduated with honors from Stanford University in 2009, where he majored in English with a special concentration in Shakespeare. Upon graduating, Adhaar enrolled in the doctoral program in Language and Literature at Cornell University, where he studied early modern literature with an advisory committee comprised of Rayna Kalas (chair), Walter Cohen, Philip Lorenz, and Jenny C. Mann. Adhaar's research and teaching interests include Shakespeare and early modern drama, Renaissance poetics, the history of science, the history of the book, and law and literature.

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This project wasn't always about lines. It was about theatrical space, prosody, borders, and the history of mathematics before it was about lines, and it was only the support and encouragement of an unconventionally open-minded and intellectually capacious committee that allowed these disparate strands to come together. The debt I owe to Rayna Kalas, Jenny Mann, Walter Cohen, and Phil Lorenz is one I'll be striving to repay, in whatever way I can, for the rest of my career. This project would not exist without Rayna, whose own scholarship informs every page and whose direction, rigor, and clarity of thought give it what shape it has. Often, her belief in the project bolstered my own waning faith; always, speaking with her renewed my excitement to work on it. Jenny has been and will continue to be my intellectual, professional, and personal role model. Jenny's careful attention to each and every draft, despite their often untenable frequency, was the great engine powering the completion of the project. So many of the best, most lucid lines within come directly from her. Walter's willingness to take seriously any of my ideas was routinely inspiring, and his incisive, often surprisingly acute challenges to me about the stakes and place of the project will linger with me for some time. The mysterious ambition of the project can be directly traced to long, complicated conversations with Phil during evenings in his office. I am grateful to Phil for making me think in ways I never have before, and for leading me to topics that I never would have arrived at alone. I frequently boasted to other graduate students that I have the best advisory committee one could want; I am grateful to have received their guidance, and am even more grateful for their friendship.

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INTRODUCTION

The Line and Literary Representation

Sometime around 1580, the most famous visual artist in England, Nicholas Hilliard, purportedly had a conversation with Sir Philip Sidney. Our knowledge of this event comes only from a brief record of it written by Hilliard over fifteen years afterwards, as part of his unpublished *Treatise Concerning the Arte of Limning* (1598).[1] Here is what Hilliard and Sidney talked about:

> *Sir Philip* Sidn[e]y*,* that noble and most valiant knight that great scoller, and excelent *Poet*, great lover of all vertu and cunninge, he once Demanded of me the question, whether it weare possible in one scantling, as in the length of six inches of a littel or short man, and also of a mighty bige and taulle man in the same scantling, and that one might weel and apparently see which was the taule man, and which the littel, the picture being Just of one length...[2]

This exchange, described by Clark Hulse as "the single most important conversation between a poet and a painter in the sixteenth century," affords us convenient ingress to widespread concerns about representation and the epistemological foundations of art in the Elizabethan period. I will return to these issues later, but for now I want to underscore how Sidney's question specifically relates to the basic units of Hilliard's

[1] Clark Hulse, in *The Rule of Art: Literature and Painting in the Renaissance* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), suggests that there is "every reason that Hilliard and Sidney should have known each other" (115). Patricia Fumerton also considers the connections between Sidney and Hilliard in *Cultural Aesthetics: Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornament* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 103.

[2] Nicholas Hilliard, *A Treatise Concerning the Art of Limning*, transcribed by Arthur F. Kinney (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1983), 27.

art of limning (the painting of miniatures): "scantlings." A scantling, as Hilliard defines it earlier in his treatise, is "your first line which you drawe" which "must be a scalle to all the rest" so that you might then use it "to doe all proportionablye to that bigness."[3] To achieve a verisimilar depiction of the sitter according to his or her actual proportions, Hilliard proposes that the artist draw one line—he suggests the outline of the forehead—against which all subsequent lines may be compared. Hilliard's response can most readily be understood as an affirmation of the visual artist's investment in measurement and proportionality, though the nature of Sidney's question reveals his assumption that since men share the same proportions, a portrait artist would have difficulty relating the true measurements of a man in a solitary portrait. Hilliard's response, which is basically that short men and tall men have different bodily proportions that would betray their statures, merits its own discussion, but for now I merely want to foreground Sidney's question because it reveals the poet's concern about the relationship between an artist's techniques and his ability to imitate life. Sidney betrays a distinctly humanist theory of natural order by obtusely asking whether the artist's method of drawing just one line somehow corroborates the relative proportions of different human bodies. By zeroing in on the most fundamental unit of composition in visual art, Sidney's discussion with Hilliard exposes the incongruity between the rationalized principles of artful representation and the irrepressible variety and disorder of the natural world. These same issues, this dissertation argues, also trouble the lines charged with ordering verbal representation.

The line is the basic unit of both poetic and dramatic composition; we

[3] Hilliard, 25.

implicitly accept this when we describe verse as written in lines or a play as consisting of lines of dialogue. Because it is such a basic unit, we often pass over it and understand the line as merely the conventional name for an almost mechanical aspect of composition. Shaking off this calcified apprehension of the line, however, we might instead understand it as something that was made, debated about, and renegotiated by different writers practicing the verbal arts over different media. Over the course of this project, I will show how at this moment particularly known for literary inventiveness, the line becomes a formative instrument for both poets and dramatists.

Seeing the line as a significant and historically conditioned component of poetic and theatrical discourse allows us to better understand how writers developed techniques that transformed habits of representation. I present these new techniques as generally characterized by the willingness of writers to challenge, lay bare, or interrogate the presumed practical rules of their art—rules that manifest as and through lines. The sense of a rule as a "guideline" etymologically relates to the line, of course, as it draws on the Latin *regulum*, which was "a rod for drawing straight lines or measuring."[4] As will be explored at greater length below, the interrelations of the rule as an intellectual framework and the rule as an embodied and material process are fully alive within the early modern literary line. One way to think about the line is as a rule, a standard by which language is organized, but seeing it as a guideline only provides half of the picture. Though the line preserves certain practices of composition, it also remains a material object, like the rod that gave the rule its name.

[4] *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (Oxford University Press, June 2014), s. v. "rule, n. 1," http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/168717?rskey=ACkLIj&result=1&isAdvanced=false (accessed August 13, 2014).

In this dissertation, I explain how the articulated line becomes a means by which practical rules are exposed as drawn from embodied experience, and as such are opened up to challenge and reflection.

How can lines both observe and challenge rules? I perceive the line as a crucial and coherent element of representation, as it promotes a way, via demonstrations founded upon precepts, of arriving at knowledge. As Hilliard reveals, even the first line of a limner (a line at the smallest practical scale) is freighted with conscious rationality – in this case, the actual ratios it anticipates between itself and subsequent elements of the illustration.[5] Often, the rules governing representation and guiding the intellect are invisible, unspoken, or ingrained by reiteration. Lines lead the intellect down a pathway cleared by mental habits indifferent to the pathway's artificiality; once Hilliard completes his illustration, after all, viewers lose access to the crucial initial scantling even as they admire the verisimilar proportions that it has enabled. If viewers are encouraged to see the line as distinct from the image's proportional totality, however, they might puzzle over the arbitrary foundations of Hilliard's first, curved, organic, irregular scantling—its basis is in imitating the artist's perspective of the seated subject, but does not really situate the subject within the presumably ordered framework of natural life. Sidney assumes that it would not tell you about the difference between a tall man and a short man, after all. In our apprehension of literary texts from the period, lines similarly tend to fade behind words or integrate into stanzas or speeches, but as I will demonstrate, many texts encourage readers and spectators to see the line in ways not conditioned by presumed rules– these lines

[5] In Chapter 2, the scantling returns in the form of geometry's "rational line."

appear on the page as ragged and misshapen, or on stage as disjointed and chaotic.

Just as Hilliard understands and intellectualizes his scantlings, poets and players are aware of lines as the invisible motors behind literary representation. Over the course of the late sixteenth century in England, the line becomes a conspicuous and self-conscious unit of literary form. Writers from Sidney to Jonson, Marlowe to Herbert all cannot help but draw attention to the fact that their words are fashioned into lines. My analysis thus begins by asking how and why literary lines in England begin to self-reflexively assert themselves *as* lines. I propose that to some extent, these writers recognize the line as the fundamental medium of artful verbal expression. Rather than imagining verbal art as one of sound, writing, or even words, they understand the line as the foundation of their discourse. When they make the presence of lines perceptible, they draw the practical rules assumed to be underlying their verbal art into the foreground and make them visible, material, and open to inquiry. My analysis of the poetic line, for example, explores how the logic of poetic craft changes in the late sixteenth century, as poetry becomes predominantly understood as something that is read rather than only heard. As a figure on the material page, a figure predicated by metrical patterns concerned with aurality, the visualized line begins to challenge the primacy of meter in approaches to poetic craft. The verse line links poetry's two media and forces them into odd couplings, before it eventually overtakes them both and becomes the foundation of poetic invention.

It is somewhat more difficult to think about the centrality of the line with respect to theatrical craft, but the second part of this project explains how the line emerges as the integral technical unit of collaborative playhouse practice. Actors on

the early modern stage rely upon one another to correctly deliver their scripted lines so that the show might go on without interruptions or breakages. Consequently, these lines establish the essential difference between actors and spectators. Because the dramatic line is not (only) a textual artifact, however, as soon as it arrives on stage it becomes a volatile and embodied locus wherein represented fictions become porous and flexible.[6] As a result, the dramatic line, like the written verse line, both preserves the sense of an ordered, scripted representation but affords opportunities for this representation to become something that feels fluid and participatory. Poets and playwrights, attuned to the physical line's inherent instability as the grounds for their representational practice, exploit its ability to recast the terms by which these representations make things knowable—a useful technique, as I will show, for using art to interrogate epistemological and political problems that hinge on conflicts between abstracted perceptions of order and lived experience.

Written lines announce a discourse presuming its own internal logic and protocols of making meaning. Extemporaneous utterance does not rest upon lines as poetry does, and everyday speech cannot be interpreted in terms of lines in the same way that theatrical dialogue can. Lines, by corralling words into arrays, compel readers to view language as "artful," or, in Elizabethan parlance, "artificial"– at their most fundamental, lines signal a peculiar application of language. Though this project

[6] Julie Stone Peters' monumental *Theatre of the Book, 1480-1880: Print, Text, and Performance in Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), explores in part how by the later sixteenth century, "printers seem to have come to rely on a readership familiar with both the theatre and the typographic conventions of the drama. They seem to have come to rely on the *mise en page*—the visual semiotics of the dramatic text—to explain through visual form what narrative descriptions might do at greater length" (24).

will be suffused with different kinds of lines—poetic, geometrical, pictorial, dramatic, and even geopolitical—they all share the characteristic of being a conditioned mode of producing knowledge. These lines are typically bounded—by metrical patterns, by points, by whitespace, by cues for other actors, by geography—but they are also traces of or tracks for movement. Crucially, these lines are both material figures and also signs for qualities or relationships: the line drawn on a page, like an em dash in this paragraph, is a thin black artifact that reifies an active process, such as separation, division, connection, or delineation. Christian Jacob describes the complex relationship lines have to reading practices when considering the lines drawn on maps:

> Lines and forms are given to two different ways of looking. The lines invite the eye to follow an itinerary, a linear and oriented movement. The forms appeal to a static gaze that will grasp their coherence and, with a little distance, their interlocking with neighboring forms. No form exists without a contour, that is, without a line that will or will not close upon itself…. A linear gaze can, in the end, become a schematic gaze. But the lines are not totally subordinate to the forms that they help create: on the map they also have an autonomous reality. These lines are the shorelines, the borders, the communication routes, indeed all the lines that actualize the flux of beings, things, and phenomena.[7]

Jacob's language of "schematic" and "itinerant" ways of looking draws upon Michel de Certeau's conception of how the language of "maps" and "tours" are used to describe space. Together, they suggest that lineated representations, like cartographic spaces, are apprehended both in terms of ordered wholes and as personal experiences happening spatiotemporally.[8] As part of de Certeau's overarching

[7] Christian Jacob, *The Sovereign Map: Theoretical Approaches in Cartography throughout History*, ed. Edward H. Dahl, trans. Tom Conley (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), 306.

[8] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 118-122.

discussion of "strategies" and "tactics," the interrelatedness of these different ways of looking at space gives rise to "spatial stories" of everyday life in which local, individual decisions can resist or even reform global structures. In Jacob's sense, the line, though at first glance a totem of structure and ingrained, schematic habits of thought, actually possesses the possibility of introducing new "*ways of using* the constraining order" and establishing "a degree of plurality and creativity."[9] Beyond simply noting that lines announce printed poems as purposively manipulated language or that they underscore theatrical dialogue as scripturally circumscribed, then, I argue that the line is a sophisticated creative instrument available to writers by the late sixteenth century.

By laying bare the processes by which ideas are given form, lines can encourage readers and spectators to sense the contingencies of a representation as it is being constructed, to apprehend artworks as intricately made and precisely proportioned things that are nevertheless firmly situated in the unreliable realm of human experience. The line may be an intervention of method upon matter, or of matter upon method, but by compelling readers to attend to this exchange, the line gets at the heart of how knowledge is taken up and affirmed. To get a grasp on the line's capacious resonances as a signifying unit of literary art, we need to not only recognize its conceptual density and representational capacity, but also to resituate it in context and understand it with respect to the complex materiality of writing in post-Reformation England. We need to adopt a manner of looking at the line that acknowledges its material presence even as the line itself might recede behind the

[9] De Certeau, 30, emphasis in original.

forms to which it gives shape.

The word "line" in early modern England ruled, as it continues to rule today, over wildly variable associations. Etymologically, the word traces back to the Latin *linum*, meaning flax, or the Greek *λίνον*, linen cloth.[10] As with many other words, including the already witnessed "rule," line's inauspicious origin as the name of an object in the material world proceeded by metonymy to adopting a meaning indicating qualities of the object; here, flax's long and thin fibers become lines. In the early modern period, the materiality of the line's origins had not faded, as lines would still indicate a "cord or string" or a kind of thread, like a fishing line, but centuries of diverse application had already suffused line with an immateriality relating to the experiences of distance, movement, difference, and time. Lines unspooled, could be woven, could be extended or cut short. The word's material origins and abstract associations often permeated one another, as in modern expressions like "timeline" or older expressions like "line of life," which apprehends both the "thread" woven by the Greek fates and the central furrow on a palm as figures for the duration of a lifetime.[11] Of course, the most immediate definition of line in the early modern period was likely, as today, a graphical marking silently signaling or appropriating qualities associated with those ancient fibrous strands. I propose that we see the written line as a figure *for itself*, or even for figuring in general, as any attention to the line reveals it to point to a

[10] *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (Oxford University Press, June 2014), s. v. "line, n.1," http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/108602?rskey=vVFQql&result=1&isAdvanced=false (accessed August 13, 2014).

[11] Sidney translates Psalm 39, for example, by drawing upon the line as a way to perceive the flow of time: "Lord unto me my times just measure give, / Show me how long, I have to live: / Lo thou spanns a length, mad'st my living line. / A spanne? nay nothing in thine eyne." Sir Philip Sidney, "Psalm 39," *The Psalms of Sir Philip Sidney and The Countess of Pembroke,* ed. J. C. A. Rathmell (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1963), 89-90.

quality or relation, like duration or separation. We are typically asked to ignore its material dimensions in service of the concept it conveys, even as and if the concept it conveys can only be articulated by a material line, but as I will demonstrate, the line becomes increasingly difficult to ignore in the early modern period.

The most prominent product of the line's definitional migration from material artifact (flax), to the qualities of that artifact (thinness and length), to a material figure for those qualities (the thread-like mark), and back to metonymic qualities conjured by that material figure (length without any breadth at all), is the geometrical line, which is "an element of configuration such as must be represented in geometrical figures by a 'line.'"[12] The imperative phrase in this definition is "must be represented," as a geometrical line is a concept that possesses no material presence of its own and therefore requires the encumbrance of a physical form to convey its meaning. The first English translator of Euclid's *Elements*, Henry Billingsley, explains in 1570 that a geometrical line "is a magnitude hauing one onely space or dimension" and John Dee, who wrote an influential preface to Billingsley's translation, defines line as "the race or course of a point."[13] As Chapter 2 will explore, the geometrical line's demonstrative and diagrammatic functions expose the paradoxes that attend applying measurements to objects in the material world. Nevertheless, the geometrical line's hesitant merger

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[12] *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (Oxford University Press, June 2014), s. v. "line, n. 2," http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/108603?rskey=vVFQql&result=2&isAdvanced=false (accessed August 13, 2014).

[13] Henry Billingsley, *The elements of geometrie of the most auncient philosopher Euclide of Megara…With a very fruitfull praeface made by M. I. Dee . . .* (London: Printed by Iohn Daye, 1570), sig. 1.[v], Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery; John Dee, "The Mathematicall Preface", *Euclides Elements of Geometry: the first VI Books* (London: Printed by Robert and William Leybourn, 1651), sig. B3[r], Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

of method with matter would inevitably produce new metonymical associations, such as an abstracted sense of order, rigidity, or "methodological accuracy"; here the OED cites as an example from Shakespeare: "Do, do: we steal by line and level, an't like your grace" (*Temp.* 4.1.239-240). Interestingly, Trinculo's phrase, "line and level," puns on Stephano's earlier "Mistress line, is not this my jerkin?" (*Temp.* 4.1.235), presumably referring to the physical clothesline from which he is stealing.[14] The joke thus takes on a greater irony, as "steal[ing] by line and level" essentially implies a method to madness, or rules for breaking rules.

Lines, then as now, are "things"—the markings and material artifacts with continuous extension—but they are also bearers or catalysts for spatialized experience. The line's fluctuations as a sign that operates like a pointer or referent and as an embodied material figure place it at the center, if inconspicuously so, of sixteenth century debates regarding the nature of icons. Though a sense of a widespread post-Reformation fear of images and iconoclasm in England persist, scholars have nevertheless argued that critiques asserting the dominance of the word over the image misapprehend the degree to which the logic of icons contributed to English discourse.[15] The line is one of the main instruments by which this logic extended into the Elizabethan and Jacobean period. Mary E. Hazard, in an expansive study of Elizabethan "silent languages," spends her first two chapters on the line and begins by

[14] All quotations from Shakespeare's plays and sonnets in this dissertation, barring those to *Macbeth* in Chapter 4, are from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd edition, eds. G. Blakemore Evans and J. J. M. Tobin (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1997). All citations to plays will appear in text and include an abbreviated play title, and act, scene, and line numbers, and to sonnets by sonnet number.

[15] See Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), esp. 136-139; David J. Davis, *Seeing Faith, Printing Pictures: Religious Identity during the English Reformation* (Boston: Brill, 2013), esp. 10-19; Ellen Spolsky, *Word vs. Image: Cognitive Hunger in Shakespeare's England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), esp. 1-55.

noting how in northern European countries, as opposed to Italy and Greece, the line was understood more in relation to the literary than to the pictorial.[16] The line, she proposes, as a result "constitutes what might be regarded as a phoneme in Elizabethan silent language, one of the smallest nonverbal elements that make a difference."[17] After surveying an impressively dense collection of discourses featuring the line as a graphical and textual object, Hazard notes that there was a "lack of distinction between line as employed in art and line as conceived in letters" that is "made explicit in a number of statements that were articulated during the long dispute over iconoclasm." Citing figures like Stephen Gardiner and Thomas More, who wrote that "is the wrytyng not the name it selfe / but an ymage representyng ye name," Hazard explains how because the orthographic line was constitutive of words, words could also be seen as images and thus as challenges to Reformation contentions of difference between the name and image of Christ.[18] As I will explain at the end of Chapter 1, John Donne's views on language also acknowledge its materiality, as the "lines" comprising his poetry suggest everything from the dashes that form words to the stanza on the page. In Donne's poetry, as in the other texts considered in this project, each time the line's presence is felt makes the apprehension of represented ideas

[16] Hazard suggests that the line was separated from painting and associated with letters "possibly because humanists elevated letters to the status of the liberal arts, whereas they consigned painting because of its onerous association with a material medium and manual execution to some other, lower, order of activity". See Mary E. Hazard, *Elizabethan Silent Language* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 23-24.

[17] Hazard, 24.

[18] Hazard, 25-26. Hazard notes the "commonplace observation that [Protestant] reformists valued word over image" in explaining how "religious and other forces converged to retard the development of easel painting and to reinforce the strong interest in line that is elsewhere evident in Elizabethan culture," such as in landscaping and architecture (28).

grounded in the immediacy of sensory experience.[19]

Whereas Hazard's attention to the line seeks to recover and describe unspoken and largely unrecorded signifying practices informing the composition of poetry and visual arts, I view the line from a different direction by focusing specifically on its self-reflexive negotiations with its own materiality. The language of lines, I argue, is not always silent, because the line may speak through the interventions it makes upon the language it marshals into order. In tracing the traditional importance of the line to representation, Hazard retells a story of from Pliny about how two artists, Apelles and Protegenes, measured their skills against one another by drawing and comparing lines. Hazard explains that "the crux [of the story] is that each competitor drew an even finer line on top of the other's, fineness of line being the measure of triumph in this prototypical paragone."[20] Fineness of line, which privileges the extent to which a line may recede into nothingness while still defining forms, would be exalted as constitutive of but not intrusive upon images. Adding to Hazard's discussion, my research explores how the line, as a site of contestation for the ontological status of the sign, enables representational practices unconstrained by referential mimesis. Lines, I argue, could stage a productive friction between their physical substance and the conceptual difference or coordination they are deployed to perform, and use this friction to augment the reader's experience. For early modern authors reflecting upon the inadequacy of language, signs, and images in representing idealized or abstract

[19] Ellen Spolsky suggests that in the wake of reformation emphasis on literacy, there existed a "cognitive hunger" for visualized engagements with scripture and argues that "artists never lost touch with the embodied nature of knowing, as theologians did" and therefore "managed to feed the hunger for understanding of those for whom words were not enough" (Spolsky, 20).

[20] Hazard, 29.

forms, the line itself, however fine, was a reminder of the distance between sign and signified. Rather than attempting to efface, diminish, or fade the line, some authors occasionally resolved to foreground its presence. Doing so was a way of incorporating its challenge to transparent representation into their representational practice.

Attention to the materiality of early modern signs, and specifically words, has since interventions by scholars like Judith H. Anderson and Margareta de Grazia augmented the way critics approach textual artifacts from the period. Anderson explores how words promote a "linguistic perception" through the "interplay of language with the growing cultural emphasis on externalized expression and on the material world."[21] According to Anderson, the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries exhibit a theory of language wherein works by poets like Herbert and Spenser "debate the relation of words to things and, in particular, the substantiality of language apparent in even the authorized grammar of the time."[22] In a brief essay treating on the same themes, de Grazia asserts that "a word is a thing in the sixteenth century but a nonthing in the seventeenth century," based on the fact that sixteenth century words were generally far from "transparent representations of things" while seventeenth century thinkers like Bacon and the Royal Society yearned for a language freed from the defects that make it confusing or hard to interpret.[23] The status of the

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[21] Judith H. Anderson, *Words that Matter: Linguistic Perception in Renaissance English* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 2.

[22] Anderson, 18.

[23] Margareta de Grazia, "Words as Things," *Shakespeare Studies* 28 (2000): 231-235. The perplexity of the categories of words and things, or *verba* and *res*, has been discussed at least since A. C. Howell noticed in 1946 that "the term *res*, meaning *subject-matter*, seems to become confused with *res* meaning *things*, and the tendency to assume that *things* should be expressible in *words*, or conversely, *words* should represent *things*, not metaphysical and abstract concepts, may be discerned" in the seventeenth century. See A. C. Howell, "*Res et Verba*: Words and Things," *ELH* 13.2 (Jun., 1946): 131-142, esp. 131.

material sign in the characteristically theologically heterogeneous and ambivalent Elizabethan era was largely unsettled; James Kearney argues, for example, that the printed text, and especially the book, became for some "an emblem of the desire to transcend the merely material and irredeemably fallen world of objects, of things" and for others merely another symptom of the "fallen material dimension of all representation."[24]

The technologies of writing, such as the printing press, might then be thought of as coordinating the material dimensions of matter, drawing intelligibility and order out of chaos. The organization of language according to governing principles became a way to combat theological disorientation with a sense of purpose. When I describe the literary line as a rule, I understand it in this way, as an inscription technology that coordinates word-things into rationally ordered systems productive of what was held as knowledge.[25] Like Hilliard's scantling, a written line might pretend as an arbitrary intervention motivated by mimesis, but actually and necessarily indicates a regulated or internalized protocol of representation. Another way to think about the technologies of writing, however, remembers that the book, and the lines it may contain, are themselves part of the "fallen material dimension." As many of the texts examined in this dissertation will reveal, the application of any amount of pressure to these rules unleashes the disorientation they are meant to suppress. Unruly lines, by

[24] James Kearney, *The Incarnate Text: Imagining the Book in Reformation England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 3.

[25] Will West, attempting to relate theaters to encyclopedias in the period, suggests that "[what] they share—at least what they were imagined to share—was a conception of knowledge as the ordered representation of everything." See William N. West, *Theatres and Encyclopedias in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1.

foregrounding the resistance of experience to a rationally ordered worldview, invite readers into the vertiginous space between signs and signifiers.

Although the sign's relationship to the signified in contemporary thought tends to exists as a "bond established, inside knowledge, between the *idea of one thing* and the *idea of another*," during the Renaissance this relationship had a "more complex organization" mediated in part through the materiality of signifiers. For Foucault, "the theory of the sign implied three quite distinct elements: that which was marked, that which did the marking, and that which made it possible to see in the first the mark of the second." Foucault names this third term "resemblance," as the "sign provided a mark exactly in so far as it was 'almost the same thing' as that which it designated."[26] In considering how *Don Quixote* is "a negative of the Renaissance world" because in it "resemblances and signs have dissolved their former alliance," Foucault explains that "*Don Quixote*'s truth is not in the relation of the words to the world but in that slender and constant relation woven between themselves by verbal signs."[27] Thinking about the woven relationships between signs within the self-reflexive fictions they help constitute reveals that the representational apparatus being described does not refer to reality, but to its own internal dynamics. Yet it must be remembered that signs retain their own materiality distinct from that which they resemble, a materiality that makes signs continuous with the space of the reader. The second book of *Don Quixote* memorably enacts this problem by making the first book an object within its own ordered universe. Words, lines, and books in the sixteenth century are also things, and

[26] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 63-64.
[27] Foucault, 47, 48.

they are, as Rayna Kalas suggests in a discussion of early modern metaphors of glass, "simultaneously transparent and material."[28] Crafting a fiction, or a poem, or a play activates what appears to be closed system, but when the assumptions defining that system are exposed, it may be experienced as having porous limits. Throughout my readings, lines will be routinely associated with the language of material manufacture—they will weave, join, glue, bind, fetter, and enclose—and their ability to exert palpable pressure upon and through language will be essential to their representational functions. When these lines claim the reader's attention by announcing themselves *as* lines, they allow parts to combat wholes, joints to break up façades. These unruly lines allow readers to experience how ways of looking inform ways of thinking, which in turn opens ideas enclosed behind authoritative habits of representation to creative re-appropriation.

Lines and/as Rules

Looking again at Hilliard's dialogue with Sidney through the lens of lines, we might think about how Hilliard's defense of his scantling actually allows this line to assert its own unruliness, and thereby disrupt they habits of thinking illustrative lines might set in motion—habits which appear to have spurred Sidney's question in the first place. Scholars typically read the conversation as evidence of the continentally-oriented Sidney inquiring about how the technical practices of limning adhere to humanist principles of proportionality, which, inherited from Vitruvian notions,

[28] Rayna Kalas, *Frame, Glass, Verse: The Technology of Poetic Invention in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 135.

considered man's relative measurements to be absolute.[29] How, Sidney seems to be asking, can an artist restricting himself to individual portraits convey the different statures of a "littel or short man" and "a mighty bige and taulle man" if human proportions are mathematically ordered? Hilliard's response, as noted, is that short men and tall men have different bodily proportions. Hilliard in this way breaks with Vitruvius, Alberti, da Vinci, and, most proximally, Albrecht Dürer. Discrediting Dürer's assertion that "comonly all faces howld one measure and true proportion" with the example of former Lord Chancellor Christopher Hatton, a man well known to have "a very low forehead, not answerable to that good proportion of a third part of his face," Hilliard suggests that proportionality in art is not apprehended through a rationalizing intellectual filter such as Dürer's rules, which are "hard to be remembred, and tedious to be foloued."[30] Instead, he analogizes proportion in painting with a kind of absorbed language, learned by the eye "without rulle by long usse, as little lads speake their vulger tonge without gramour Rulls."

As straightforward as the response may seem, Hilliard's inclusion of it in his treatise allows him to articulate a position regarding the role of mathematical rationalization in imitations of nature. Hilliard, as Hulse explains, "presses upon the material nature of his *mimesis* and the material conditions of his creative activity in

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[29] Dympna Callaghan, in "The Elizabethan Miniature," *A Companion to British Art: 1600 to the Present*, ed. Dana Arnold and David Peters Corbett (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2013), 449-472, understands the question as Sidney asking about "how people of different dimensions can be rendered on the surfaces of identical measurement" (462). John Pope-Hennessy, in "Nicholas Hilliard and Mannerist Art Theory," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 6 (1943): 89-100, suggests that the question "refers to two figures portrayed as identical in height but different in proportion" (95).

[30] Hilliard, 19. Hilliard understands proportion from a position that "refuses the opportunity to arrogate the power of vision to the realm of learning" and he seems critical of the rigidity of rules that "do not conform to experience" (Hulse, 129).

order to break apart the representational stability of Dürer's and Alberti's systems."[31] Despite liberating human proportion from mathematical principles derived from learned authorities, however, Hilliard nevertheless stresses that representation in miniatures mingles art with nature via rules—a fact Dympna Callaghan emphasizes when observing in Hilliard's protocols a concern "not only to represent whatever physical beauty appeared before them in the countenance of any given sitter, but also about its manifestations in terms of the formal qualities of their aesthetic practice."[32] Hilliard's account of his discussion with Sidney thus becomes a way to explain how his methods integrate the regulated artistry of proportion into verisimilar imitations of unruly nature. Hilliard breaks Dürer's rules, but goes to some lengths to stress that he does so 'by line and level.'

The line allows us to explore the stakes of early modern formal techniques by revealing tensions between the ordered habits of artistic craft and art's self-imposed responsibility to imitate nature.[33] According to Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo (whose *Tracte Containing the Artes of curious Painting Carving Building* influenced Hilliard and was translated by his friend, Richard Haydocke, in 1598), art is "nothing else but a *sure and certaine rule of thinges to be made*." Visual artists like Lomazzo may thus proclaim that painting is an art "because it imitateth naturall thinges most precisely"

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[31] Hulse, 131.

[32] Callaghan, 462.

[33] Timothy J. Reiss, in *Knowledge, Discovery, and Imagination in Early Modern Europe: The Rise of Aesthetic Rationalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), discusses how debates in the sixteenth century "about the failure of language as a tool for discovery" led to its "eventual replacement, in this epistemological domain, by mathematics and a new idea of rational method" (xiv). Reiss is discussed at greater length in Chapter 2. Clark Hulse also maintains that the Renaissance "marks a radical break with the ways that medieval poets and, even more, medieval painters spoke of their art, for it submerges the craft elements of art in favor of an intellectualized and theorized language that could buttress the social claims of poet and painter alike" (Hulse, 9).

and is “the very *Ape* of Nature: whose quantity, eminencie, and colours, it ever striueth to imitate, performing the same by the helpe of *Geometry*, *Arithmetick*, *Perspective*, and *Natural Philosophie*, with most infallible demonstrations.” In this way, though a painter’s task in imitating life is manual since he works “both with his hand and pencel,” painting is not a mechanical art because painters must also be geometricians, who “also worketh with the hande, by drawing lines.” Painting affirms its status as liberal art ruled by rationality in the sense that it is “subordinate” to perspective, natural philosophy, and geometry, “all which out of question are liberall sciences.”[34] During the Renaissance, and especially in Italy, mathematics was seen as “the key to the universe” as it allows man, situated between the heavens and the earth, to draw correspondences between the spheres. Founded upon the technical precision of geometry and arithmetic, which “was remarkable for its certainty and the immutable truth of its propositions,” mathematics also gave philosophers “intimations of the eternal truths of God, man and the universe” and could suggest “new pathways for the contemplation of reality.”[35] Literary forms, witnessing the denigration of rhetoric as a form of knowledge that works by persuasion rather than by “infallible demonstrations,” sought means in the late sixteenth century to elevate their own art form as an ordered way to imitate nature. The discourse of *paragone* practically demanded that writers find a way to make their methods as intellectually potent as those claimed by painters practicing the perspectival arts.

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[34] Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, *A tracte containing the Artes of curious Paintinge Carving & Buildinge*, trans. R[ichard] H[aydocke] (Oxford: By Ioseph Barnes, 1598), 14, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

[35] Paul Lawrence Rose, *The Italian Renaissance of Mathematics: Studies on Humanists and Mathematicians from Petrarch to Galileo* (Geneve: Librairie Droz, 1975), 6.

Hilliard's *Treatise* demonstrates the burden placed on lines by visual artists, as lines were the basic units of composition and ultimately the sites upon which aesthetic crafts were appraised.[36] Hilliard's practice begins with "the truth of the lyne," which he associates with the capacity of merely "playne lynes without shadowing" to accurately imitate subjects—an example he provides is that "though the shadowe of a man against a whit wall showeth like a man, yet is it not the shadowe, but the lyne of the shadowe."[37] Beyond being essential for giving form to matter, lines were instruments by which painters could achieve harmony and proportion in their images, thereby confirming painting's position among the increasingly quadrivially-focused liberal arts.[38]

If we can imagine a riposte from Hilliard asking whether a single line of verse could express the true proportions of a tall or short subject, we might also imagine Sidney taking recourse to something like what he says in his *Apologie*: that classical verse forms, which mark "the quantity of each syllable" and so are "fit lively to express divers passions, by the low or lofty sound of the well-weighed syllable."[39] It would not be enough for a line to merely describe a man's size; to be truly artful, the poetic line would "infallibly demonstrate" through an artificial conceit the subject

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[36] Lomazzo explains how a painter resembles Nature because Nature "first presupposeth matter being a thing voide of *forme* , *beauty*, *bound*, or *limite*, and afterwardes bringeth in the *forme*, which is a beautifull and limited thing," and when the painter sits at a table, the surface of which is "nothing but a flat and plaine superficies," he "*trimmeth*, *primeth*, and *limiteth* it by tracing thereon a man, a horse, or a *Colomne*, forming and tricking the true proportion thereof, and (in a word) imitating by lines the nature of the thing to be painted in breadth, length, and thicknesse" (Lomazzo 16-17).

[37] Hilliard, 28.

[38] Timothy J. Reiss, "From Trivium to Quadrivium: Ramus, Method and Mathematical Technology" in *The Renaissance Computer: Knowledge Technology in the First Age of Print*, eds. Neil Rhodes and Jonathan Sawday (New York: Routledge, 2001), 45-58

[39] Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie* (London: Printed for Henry Olney, 1595), sig. L^{v}, Early English Books Online, http://eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

being described. It seems especially pointed, in this view, that Sidney asks about "short" and "taulle" men, given that lines in classical prosody—a mode with rules to which Sidney still believed English was "fit"—were determined by "long" and "short" syllables.[40] Sidney's question to Hilliard thus might appear to be an implicit affirmation from the staunch defender of poetry that the first scantling of a poetic work would surpass the first scantling of a painting by duly articulating the true proportions of its subject. It is as if Sidney knows that Hilliard's practice, by directly imitating nature, cannot translate sensory perceptions into a demonstrable comprehension of natural and cosmological order. His seemingly innocuous inquiry puts Hilliard in the position of admitting that his art is beholden to nature rather than capable of transmuting nature's brazen world into a golden one.

Hilliard's response makes one thing clear about the importance of the first scantling: it sets the dimensions of the entire representation, thereby ensuring verisimilitude but also emphasizing rules and method. In this way, we might generally think about the artful line not only as a rule but as an agent of *extension*—the first line promises a habit of looking and thinking that coordinates the reception of each subsequent line. This sense of the line with respect to poetry now seems intuitive, as the length of the first line of a sonnet seems to set the mold for the next thirteen. The line's ability to extend itself into a system, its implicit promise of an ordered whole founded upon a known logic, allows it to become the rule of the representation rather than impose a structure based on unrelated precepts. If Hilliard followed Dürer's rules

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[40] Sidney, *Apologie*, sig. L2^r: "Truely the English, before any other vulgar language I know, is fit for both sorts [of versifying, Ancient and Modern]."

to the letter, his portrait of Sir Christopher Hatton would make a man with a low forehead look just da Vinci's Vitruvian man; Hilliard's rule, he explains, is the scantling. It seems odd, even absurd, to think that artistic practice could be so thoroughly abstracted from experiences of the material world that its practices stem from precepts rather than observations, but advocates for rigorous English artificiality in the Elizabethan era nearly came to such a conclusion with respect to vernacular prosody. As Chapter 1 explains, poets like Thomas Campion threatened to use Greek and Latin orthographic rules in order to assimilate "long" and "short" syllables into English, which does not naturally possess them. A similarly abortive wholesale translation of life into regulated practice appears under a different guise in *Hamlet*, wherein Shakespeare puts instructions to actors in the protagonist's mouth—"Suit the action to the word, the word to the action"—that the playwright himself famously does not even attempt to observe. If anyone "out Herods Herod" by outweighing his actions with his words, it is Hamlet himself (*Ham*. 3.2.17, 14).

Throughout this dissertation, I explain how literary writers like Donne, Lyly, and Shakespeare establish rules for their craft that preserve the importance of lines, even as they resist making the line beholden to any rule other than its own presence. Once the line is recognized as the medium of literary artfulness, it becomes apparent that though the line conditions habits of thinking, it also has the capacity to recondition them. The innocuous, sometimes invisible line takes the objects of experience, and, by the application of artificial rules that have been sublimated into rational truths, gives them form and meaning—in this way a poem might make a claim to resonating with the order of the cosmos. Yet if the line is perceived not as the

purveyor of a rule, but a denigrated, fallen, man-made artifact fundamentally distinct from the products of divine reckoning, the rules of art which contribute to knowledge are themselves exposed as potentially untrustworthy. Throughout my chapters, I read texts that implicitly or explicitly encourage their audiences to mistrust the images being constructed: Donne's poems drag ideas back down into their material shells, "The Phoenix and Turtle" obsesses over Reason's inability to accept the very idea the poem centrally labors to render, *Galatea* exposes art and craft as inefficacious deceptions, *The Old Wives Tale* laughs at the theater's pretensions to telling coherent stories, and *Macbeth* presents audiences with a king who finds himself to be an actor speaking words signifying nothing. These works, I will argue, are not critiques of art, but critiques of the passively acquiescing to presumed rules of art. They uproot the assumptions by which readers interpret and experience poetry and plays by disallowing lines from establishing rules and then vanishing into the structures these rules have conditioned. In these works, the line ceases being an agent of order and becomes an unruly instrument for restoring agency to audiences, so that they might perceive artful language as something with ideas they might discover through experience, or as something that invites them into a representational system rather than asking them to passively perceive it. The unruly line, in other words, becomes an avenue for tactical individuation within the strategies that govern artistic composition.

Through-lines: Line, Page, Part, Space

This dissertation is divided into two parts, with the first part being devoted to poetry, and the second to drama. The distinction between these halves is even more

strongly established by the fact that the first part generally advocates for thinking about poetic lines as material objects inscribed on the page, while the second part proposes that dramatic lines need to be understood as embodied technologies for conducting live performances and not as textual artifacts. In some respects, there are different arguments about two different literary forms being made here. What links these halves of my project, however, is the line itself– the foundational unit employed by both crafts for differentiating their use of language from everyday speech. In poetry, we presume that meter produces lines, and so when we see lines, we know that special care has gone into crafting these words. In theater, we do not necessarily register actors' speeches in terms of lines, even when they are speaking in verse, but we know that any actor in a non-improvisational play had to have learned his lines in order to participate in the production. The line establishes difference with respect to the operations of language specifically by establishing a rule, a standard by which language is determined to belong within the work of art. This rule might be a specific metrical technique, or it might be the purposive coordination of language set down in an actor's part, but in either case what we understand when we say "verse line" or "dramatic line" is the manifestation of a rule we assume to be guiding composition. In my readings of both poetry and drama, I interrogate how the line functions as a way of arriving at knowledge by being the silent motor driving literary representation. Typically, the line preserves the rules that give artful language its privileged access to making meaning, but as I will demonstrate, early modern artists often turned the material fact of the line against the rules from which it derives. As a result, the line becomes "unruly" in a variety of ways that manifest on the page and in the playhouse.

The two halves of this project also function as a whole by way of their methodological interests and concerns. In both sections, the way I understand the line derives from recent scholarship regarding the technical practices and material conditions of literary composition in the early modern period. My attention to the line builds upon the work of analytical bibliographers and theater historians in order to develop new ways of reading and apprehending literary form. Each chapter will introduce its own critical and scholarly debts, but in general my project unites historical work done on reading practices, inscription technologies, playhouse techniques, and theatrical conditions with critical readings of texts that seek to better understand the function of literature in everyday experience. Throughout my chapters, different critical trends espousing their own freshness will be explicitly or implicitly invoked—New Bibliography, New Prosody, New Theatricality, and of course the New Historicism—but the central question posed by the project as a whole is perhaps as old as literary criticism itself. I simply ask what rigorous analyses of formal literary techniques can tell us about historically situated modes of knowledge production and reception. As such, the first chapter of each part introduces a way of thinking about the line within the historical context of early modern England—how the line was argued about by commentators on prosody and how it manifested in print as opposed to manuscript (Ch. 1), or how the line was taken up by actors in playing companies as a tool of their trade and how it enabled these players to take full advantage of theatrical environments (Ch. 3). The second chapter of each section subsequently takes the findings of the initial chapter and engages in an extended reading of a work by

Shakespeare focalized on the logic of its lines. Driving readers to experiences of disorder and disorientation by way of his irregular lines, I argue, allows Shakespeare to offer potent inquiries into topics such as the material foundations of knowledge (Ch. 2) and the technical logic of sovereignty (Ch. 4).

As a way of both foreshadowing the mode of reading promoted by this project and also of introducing each of the chapters in greater detail, I offer a reading of Shakespeare's Sonnet 23 as a framing device. The sonnet, itself thematically concerned with the differences between poetry and drama, also references how the techniques and material conditions of both literary forms rely upon lines. Rather than quoting it, I have decided to paste the printed version from the 1609 quarto for reasons that should become obvious:

23

AS an vnperfect actor on the ſtage,
Who with his feare is put beſides his part,
Or ſome fierce thing repleat with too much rage,
Whoſe ſtrengths abondance weakens his owne heart;
So I for feare of truſt, forget to ſay,
The perfect ceremony of loues right,
And in mine owne loues ſtrength ſeeme to decay,
Ore-charg'd with burthen of mine owne loues might:
O let my books be then the eloquence,
And domb preſagers of my ſpeaking breſt,
Who pleade for loue, and look for recompence,
More then that tonge that more hath more expreſt.
O learne to read what ſilent loue hath writ,
To heare wit eies belongs to loues fine wiht.

Figure 0.1: Sonnet 23 from *Shake-speare's Sonnets* (1609)[41]

[41] William Shakespeare, "Sonnet 23," *Shake-speare's Sonnets* (London: G. Eld, 1609), sig. C^{v}, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

The poem posits a conflict between the obstreperous feeling of a lover and his ability to express this feeling in speech. Comparing himself to a player overcome by stage-fright and to "some fierce thing repleat with too much rage," the speaker (or, more appropriately, the writer) expresses regret that he is "ore'charg'd with burthen" and so cannot shape his "loues might" into a spoken utterance. Instead, he enlists "books" as his eloquence, as "domb presagers" speaking on behalf of his muted heart. This trade culminates in the final line of the third quatrain, the puzzling declaration that these eloquent books are capable of "[m]ore then that tonge that more hath more exprest." As a way into unpacking the self-conscious excesses indicated by this line's multiple iterations of the word “more,” the closing couplet enjoins the beloved, and readers, to synesthetically "heare with eies." The sonnet so alludes to two different kinds of silence: the absent speech of the actor and the silent love that proceeds through writing, and which the poet proposes might still be “heard” with eyes. The sonneteer thus suggests that the silence that inspires written eloquence infuses language with something “more,” with the adornments of “ceremony” available to actors but which also may be ocularly apprehended in a book. Patrick Cheney, arguing that this sonnet indicates that "Shakespeare's ingrained thinking process both separates and intertwines the two modes of his professional career," makes a case for reading "books" and "domb presagers" in terms of their respective resonances with Shakespeare's poetic products and his theatrical vocation.[42] Indeed, I concur that the poem signals

[42] Patrick Cheney, "'O, let my books be…dumb presagers": Poetry and Theater in Shakespeare's Sonnets," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 52.2 (2001): 222-254, 241.

Shakespeare's two preferred forms of literary art, and the intertwined references to both the "book" upon which poetic lines are inscribed and the "part" out of which an actor might step affords us an opportunity to think about the similarities and differences between poetic and dramatic lines as they will be discussed in this dissertation.

Turning his conceit upon these two media allows the sonneteer to balance the ephemeral ceremony of theatrical performance with the stolid permanence of printed books. Yet, the sonneteer presumes that his "books" will require "recompense" more than that beseeched through eloquence; more than the more that the tongue expresses. The speaker/writer suggests that his poetic lines can exceed even the excesses of theatrical eloquence. The idea that writing can say more than performative speech is the foundation of my analysis in the first part of this dissertation. Through readings of poems by King James VI and John Donne in conversation with prosody debates and the material practices of writing, Chapter 1 argues that as poetry shifted from something that was heard to something that was read, the line became the medium of poetic discourse. A pattern poem by James, for example, sheds light on what it might mean for a poem to be a "monument" as well as a "song." My approach to Donne's poems, and particularly "The triple Foole," proposes that the shape and placement of written lines—which I argue are for Donne self-consciously "crooked"—supplements and augments the representational capacities of the words these lines contain. Then, Chapter 2, a prolonged reading of Shakespeare's 1601 elegy, "The Phoenix and Turtle," takes the material presence of the written line as a given with respect to poetic making, and explores the consequences of this presence for the conceptualization of

poetry as written in “numbers.” Comparing the verse line to the diagrammatic lines in Robert Recorde’s math manuals, which were also conflating graphical objects with numerical measurements, I consider how Shakespeare and Recorde, the poet and the mathematician, reconcile themselves differently to the irrationality that stems from this conflation.

If we look again at Sonnet 23 through the lens that will be supplied by Chapters 1 and 2, we may perceive how it combats the assumption that silence connotes a love that "seem[s] to decay." Unlike a typical sonnet, which because of its metrical patterns has the distinct shape of a rectangular block with a rough or ragged right-hand side, this sonnet presents a visual pattern of repeated expansion, a cascading structure built out of ink wherein each line of each stanza increases in physical length without altering in measure. The first line, for example, carries only 29 inked characters, whereas the fourth line carries 44. As we will see in Donne’s irregular verses and in the lines of "The Phoenix and the Turtle," such material lines can play accentual measure (a decorous pentameter) against line size or position, enabling the inscribed words to take on a visual body that struts and frets upon the page and "says" (or "shows") more than words alone may permit. The poem implies not only that printed poetry can capture the extra-linguistic semantic "frill" attained by ritual or theatrical performance by allowing audiences to "hear with their eyes," but also implies, inversely, the degree to which Shakespearean theater relies on "seeing with the ear." What the poem purports to replace through print is precisely that which the silent speaker cannot obtain—a kind of excessiveness available to a perfect actor

speaking his part perfectly.[43]

The sonnet's invocation of an "actor's part" foreshadows the revision to the concept of the line as a unit of dramatic form that I undertake in the second part of this dissertation. Rather than thinking of dramatic lines as verse lines, and debating the difference between prose and verse dialogue, I propose that the dramatic line be understood by way of the technical practices used by players and compositors in order to indicate who must say what at which time. Actors are reliant on one another's memories for the overall success of the theatrical illusion; if one actor forgets his lines, he also forgets the cues the other actors need to issue their parts. The dramatic line, as I present it, concerns the creation of a specific kind of theatrical space that circumscribes the performance event and is not limited to the stage or playing platform. Shakespeare's spatial language of the "vnperfect actor on the stage" being "put besides his part" even suggests that the foundations of theatrical performance can experience a seismic tear if an actor fails to say what he is supposed to say—if the actor is "besides" his part, he is no longer in the play, even if he remains on stage. The common expression for such a moment, in fact, was being "out." Consequently, I understand the dramatic line as the coordinating foundation of the theatrical medium, much as the line is established as the medium of poetry in the first half.

Importantly, I do not claim that the dramatic line presupposes perfect recollection—it is by its nature as embodied speech vulnerable to mistakes. A player

[43] Patricia Parker, "Shakespeare's Sound Government: Sound Defects, Polyglot Sounds, and Sounding Out," *Oral Tradition*, 24.2 (2009): 359-372, esp. 361. Parker's discussion of "sound effects" or "sound defects" informs my approach here a great deal; whereas Parker is concerned with how plays "turn the ear into a substitute *oculus* or eye," I propose in Chapter 3, especially through my reading John Lyly's *Galatea*, that dramatic lines equally rely on turning the eyes into ears.

that forgets his lines, or says "more than what is set down for them" (*Ham.* 3.2.39-40), appears to be breaking the rules of playing, because players are understood to be responsive to the lines as set down and to each other. Yet players might, like the sonneteer describes, work themselves up to such a rage, or overcharge themselves with such feeling, that they elevate the words they are meant to say. This breaking of frame, however subtle, is fundamentally what makes theater compelling and unique as a medium, and early modern playwrights demonstrate an acute awareness of this.

Chapter 3 presents two examples of playwrights designing theatrical spaces around the dramatic line's capacities to both articulate and refreshingly disrupt theatrical spaces. John Lyly's *Galatea* (1584) is a play about disguises, deception, and outward shows—a theme mirrored in the heavily artificial euphuistic language in which the characters speak. Yet Lyly's play interestingly hinges not on the success of these disguises, and consequently on the persuasiveness of his theatrical techniques, but on their inevitable failures. George Peele's *The Old Wives Tale* (1595) takes a fundamentally different approach from Lyly's play, and tests the limits of theatrical techniques by structuring a play around a story without any clear semblance of order. Unlike Lyly's highly superficially controlled offering, Peele's is a festive work of dramatic misrule – yet, as I will show, Peele's play nevertheless works its way back toward coherence despite its lunacy, because of the logic of its dramatic lines. Together, Lyly and Peele demonstrate the fortified fluidity of theatrical space, a space wherein the integrity of the represented illusion is of less consequence than the integrity of a certain kind of experience for the audience. With this understanding of theatrical space in mind, Chapter 4 turns to *Macbeth* (1605/6), which I posit as a play

constructed atop a borderline, and therefore subject to different and competing representational laws. Macbeth becomes, as he himself recognizes, an "vnperfect actor" who is set beside his part, but the perplexing feature of the play is that despite seeming like he is "out," Macbeth remains in his play until he is finally dethroned and beheaded. The disorienting presentation of a character technically untethered to his environment, I claim, allows the theater to interrogate the conditions of sovereign rule in which a sovereign and his kingdom are not legally and administratively allied. Comparing Macbeth's dislocation to James I's attempts to erase the Anglo-Scottish border and unite his kingdoms, I argue that James's struggles resemble Macbeth's failure. They are both kings working from outside, speaking in a language the others around them cannot understand. The dramatic line, as a means to construct an imaginary that necessitates sociability but which is nevertheless an avenue for individuation, thus becomes a way to analyze the logic of sovereign rule. As a way to reflect upon habits of thinking, the unruly line asks what exactly it means for a king, or an outlaw, to exist outside of the law.

The unruly lines in this dissertation do not break rules so much as they manipulate them; like de Certeau's street-walker, who may jaywalk or ignore sidewalk patterns, the line opens avenues for taking chances and resisting binding structures. Sonnet 23's treatment of the speaker's excessive "burthen of loue's might," which precludes his ability to be a speaker, models this tacit subversion by finding an outlet not in speech but in printed whitespace. The sonnet does not change the poem's meter—the longer lines are still decasyllabic—but it views this meter from a skewed perspective, wherein it may speak in ways prosodic rules could not have anticipated. I

conclude this introduction with some insights from Robert Herrick, who writes nearly half a century after many of the poets in this discussion are meddling with their lines. One of Herrick's best-known poems, "Delight in Disorder," discusses the blandness of art that is too "too precise in every part" and exclaims how order interlaced with irregularity—a "cuff neglectful," a "tempestuous petticoat"—can "bewitch" the senses.[44] In each of the texts I discuss, I argue that writers use unruly lines specifically to do just this: bewitch the senses, shake them free from conditioned habits of thought, and reinvigorate the audience's experience of the world through language. Life is not predicated upon rules, but it is often, however unconsciously, understood through them. Lines are not predicated by rules, but they are often, however unconsciously, understood with respect to them. In his epigrammatic couplet, "Poets," which may as well apply to playwrights, Herrick compares life and lines:

> Wantons we are, and though our words be such,
> Our Lives do differ from our Lines by much.[45]

Herrick's line-ending "such" introduces a pivotal ambiguity to this couplet. "Such" may refer back to "Wantons," implying that poets' words, like the poets themselves, are careless and uncontrolled. In this sense, by asserting that poets' lives "differ" from their lines, Herrick suggests that poets are far more wanton than their wanton words even suggest; "differ" here connotes a matter of degree. This notion is borne out by the fact that this self-conscious critique is staged in largely metrically regular verses,

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[44] Robert Herrick, *The Poems of Robert Herrick* (London: Grant Richards, 1902), 25-26.
[45] Herrick, 210.

with the main licenses aptly being taken on “Wantons” and “differ from.” However, if really consider the second verse a material metaphor, we find this poem reflecting upon the mode of its own disclosure—“such” in this sense refers not to wantonness but to Herrick’s very lines, to these words clearly controlled by careful rules. In this reading, the control exerted on words by poetic craft fully conceals the wantonness of the poets themselves; “differ” here connotes a matter of quality. Though I, perhaps obviously, tend toward the second reading, this couplet’s insight, and the exemplary utility it provides as a way to frame this project, lies in how Herrick lays bare the idea that writers of lines apprehend the disjunctions between the rules by which we live and the life we must compress into rules. These disjunctions resurface in each of my chapters, and their presence repeatedly underscores how lines are the fundamental instruments poets and playwrights use to think, and revise ways of thinking, through language.

CHAPTER 1

On the Matter of the Vernacular Verse Line

What is poetry made out of? Or, more precisely, if poetry is a kind of "making," what materials does poetry use in order to make? These questions seem especially pressing today, as the free-verse line poses a foundational problem to contemporary poets: free verse's relationship (or lack thereof) to formal prosodic conventions immediately throws into question what exactly poetry even *is* – if not written in lines, what separates poetry from other discourses? Some commentators discuss the free-verse line in terms of ideology, others in relation to sound and breathing, others with respect to the friction it creates against syntax, others in terms of the mapping of time, and others still with respect to its material and visual qualities.[1] Despite these different views, however, is the line most essentially merely a signal for what Jonathan Culler calls a "strategy of reading" whose "major operations are applied to verbal objects set as poems even when their metrical and phonetic

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[1] Pulling just from Rosko and Zee's *A Broken Thing: Poets on the Line* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2011), the essays of which will be cited by author and page number: On sounds and breathing, Catherine Barnett reveals that she is "still most excited by the 'after silence' that marks the end of every line" (49) and Graham Foust notes how the line marks "an oscillation we might liken to inhaling and exhaling (93). On time, Bruce Bond suggests that the line "encourages us, as do all poems of shimmer and evocation, to slow down" (53) and Catherine Imbroglio notes that "lines created spaces, with both being used for material notation of the temporal" (135). On syntax, Scott Cairns argues that the line "is the poet's best defense against the narrow tyranny of syntax" (56) and Robert Wrigley stresses how while "syntax is holy" in all writing, "if you are a poet, your syntax must be arrayed across a grid of lines, thus enabling it to be much more than might otherwise seem possible" (253). Gabriel Gudding depicts the line as an instrument of power, saying that "the line is an ideological device masquerading as an aesthetic element" (113). Martha Rhodes stresses the written materiality of the line by announcing that she is "a short-lined poet who uses the left side of the page as a launch pad" (204), Alice Fulton suggests that poetry asks us "to experience rather than ignore the materiality of language" (94), and Johanna Drucker looks to cuneiform and graphical writing systems to trace the interrelated history of language and "the notion of a ground line" as "foundational to all verbal systems" (78).

patterns are not obvious"?[2] If so, can lineated poetry, or prose poetry or sound poetry, challenge or subvert these strategies, or must they always reify the ideological suppositions attached to the poetic line?

As an early modernist, what interests me most about this productive consternation within postmodern poetics is the widespread presumption that the free-verse line engages with the epistemological, cultural, and even physiological aspects of poetry with immediacy seemingly unavailable to earlier, metrical verse forms. In an influential essay, "On the Function of the Line" (1979), Denise Levertov establishes this perspective toward the prelapsarian metrical line:

> The closed, contained quality of [earlier metrical] forms has less relation to the relativistic sense of life which unavoidably prevails in the twentieth century than modes that are more exploratory, more open-ended. A sonnet may end with a question; but its essential, underlying structure arrives at conclusion. "Open forms" do not necessarily terminate inconclusively, but their degree of conclusion is—structurally, and thereby expressively—less pronounced, and partakes of the open quality of the whole. They do not, typically, imply a dogmatic certitude; whereas, under a surface, perhaps, of individual doubts, in the structure of the sonnet or the heroic couplet bears witness to the certitudes of these forms' respective epochs of origin.[3]

Levertov's essay offers an important account of the logic of the free-verse line break, but I take issue with the implicit depiction of metrical compositions as somewhat less troubled by the line as a concept (or of the "epoch" of the sonnet, early modernity, being somehow less "exploratory" or possessing more "certitude"!). From the vantage

[2] Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), 163.

[3] Denise Levertov, "On the Function of the Line," *Light up the Cave* (New York: New Directions, 1979), 61.

of modern poets, one often unconsciously shared by readers and teachers of poetry, the early modern metrical line is sufficiently explained as a spandrel of meter. While commenters on free-verse appear certain about the line's reactivity, if not its definition, with respect to ideological, cultural, and historical moments, the idea that the early modern metrical line might also interrogate the "openness" of linguistic and poetic expression rarely surfaces.

In this chapter, I challenge modern assumptions by asking what the line could have meant to early modern poets without presuming that it was merely the product of the mechanical observance of metrical conventions. What if the early modern line, as an element of and signal for poetry itself, was subject to no less interrogation and experimentation than contemporary free-verse? On what grounds or premises might this experimentation occur? By examining the various capacities of the written line of vernacular poetry, I explain how changes in the way the poetic line is perceived in early modern England provokes changes in the way the line, and poetry in general, conditions ways of thinking through language. Just as contemporary critics ponder the status of the line in the wake of free-verse poetics, inquiring as to what exactly the line is, early modern vernacular poets recognized the centrality of the line to prosody but did not necessarily agree upon its essential character. Deriving a sense of poetry as lineated from classical prosody, which divided verses into patterns of "long" and "short" syllables and was consequently rooted in the rhythmic musicality of this patterned speech, vernacular English poets struggled to locate the same kind of musicality in the accentual-syllabic form endemic to England. I claim here that as poetry transitioned in the late sixteenth century from being something predominantly

encountered in performance to something predominantly encountered as read, the poetic line became a way to negotiate poetry's two sparring media. The line announces poetic language as artificially ordered and purposively coordinated, but, as a line, translates these regulatory processes into physical artifacts that can be experientially encountered and interrogated.

The line, originally a byproduct of metrical patterns, becomes upon inscription a material figure with qualities unrelated to those aurally derived patterns. As this chapter will show, this new, multimodal line insinuates itself as the fundamental medium of poetic craft, and in doing so, launches a kind of poetic making capable of foregrounding how the rules governing poetic making and the ideas promoted by these rules are nevertheless manufactured by human techniques and grounded in physical and embodied experiences. While scholars have explored how the variations inherent to spoken English led to compromises and changes in the character of prosodic rules imported to England, I look beyond a poetics rooted in spoken English and toward another consequence of the vernacular Elizabethan line's confrontation with classical quantitative meters: the integration of prosodic rules for spoken language with poetry's presentation on the physical page.[4] After explaining the uncertain status of

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[4] George T. Wright points out that for Elizabethan readers, "iambic pentameter was perceived essentially as a line whose pattern was entirely defined when you stated that it had ten syllables," but explains that humanists and scholars who "admired the capacity of Latin verse to *vary* the number of syllables, and by so doing, to achieve expressive effects" undertook to augment the capacities of the vernacular verse line.[4] Wright explains that by playing phrase against line, poets of the later sixteenth century were liberated "from the severe stewardship of an autocratic meter" and could take the line "into [their] own hands." See George T. Wright, *Shakespeare's Metrical Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 210. Rayna Kalas offers a different account of this transformation by noting how poetic making in early modern England "was a material and technical process of joining or admixing the already extant matter of words and of tempering song with image." Kalas finds that for early modern poets, "one frames verse in accordance with the natural rhythms of a given language, rather than imposing meter onto an arrangement of words"—"framing" thus "describes the process of

poetic meter during a period in which poetry shifted from being thought of as predominantly performed to being predominantly read, I argue that for some poets, the "matter" of the line as a written figure becomes as important to *poiesis* as eloquent words capable of rendering castles in the air.

When early modern English poets speak of the line, they overwhelmingly appear to consider poetic lines in terms of their written materiality. This materiality allows the line to serve either as synecdoche for a poem as a whole, or as an alternative avenue for expression and emotional catharsis when verbal expression fails, or even as a figural substitute for the author. Francis Davison characterizes lines in his sonnet as a space into which someone may intrude—"Who in these lines may better claime a part"—before also presenting them as a physical gift: "Accept then these lines, though meanely pend, / So fit for you to take, and me to send."[5] Barnabe Barnes asks, "Can neither sighes, nor teares, my sorrowes moue, / By lines, or wordes, nor will they be remoued?" and exposes the line as a personal palliative after bodily expressions of pain prove ineffective.[6] Thomas Howell, in "A friendly salutation to his beloued" figures poetic lines as a metaphorical substitute for himself when he asks that his dedicatee "Accepte and vewe these lines, / And thinke my hart you see, /

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conforming language to certain regulated patterns; but it also connotes the eloquence inherent in the cadences of spoken language." See Kalas, 55, 57.

[5] Francis Davison, "Sonnet IIII," *A Poetical Rapsody containing, diuerse sonnets, odes...* (London: by V.S. for Iohn Baily, 1602), sig. D3^{v}, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Folger Shakespeare Library.

[6] Barnabe Barnes, "Sonnet LIII," *Parthenophil and Parthenophe: Sonnettes, madrigals, elegies and odes...* (London: [J. Wolfe], 1593), 37, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, British Library.

Beholding eke this menssenger, / Somtimes consider mee."[7] Sidney's landmark sonnet-cycle *Astrophil and Stella* (1592) finds the poet-aspirant Astrophil almost rejecting his own meager poem, which begins, "Stella, the fulnes cannot staied be," for its "weake proportion," but explaining that before his pen "these lynes had dashed quite" it was compelled to stop "Because their fore-front beares sweet *Stellas* name."[8] This brief commonplace book of commentary on the line suggests that for early moderns, poetic lines at the most basic level signal the "poetic function": they orient attention toward themselves and their own phonological and discursive interrelations by announcing, 'this is a poem.' Surprisingly, instead of remarking on their status as contrivances of metrical rules or rhyme schemes, these lines draw attention to the very material surfaces upon which they are inscribed, and often even name the instruments that enable their coming into being.

Self-referential verse lines function as what N. Katherine Hayles, in an investigation of new digital media, calls "material metaphors." As material metaphors, these lines connote the "traffic between words and physical artifacts" which supplements or accompanies verbal metaphors that traffic between one word and another. "To change the material artifact," Hayles suggests, "is to transform the context and circumstances for interacting with words, which inevitably changes the meanings of the words as well," before emphasizing that this "transformation of meaning is especially potent when the words reflexively interact with the inscription

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[7] Thomas Howell, "A friendly salutation to his beloued," *Newe sonets, and pretie pamphlets* (London: by Thomas Colwell, 1570), 18, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Trinity College Cambridge Library.

[8] Sir Philip Sidney, *Sir P. S. his Astrophil and Stella* (London: Printed by John Charlewood, 1591), sig. D3^r, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, British Library.

technologies that produce them."[9] Central to this chapter, then, is an understanding of the line as an inscription technology, as "the context and circumstances," for poetic discourse. This understanding sees the line mediating between a poetic craft largely determined by aural strictures and a poetic discourse finding itself increasingly fixed upon material surfaces. In this sense, the line must be understood both as preserving metrical rules and as the physical artifact into which those rules are inscribed. I argue that as a consequence of this increasingly divided allegiance between sight and sound, poets occasionally insist that their lines to be perceived *as* graphical lines, overtly making them "material metaphors" or figures of their own materiality. In doing so, these poets fold the graphological characteristics of lineation into poetry's representational arsenal.

To sense some of the ways the poetic line's visuality augments the dynamics of poetic expression, we might turn again to my commonplace book. In the wake of Sidney's towering intervention on sonnet writing, the poetic line starts taking the written word seriously – if not more seriously—than the proportions, symmetries, and metrical signatures expected of prosody. Writers begin offering the line as a figure of its own, metapoetically reflecting not only on a poem as social currency, but on the materiality of the poetic word and the physical and intellectual experiences of authors and readers. In the first sonnet of his *Amoretti* (1595), Edmund Spenser places his lines as the middle term between the "happy leaves" of a book that the beloved might

[9] N. Katherine Hayles, *Writing Machines* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2002), 23-24. Hayles argues that even though literary critics have long relegated the materiality of literary artifacts to "the specialized fields of bibliography, manuscript culture, and book production," the burgeoning new field of electronic textuality has made it "overwhelmingly clear that we can no longer afford to ignore the material basis of literary production" (19).

handle and "hold in loves soft bands," and the "happy rymes" of the poetry contained therein. His "happy lines" are in this configuration what the speaker adds to the leaves as objects "on which with starry light, / those lamping eyes will deign sometimes to look / and read the sorrowes of my dying spright / written with teares in harts close bleeding book." These lines are remarked upon alongside the "happy rymes" which look not inward at the speaker but outward and "behold that Angels blessed look." [10] For Spenser, the lines are visual, and sit somewhere between the aurality invoked by "rimes" and the tactility asserted by "leaves."

In his sonnets (1609), Shakespeare sees his lines as potential gateways to immortality—"When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st" (Sonnet 18)—and also as reminders of the material past: "When that churl Death my bones with dust shall cover / And [thou] shalt by fortune once more re-survey / These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover..." (Sonnet 32). Lines are always written objects asking to be read, but they are also often sites of temporal extension that link readers to moments, actions, and even bodies in both the future ("His beauty shall in these black lines be seen, / And they shall live, and he in them still green" [Sonnet 43]) and in the past ("Nay, if you read this line, remember not / The hand that writ it, for I love you so" [Sonnet 71]). Elsewhere, Shakespeare's lines are vessels that the poet bawdily fills; when a rival offers the beloved poetic offerings, the speaker's verse line becomes hollow and flaccidly empty: "But when your countenance fill'd up his line, / Then lacked I matter; that enfeebled mine" (Sonnet 86). As will be addressed further in Chapter 2,

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[10] Edmund Spenser, "Amoretti," *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser*, ed. William A. Oram et. al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 600 [Sonnet 1].

Shakespeare's lines are very much physical objects, but they are objects conceived through the rules and peculiar affordances of prosody. Francis Quarles's *Argalus and Parthenia* (1629) places the line at the center of a captivating synesthesia moving from heard speech, to kinetic physical force, to the visual permanence of the written word: "Excuse my silence: If my lines should speake, / Such marble hearts, as could not melt, would break; / No, leaue her to her selfe: It is not fit / To write, what being read, you'd wish vnwrit."[11] Just what exactly the medium of the line is, by the time Quarles is writing, seems less important than what the line is able to do.

The poetic line as a material artifact—and as the graphical form properly associated with poetic discourse—has a convoluted history in England too intricate to summarize here. [12] My specific interest in this particular moment in the history of poetry, however, relates to the emergence of a complicated interface between the problematic status of the linguistic sign in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in

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[11] Francis Quarles, *Argalus and Parthenia*, (London: Printed for Iohn Marriott, 1629), 46, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Bodleian Library.

[12] Rosemary Huisman's *The Written Poem* (1998) offers a thoroughly well-researched introduction to this history which explains that the spatial arrangement of poetry in lines "has been a convention associated with written texts of poetic discourse in English at least since the time of Chaucer, about 1400" and that this arrangement "has primarily been a metaphor for the temporal phonological realization of the poem." Tracing the origins of poetry as "shaped" back to about the 12th century and recounting how "English scribes writing down poetic texts were necessarily being exposed to whatever conventions were developing for the writing of Latin and French poetry," Huisman argues that the textual practices of writing down poetry did not experience a "linear development from orality through transitional literacy but a more complex development of doubly transferred literacy. Before the Norman Conquest, English had been a written language with a comparatively fixed orthography. But after the conquest, English was to some extent returned to being only a spoken language again. Thus, subsequently, when the demand for written English began to re-emerge, the developed literacy of French, transferred from Latin, was transferred to English. This transferred literacy would include the generic conventions for written poetry." M. B. Parkes similarly recounts how "most medieval scribes had relied exclusively on layout and rhyme when presenting verse for readers, to evoke in them the responses required by a poetic text," and tracks the use of typographic layout to signal a specific interpretive mode into the sixteenth century. See Rosemary Huisman, *The Written Poem: Semiotic Conventions from Old to Modern English* (New York: Cassell, 1998), 15, 105-107; M. B. Parkes, *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 98-101, esp. 101.

England (the word as a "thing" and as a transparent vehicle for meaning) and the generally unsettled status of aural, manuscript, and printed poetics.[13] How were vernacular poets' attempts to achieve the "musicality" they perceived in classical verse influenced by what Roger Chartier identifies as "the introduction of breathing space on to the page"?[14] Why did the period witness the revived popularization of pattern poems, or *technopaegnia*, as well as anagrams and acrostics (themselves re-emergent classical forms), and did the emergence of these forms impact metrical poetic craft? Rosemary Huisman proposes that since the fourteenth century, the reader, "recognizing in the printed line an instance of a poetic genre, read with the expectation of poetic patterns of rhythm and rhyme." She goes on to imply, drawing on Chartier, that unlike the authors publishing in print by the eighteenth century, whose "graphic display could be read as augmenting or guiding interpretation," poets could not avail themselves of "similar possibilities" until the twentieth century. I openly concede that early modern poets did not typically exert control over their poems' appearance in print (although I make an implicit case for King James VI doing just so, below), but I nevertheless argue that the early modern poetic line, even in poems without visual gimmicks, allows written matter to become a component of poetic making.

Through the lens of King James VI's *Essayes of a Prentise on the Divine Art of Poesie* (1584), which affords an outsider's perspective on the issues troubling English

[13] Huisman argues that "by the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, lineation and graphic display for poetry as poetry is very well established" and that consequently the "visual text-as-object for poetic discourse is not a result of print culture," but acknowledges that "after the introduction of printing, this visual awareness accelerates." Huisman, 101, 127.

[14] Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 11.

versifiers, this chapter first explains how poets in the sixteenth century begin seeing the visual magnitude of the written line as recompense for the absent "long" and "short" syllables that their language lacks. Poetry, shifting its nature from something that is predominantly heard and encountered as performed to something that is predominantly read and encountered on pages, hangs on to the line as a signal of the peculiarity of poetry's ways of making meaning. By explaining how prosody debates in Elizabethan England hinge upon the nature of syllabic value, described interchangeably in terms of "length" and "stress," the first section argues that the poetic line becomes a site of contestation between the two media of poetic craft. Though the sight of lineated language proclaims artifice and a coordinating logic to the composition, new rules of art founded upon shape and size supplement meter as the verse line assimilates itself to the page.

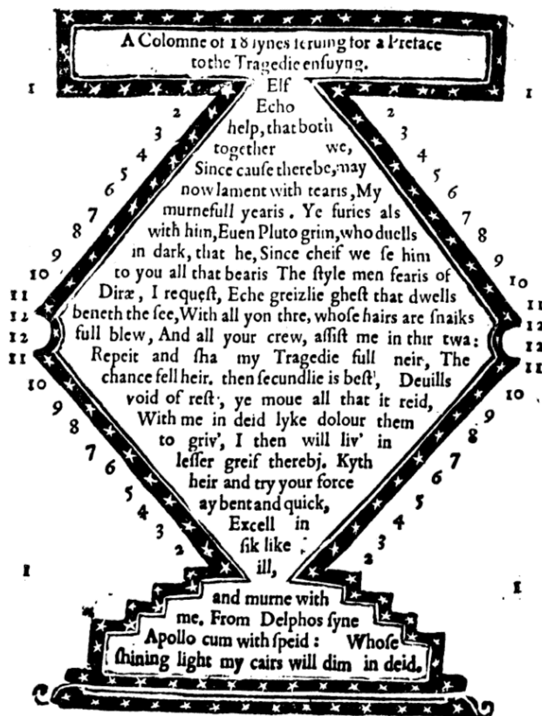
The second part of this chapter then considers how this new, multimodal line allows John Donne to break with conventional metrical prosody and practice a poetics specifically concerned with the relations between form and matter. In Donne, the line becomes a crucial instrument for recognizing ideas, spirit, and thought as embodied and material. I propose that the tropes of materiality attending the poetic line described in the first section are perhaps most deeply investigated by Donne, for whom the line crystallizes into a figure of materiality itself, and a means by which poetry might explore the interrelations between matter, form, experience, and abstraction. In other words, for Donne, the line can become the very stuff out of which poetry forges new relationships between matter and ideas.

The Poetics of the Page: King James VI's Echoing Lines

This section seeks to offer a corrective to the presumption that lines are answerable only to metrical rules by noting how the poetic line in the late sixteenth century, pressured by untenable responsibilities to aural metricality, takes recourse to written, rather than aural, patterns. What will immediately spring to mind are gimmick poems like pattern poems, anagrams, and acrostics, and this section, though largely concerned with a superlatively gimmicky poem, argues that the material residue of these written forms adheres to lines across a variety of poetic genres. I begin my analysis with a poem written on the margins of English debates on vernacular prosody, though one that might very well have been of concern to Elizabethan poets by the end of the sixteenth century.[15] Authored by King James VI of Scotland in the 1580s and included in his first official publication, *The Essayes of a Prentise, In the Divine Art of Poesie* (1584), this poem exhibits some compositional techniques that trouble our sense of the early modern poetic line as simply metrically conceived:[16]

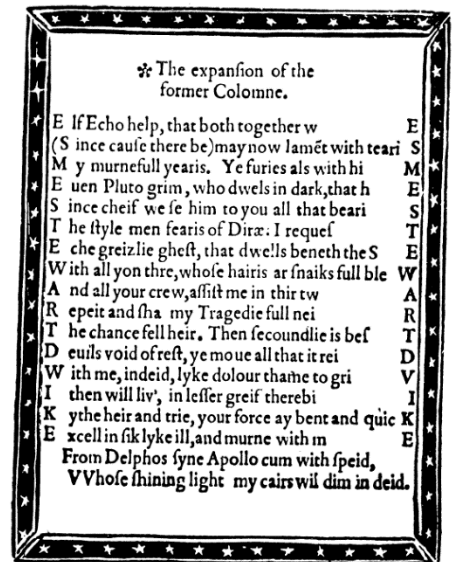
[15] Gabriel Harvey, for example, would annotate a fresh copy of James's *Essays* in 1585; for a discussion of the political implications of this document, see Jennifer Richards, "Gabriel Harvey, James VI, and the Politics of Reading Early Modern Poetry," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 71, No. 2 (June 2008), pp. 303-321.

[16] All citations of James VI's *Essayes* will be from *The Poems of King James VI of Scotland*, vol. 1, ed. James Craigie (London, William Blackwood & Sons, Ltd., 1955), 1-96. References will be to page number and also to the page signature from the 1584 edition.



A Colomne of 18 lynes ſeruing for a Preface
to the Tragedie enſuyng.

Elf
Echo
help, that both
together we,
Since cauſe there be, may
now lament with tears, My
murnefull yearis. Ye furies als
with him, Euen Pluto grim, who duells
in dark, that he, Since cheif we ſe him
to you all that bearis The ſtyle men fearis of
Diræ, I requeſt, Eche greizlie gheſt that dwells
beneth the ſee, With all yon thre, whoſe hairs are ſnaiks
full blew, And all your crew, aſſiſt me in thir twa:
Repeit and ſha my Tragedie full neir, The
chance fell heir, then ſecundlie is beſt, Deuills
void of reſt, ye moue all that it reid,
With me in deid lyke dolour them
to griv', I then will liv' in
leſſer greif therebj. Kyth
heir and try your force
ay bent and quick,
Excell in
ſik like
ill,
and murne with
me. From Delphos ſyne
Apollo cum with ſpeid: Whoſe
ſhining light my cairs will dim in deid.



The expanſion of the
former Colomne.

E lf Echo help, that both together w E
(S ince cauſe there be) may now lamẽt with teari S
M y murnefull yearis. Ye furies als with hi M
E uen Pluto grim, who dwels in dark, that h E
S ince cheif we ſe him to you all that beari S
T he ſtyle men fearis of Diræ: I requeſ T
E che greizlie gheſt, that dwells beneth the S E
W ith all yon thre, whoſe hairis ar ſnaiks full ble W
A nd all your crew, aſſiſt me in thir tw A
R epeit and ſha my Tragedie full nei R
T he chance fell heir. Then ſecoundlie is beſ T
D euils void of reſt, ye moue all that it rei D
W ith me, indeid, lyke dolour thame to gri V
I then will liv', in leſſer greif therebi I
K ythe heir and trie, your force ay bent and quic K
E xcell in ſik lyke ill, and murne with m E
From Delphos ſyne Apollo cum with ſpeid,
VVhoſe ſhining light my cairs wil dim in deid.

Figure 1.1: A pattern poem in two different configurations. From King James VI's *The Essays of a Prentise, In the Divine Art of Poesie* (1584)[17]

[17] King James VI, *The Essayes of a Prentise, in the Divine Art of Poesie* (Edinbrugh: Imprinted by Thomas Vautroullier, 1584), sig. Gii^{v}-Giii^{r}, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com.

Titled “A Colomne of 18 lynes serving for a Preface to the Tragedie ensuyng” (hereafter, “Colomne”), this poem by a self-professed “Prentise” to poetic craft attempts a bravura synthesis of a variety of different formal concerns. Looking first at the right-hand side, the “expansion,” we might note that the poem’s meter is largely iambic pentameter, and we might also notice the sophisticated patterning of “echoing” internal rhymes – we / be; tearis / years; him / grim—in lieu of more traditional end rhymes. In place of these rhymes, the poem bears a peculiarly emphasized double-acrostic character wherein each line begins and ends with the same letter—“*E*ls Echo help, that both together w*E*” (emphasis mine)—thereby announcing each of these lines as a carefully plotted unit. Read vertically, these letters align to spell “ESME STEWART DWIKE [DUKE],” referring to Esmé Stewart, James’s recently dead French cousin, childhood friend, and potential romantic interest. In some sense, the “line” by which this poem is organized is Stewart’s name; the “expansion” is itself a column that must be apprehended by eyes scanning it vertically. The diptych “Colomne” is a paratext for the allegorical poem, “Phoenix,” which begins on the following page and which is plainly about the persecution, exile, and death of Stewart.[18] Together the two works are titled *Ane Metaphoricall Invention of a Tragedie Called Phoenix*. The “expansion” is hard enough to parse with all of its stylistic fireworks, yet the title and the sequence of them emphasizes that readers focus first on the left-hand side “Colomne.” Shifting our eyes over to this pattern poem, we

[18] See Alan Stewart, *The Cradle King: The Life of James VI and I* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2003), 70-71 and David M. Bergeron, “King James and Letters of Homoerotic Desire,” (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999).

see a different compositional logic, where each line is divided by sequencing increasing and decreasing numbers of syllables—"[1] Els / [2] Echo / [3] help, that both"— and that this pattern culminates visually as a symmetrical urn. It should already be obvious that James here exhibits nearly every trick in a sixteenth-century vernacular poet's arsenal, as he ostentatiously announces, or at least tries to announce, his arrival not as a "prentise" poet but as a practicing master. More than just a demonstration of an eager admirer seeking recognition, however, James's poem offers compelling cause to consider more deeply the relationships between the early modern poet line, printed matter, and the formalization of poetic authority.

James's poem reveals the issues that might emerge when attending to the early modern poetic line, since merely speculating about the making of his poem opens up new avenues for reading it as a crafted object. Part (perhaps all?) of the poem's pleasure for us lies in its demonstration of technical skill; not only is it written in a sturdy iambic pentameter, but its syllabic patterning extends beyond this accentual mode and into units fitting lines of extending and descending syllabic length—none of the lines in the urn, after all, cut a word off mid-syllable. My first questions when confronted with this poem inquired after the method of its execution: what would the poet do first? Conceive of the shape? Decide upon the meter? Organize words by syllabic length so that they fall into units of one / two / three syllables? Presumably, the metrical verse on the right would be composed first, but here James presents it as a secondary "expansion," a decision that folds the process of retrospective editing—and even typesetting—into the crafting of a poem. Looking especially closely at the poem, some flaws in the translation between the two forms appear: duke is spelled "DWIKE"

on one side of the double acrostic and “DVIKE” on the other; “therby” in the “I” line is spelled “therbii” in the acrostic and “therebj” in the urn; in the right-hand “E” line of “STEW,” “sea” is spelled “se” in the acrostic and “see” in the urn. The poems, presented on facing pages, almost encourage us to read them in this way that likely mimics their process of composition, because we proceed recursively rather than unidirectionally. Readers, like the author, are compelled to consider these works both simultaneously and sequentially, holding the logic of crafting in mind even while parsing the language and attending to the barely-concealed acrostic key.

This process upends whatever we might determine the poetic line to be or do. During which phases in writing are the poetic lines’ shapes conceived of as reaching an accentual metrical “number,” five iambic feet, and during which phases are the lines thought of as syllabic segments of an increasing typographical quantity productive of an urn pattern? At what point do they cease being objects of numerical quantity at all and become arranged as the visual elements of that pattern? And when does the impulse toward a double acrostic slip into the compositional proceedings? John Hollander, drawing from his own experience composing pattern poems, observes that “in the matter of line length, the shaping of the silhouette must if necessary take precedence over whatever prosodic conventions normally govern the length of lines” and goes on to note how this mode of composition entails “articulating lines in response to the boundaries of outline.”[19] James, however, makes his prosody “work” both as a shape and as a more traditional left-aligned poem. As readers, sustaining attention toward these different formal spinning plates is exhausting, and we do so

[19] John Hollander, *Types of Shape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), ix, xii.

here for merely the preface to another poem! In some ways, the most troubling – or invigorating—aspect of James's "Colomne" is the creeping sense that its actual "content," its verbal or semantic meanings, are of decidedly less concern than its formal flourishes. Are we meant to "read" this poem, or merely look at it, perhaps while counting on our fingers, and marvel? Does promoting this perspective toward a poem's formality make the poem somehow less legitimate than one duly emphasizing the primacy of words?

James's "Colomne" is, if not an ostentatious display, an experiment in versification. In *The Essays of a Prentise*, wherein this poem was first published, James taps into the central strains of English debates about vernacular prosody. In what follows I attempt to recover the poetics of James's lines through his implicit and explicit engagements with these debates. Before 1584, King James likely got his hands on some English poetic commentaries, and, a budding poet himself, felt compelled to personally catalyze a renewal of Scottish verse. Witnessing changes and developments in the art of poetry, because "lyke as the tyme it changeit sensyne, sa is the ordour of Poesie changeit," James takes stock of poetry as it has come to "mannis age and perfectioun."[20] Interestingly, he presents himself as a "prentise" despite also offering "some revlis and cautelis," and acts both as a newcomer to the art and as an ambassador for his kingdom: "For albeit sindrie hes written of it in English, quhilk is lykest to our language, zit we differ from thame in sindrie reulis of Poesie, as ze will

[20] King James VI, "Ane Schort Treatise, Conteining Some Revlis..." *The Poems of James VI. of Scotland*, vol. 1, ed. James Craigie (London: William Blackwood & Sons Ltd., 1955), 65-84, esp. 67 (sig. Kiij^r). All citations to this treatise will be to this edition, but will also cite the page signature of the original 1584 printing.

find be experience." In his preface, James specifically cites Joachim Du Bellay, whose *La défense et illustration de la langue française* (1549) proclaimed new, nationalistic ideals for French poetics, and James's mention of "sindrie" authors writing about English verse is taken by scholars as an obvious allusion to George Gascoigne's *Certayne Notes of Instruction Concerning the Making of Verse or Ryme in English* (1575).[21] Predominantly concerned with Scottish poetics, James sometimes offers advice at odds with Gascoigne and Du Bellay (such as his approval of alliterative, or "lliterary" poems), but throughout the treatise, he also demonstrates an engagement with the central issues facing English prosody. James's rules and definitions exhibit the confusions central to sixteenth century English prosody, especially with respect to the substance of the poetic line. At the end of James's treatise, he arrives somewhat abruptly upon a brief but suggestive discussion of "cuttit or brokin" lines and their relationship to poetic invention. As we work our way toward these "cuttit lines" and back to James's "brokin" up iambic pentameter "Colomne," a revised conception of the early modern poetic line as negotiating aural strictures against visual materiality comes into focus.

James begins his *Revlis* with instructions about rhyming—"That ze ryme nocht twyse in ane syllabe. As for exemple, that ze make not *proue* and *reproue* ryme together, nor *houe* for houeing on hors bak, and *behoue*."[22] This simple enough

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[21] For more on James's influences, see Morna R. Fleming, "The *Amatoria* of James VI: Loving by the *Reulis,*" *Royal Subjects: Essays on the Writings of James VI and I*, Ed. Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), 124-148. See also Carolyn Ives and David J. Parkinson, "'The Fountain and Very Being of Truth': James VI, Poetic Invention, and National Identity" in *Royal Subjects,* 104-123, esp. 110-111.

[22] James VI, *Reulis and Cautelis*, 70 (sig. L^{r}.)

practical advice about it being poor form to rhyme one syllable with itself, though strangely particular for the very first rule of the treatise, also reveals James's stance (or lack thereof) with respect to certain ideas. This is an implicit endorsement of rhyming in general, with rhyming here specifically connoting two words with phonological congruence. In England, accentual-syllabic meter in general was for a time referred to as "rhyme" or "rime," and they were traditionally capped with what we today metonymically understand as rhymes. For some English commenters, rhyming was disdained in comparison to the more carefully crafted lines of classical quantitative verse, which bore syllables measured in terms of their duration or "weight." Roger Ascham, in his influential grammar-school text *The Scholemaster* (1570), disparages the ubiquity of rhyme composed by "rash ignorant heads, which now can easely recken up fourten sillables, and easelie stumble on every Ryme."[23] Echoing Ascham, Richard Stanyhurst, in the dedicatory epistle to his verse translation of the *Aeneid* (1582), exclaims, "Good God, what a frye of such *wooden rythmours* dooth swarme in stacioners shops, who neaver enstructed in any grammar schoole, not atayning too thee paringes of thee Latin or Greeke tongue."[24]Ascham and Stanyhurst's grievances underscore a general sentiment that English verse had been dispersed among an unlearned sort, that anyone who could count and find two words that sounded alike could construct a viable line of poetry. Classical quantitative verse, by contrast, was comprised of meticulously arranged syllables with lengths fixed according to certain

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[23] Roger Ascham, "The Scholemaster," *Elizabethan Critical Essays* vol. 1, ed. G. Gregory Smith (London: Oxford University Press, 1904), 1-45, 31.

[24] Richard Stanyhurst, "The Translation of the *Aeneid,*" *Elizabethan Critical Essays* vol. 1, ed. G. Gregory Smith (London: Oxford University Press, 1904), 141.

rules; these lengths "were concerned purely with time," since a "long" syllable always took twice as long to utter as a "short" one.[25] The English language's isochrony and lack of syllabic standardization, on the other hand, could only produce predictable stress patterns potentially divorced from natural speech, and thus eventually became an object of derision.[26] In *Certayne Notes*, even the generally accommodating Gascoigne laments that the English have "fallen into such a playne and simple manner of wryting, that there is none other foote used but one: whereby our Poemes may iustly be called Rithmes, and cannot by any right challenge the name of a Verse."[27]

While James was not necessarily influenced by Ascham or Stanyhurst, his humanist education came from his tutor, renowned classicist George Buchanan, who likely promoted in James a reverence for Greek and Latin authorities. James's proposals in *The Essayes of a Prentise*, however, reflect, as Rebecca W. Bushnell points out, not only a pupil holding well-known resentments toward his tutor's politics, but also a king writing "explicitly on the grounds that the Scottish language was unique, and implicitly on the grounds that he was the one to make the laws concerning its poetry."[28] Advocating for a clean break with classical rules, James compiles a Scottish poetics that welcomes well-managed rhyming under the metrical

[25] Derek Attridge, *Well-Weighed Syllables: Elizabethan Verse in Classical Metres*, 1st ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 8.

[26] Sharon Schuman, "Sixteenth-Century English Quantitative Verse: Its Ends, Means, and Products," *Modern Philology: A Journal Devoted to Research in Medieval and Modern Literature* 74. 4 (May 1, 1977): 337–338.

[27] George Gascoigne, "Certayne Notes of Instruction Concerning the Making of Verse or Ryme in English," *Elizabethan Critical Essays* vol. 1, ed. G. Gregory Smith (London: Oxford University Press, 1904), 46-57, 50.

[28] Rebecca W. Bushnell, "George Buchanan, James VI, and neo-classicism," *Scots and Britons: Scottish Political Thought and the Union of 1603*, ed. Roger A. Mason (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 91-111, esp. 103, 106-107. See also Ives and Parkinson, 112-114.

imperative of "*Flovving*," or flowing. This is where we arrive at the central perplexities troubling the poetic line. Flowing is the name James gives to meter, and he explains that "the verie twichstane [touchstone]" of it "is Musique."[29] In order to practice flowing, poets must understand that "all syllabis are deuydit in thrie kindes: That is, some schort, some lang, and some indifferent" and that the "forme of placeing syllabes in verse" is to be uniformly iambic: "zour [your] first syllabe in the lyne be short, the second lang, the thrid short, the fourt lang..." Despite being a departure from Gascoigne, who bemoans such metrical uniformity, James's metrical proposal is easy enough to understand from our perspective since he is describing specifically the kind of prosody we assume to hold sway over early modernity. However, James's use of "short" and "lang" rather than "stressed" and "unstressed" syllables exposes the crossed wires constituting the relationship between prosody and musicality in vernacular poetics.

James's *Revlis* clearly invests in a sense of the duration of the poetic line when he explains to writers of fourteeners that their eighth syllable be either a long monosyllable or the long second syllable of a word, "for the Musique, because that quhen [when] zour lyne is ather of xiiij or xij fete, it wilbe drawin sa lang in the singing, as ze [may] rest in the middes of it."[30] This conception of a syllable and a line's "length," however, partly contradicts the classical quantitative tradition which provides the basis for syllabic prosody. The "long" and "short" nomenclature of quantitative metrical syllables derives from characteristics of the Greek language,

[29] James VI, *Revlis,* 74 (sig. Liiij^{r}).
[30] James VI, *Revlis*, 72, (sig. Lij^{v}).

which early moderns assumed to fall into the structure of a long syllable taking up twice the amount of time as a short syllable. The central critique against rhyme/rhythm for classicists like Thomas Campion, then, was that it obfuscated or failed to observe the experiential and sensory balancing act of words and lines achieved in classical quantitative verse. In his *Observations in the Art of English Poesie* (1602), Campion identifies rhyme's deficiencies by noting that "the eare is a rationall sence and chiefe iudge of proportion; but in our kind of riming what proportion is there kept where there remains such a confused inequalitie of sillables?"[31] Campion's emphasis on "proportion" discloses a philosophical disposition toward poetic craft that must be comprehended in order to unpack the nature of the early modern poetic line. Proportion is the means by which vernacular poetics aligned itself with other forms of art, including architecture, painting, and most conspicuously, music. To Campion, a renowned composer, the crucial benefit of classical quantitative verse was its ability to forge deep connections between poetry, music, and the divinely ordained patterning of the world: "The world is made by Simmetry and proportion, and is in that respect compared to Musick, and Musick to Poetry."[32] Quantitatively patterning English verse would allow it to correspond with the mathematical relations observable in the natural world, relations that are reflected both in musical signatures and in classical verse.[33]

Disparities between syllabic "flowing" (or "rhythm") and quantitative "meter"

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[31] Thomas Campion, "Observations in the Art of English Poetry," *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, vol. 2, ed. G. Gregory Smith (London: Oxford University Press, 1904), 328-355, 330.

[32] Campion in Smith, v. 2, 329.

[33] For more on poetic proportion and the Pythagorean ordering of the universe, see S. K. Heninger, Jr., *Touches of Sweet Harmony: Pythagorean Mythology and Renaissance Poetics* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library Press, 1974).

are fundamentally rooted in Aristotle's distinction between the two categories of quantity: quantities are either "discrete," like numerical units or accented syllables, and have "no common boundary at which they join together," or they are "continuous," like magnitudes (lines, surfaces, solids) and also—crucially—time and space.[34] Quantitative syllables deal with duration, so each verse line's "value" is empirically sensible and comparable to that of other lines when considered aurally. The translation of Greek prosodic conventions into Latin, and the subsequent compulsion to adapt them from Latin to English, however, creates a storehouse of ill-defined terms and concepts founded upon an unstable understanding regarding the "value" of a prosodic syllable. Hollander explains how the perfect identification of classical Greek poetry with music was unraveling even before Latin poets superimposed the "schemata" Greek prosody onto the realities of their own language.[35] The issue, in Latin as in English, comes down to the distinction and interrelation between "rhythm" and "meter":

> Actually, this whole account is complicated by the fact that two schools of thought eventually arose within Greek music itself, and it was their differences, discussed in uncomprehending detail by Roman grammarians, that became responsible for so much terminological confusion. The *metrikoi*, primarily rhetoricians and grammarians, held to traditional principles of Greek verse, maintaining in particular that one long syllable should be made equal to two shorts. The *rhythmikoi*, musicians in our sense of the word, held for finer gradations in relative length. In essence, the latter group were arguing for

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[34] Aristotle, "Categories," *Aristotle's* Categories *and* De Interpretatione, Trans. J. L. Ackrill (Oxford UP, 1963), 12-13. The following chapter examines the relationship between "number" and "line" in early modern poetics and in the epistemological transformations occurring in early modern mathematics.

[35] John Hollander, *Vision and Resonance*: *Two Senses of Poetic Form* 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 11. According to Hollander, "it was the adaptation of Greek meters to Latin that poetry, originally inseparable from music, began to grow away from it. And it was then that poetry began to develop, in its meter, a seeming music of its own."

> melodies rhythmically independent of the text. Differences between "meter" and "rhythm" remained those of commitment to the independence of melody.[36]

As perplexed as the relationship between "rhythm" and "meter" was for Greek and subsequently for Latin prosodists, it was only worsened by Elizabethans—and the Scottish king peering over their shoulders—who heedlessly adopted and conflated terminology. In England, this left the "length" of a poetic line determined by conflicting modes of measurement: the continuous, durational quantity of syllables or the discrete, numerical quantity of accented stresses.

The rules regarding the lengths of Greek and Latin syllables were, in the humanist classroom, tied to orthographic indicators; a primary rule was the "rule of position," an element of which was that a vowel followed by two consonants will always read as long, as would a diphthong. Campion explains the rule of position the rule using vernacular English in his *Observations on the Art of English Poesie* (1602): "Position is when a vowell comes before two consonants, either in one or two words. In one, as in *best*, *e* before *st*, makes the word *best* long by position. In two words, as in *setled love*: *e* before *d* in the last sillable of the first word, and *l* in the beginning of the second makes *led* in *setled* long by position."[37] In his correspondences with Gabriel Harvey, Spenser wonders how to accommodate classical rules for quantitative prosody in English: "For the onely, or chiefest hardnesse, whych seemeth, is in the Accente: whych sometime gapeth, and as it were yawneth illfavouredly, coming short of that it should, and sometime exceeding the measure of the Number, as in *Carpenter*, the

[36] Hollander, 13-14.
[37] Campion in Smith, v. 2, 352.

middle sillable being used short in speache, when it shall read long in Verse, seemeth like a lame Gosling, that draweth one legge after hir." This observation precedes Spenser's now well-known, thanks to Richard Helgerson, indication that that problem of quantitative versification actually moves from a crucial anxiety to a kind of irritation for English poets: "For why, a God's name may not we, as else the Greeks, have the kingdome of our own Language, and measure our Accents by the sounde, reserving the Quantity to the Verse?"[38]

A fracture was forming between conceptions of poetic musicality in the classical mode, and musicality and proportion achieved in vernacular poetry upon the merits already held by the language. To some extent, the sound of a poem became less relevant than the intellectual feats it performed. Stanyhurst, obliquely referring to the rule of position, even suggests that musicality was not necessarily the most immediately impressive characteristic of composing a given line of classical verse: "Thee ods beetweene *verses* and *rythme* is verye great. For, in thee one, everye *foote*, everye *word*, everye *syllable*, yea every *letter* is too bee observed: in thee oother, thee last *woord* is onlye too bee heeded."[39] Classical vowels were understood to bear an explicit relationship to spelling and positioning and in turn, students were capable of translating what they saw on the page into intellectual patterns. Derek Attridge points out that for an Elizabethan schoolboy, a line of classical meter elicited "an intellectual apprehension, not an aural one" because "if he knew his rules and his authorities well

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[38] Spenser in Smith, v. 1, 98-99. For more on Spenser and quantitative measures, see also Rosanna Warren, "Pronouncing 'Carpenter': Quantitative Meter in English," *An Exaltation of Forms: Contemporary Poets Celebrate the Diversity of their Art*, eds. Annie Finch and Kathrine Varnes (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002): 86-94.

[39] Stanyhurst in Smith, v.1, 140

enough, he could ascertain as he read the line that it was made up of the correct pattern of longs and shorts." The schoolboy—and, presumably, the adult poet he would become—would see the classical line as a "highly skilled execution of a challenging task, the shaping of the unordered particles of language into an intricate and carefully proportioned artefact."[40] An intellectual relationship with verse might then be understood as based at least partially in reading poems rather than or in addition to hearing them; a line of classical verse on the page was so considered a shaped, visual construction as well as an account of (or blueprint for) musical and rhythmic utterance. When Campion pens English quantitative measures according to such rules—and he is joined in this project by figures as prominent as Philip Sidney—the goal is to exalt and intellectualize the English tongue through deep association with rules from classical languages.

It might strike us as fairly absurd to compose verse by mapping the protocols of Greek and Latin spelling onto English; the results resemble an imposition of constraints akin to an extremely pedantic Oulipo experiment. This absurdity was not lost on Campion's contemporaries, as confirmed by the response to Campion's *Observations* by Samuel Daniel which appeared just a year later. Daniel's *Defense of Rhyme* (1603) famously tears down Campion's proposals to introduce the "tyranny" of foreign meters to English, but in the same pamphlet admits that he is not "against the

[40] Attridge, 76. Martin Elsky observes that "[h]owever much humanists made their pupils speak Latin in school, they were by and large committed to written rather than oral performance, both in pedagogy and in literary practice." See Martin Elsky, *Authorizing Words: Speech, Writing, and Print in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 114.

reformation, and the better settling these measures of ours."[41] Daniel so adopts a framework of prosodic form inspired by though dissociated from continuous classical quantity: "For as Greeke and Latin verse consists of the number and quantitie of sillables, so doth the English verse of measure and accent. And though it doth not strictly observe long and short sillables, yet it most religiously respects the accent: and as the short and the long make number, so the Acute and grave accent yeelde harmonie: and harmonie is likewise number, so that the English verse then hath number, measure and harmonie in the best proportion of Musike."[42] Daniel taking the tack of citing the musicality of vernacular accents reflects the deep interrelations between poetry and music for Elizabethan poets, not just Campion. However, the proposals offered by Daniel and Campion reflect different kinds of poetic musicality—Daniel's proposal is concerned with periodic sonic similitudes ("harmonie") and Campion's with duration and patterning ("proportion"). At root, this discrepancy concerns the difference between viewing the "measure" of a line as constituted by its number of discrete syllables or by its sensible and continuous length or duration.[43]

Gascoigne, whose writings finally return us to the vicinity of James's own

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[41] Samuel Daniel, "A Defence of Ryme," *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, vol. 2, ed. G. Gregory Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1904), 381-382.

[42] Daniel in Smith, v.2, 360.

[43] Neil Rhodes suggests that as English poets like Daniel gradually became aware that "the classical analogy between poetry and music need[ed] to be severed," they began understanding that this decision "involv[ed] making a distinction between metre and rhythm." Rhodes goes on to claim that English poets "framed and tuned their verse in concert with the rhythms of live speech," a tactic indeed central to the compromises offered by reformers such as Daniel and George Gascoigne, who advocates a marriage between classical quantity and native speech patterns. See Neil Rhodes, "Framing and Tuning in Renaissance English Verse," *Renaissance Transformations*, ed. Margaret Healy and Thomas Healy (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 32-47, esp. 42.

treatise, addresses poetic measure by privileging natural English speech in the way that Daniel will promote nearly twenty years later:

> And in your verses remembre to place euery worde in his natural *Emphasis* or sound, that is to say, in such wise, and with such length or shortness, eleuation or depression of sillables, as it is commonly pronounced or vsed. To expresse the same we haue three maner of accents, *grauis*, *leuis*, *et circumflexa*, the whiche I would english thus, the long accent, the short accent, and that whiche is indifferent...[44]

Unlike Daniel, however, Gascoigne still wants to infuse the vernacular with the elegance of classical prosody; in his definitions, then, we see the complications of "englishing" classical concepts. Gascoigne's casual conflation of "*Emphasis*" with "length or shortness" sees a formal prosody that strives for the proportional patterning and organization of classical verse forms but attempts to accommodate the natural rhythms of vernacular speech. At the center of this negotiation is the question of how to understand and divide up the poetic line. Daniel recognizes the need for settling vernacular measures but does not ascribe to classical prosodic regimes; Gascoigne, and King James, however, reside somewhere in the blurred middle ground between quantity and accent because of the persistent philosophical regard for demonstrations of proportionality. In grasping at classical quantitative proportionality, then, Elizabethan poets sought a standard and sophisticated system for measuring verse, so that measured units could be held in correspondence with one another. In the second book of his monumental *Arte of English Poesie* (1589), titled "Of Proportion Poetical," George Puttenham explains that classical artificiality surpasses the relative

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[44] Gascoigne in Smith, v. 1, 49.

primitiveness of English verse because of quantitative verse's ability to manifest aural patterns: "the *rithmus* of theirs is not therefore our rime, but a certaine musicall numerosity in utterance."[45]

Recognizing the infeasibility of applying aural quantity to the customary usage of their spoken language led prosodists to develop alternative means for imbuing English verse with sufficient proportionality. Puttenham lauds classical quantitative meter as behaving like "runners at common games," but suggests that the "running of their feet" alone separates classical verse from English.[46] His attempt at dignifying the vernacular is the second book of his *Arte*, "Of Proportion Poetical," wherein he compiles a litany of methods for facilitating patterning, namely proportion by "staff, measure, concord, situation, and figure."[47] These methods blend accentual approaches to poetry with quantitative ones; they imply that syllabic and rhyme-based structures and the spatial quantities of typographic "distance" can work in tandem, because "your ocular proportion doth declare the nature of the audible, for if it please the ear well, the same represented by delineation to the view pleaseth the eye well, and *e converso*."[48] With this reconsideration of the placement of lines, Puttenham replaces the quantitative proportions of "long" and "short" syllables—the basis of the "musical numerosity" prized in classical verse— with the proportions between whole lines on the page. In most of his suggestions, the line is treated as an ocular figure, or at least as a supporting structure within a poem's overall visual schema. The final aspect of

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[45] George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy: A Critical Edition*, eds. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 159.

[46] Puttenham, 159

[47] Puttenham, 154.

[48] Puttenham, 174-175.

poetical proportion Puttenham recommends, “proportion in figure," explicitly refers to how "meters [are] by good symmetry reduced into certain geometrical figures," like rectangles or lozenges. Puttenham so discusses the “line” of poetry as fundamentally “geometrical,” and allows a drawn line or shape to enforce an artificial condition in which "the maker is restrained to keep him within his bounds."[49] While vernacular poets did not have a system for designating the “value” of a spoken, “arithmetical” syllable, Puttenham’s recommendations indicate that they did attempt to respect poetry’s responsibility to proportion through the material quantity of the written line.

Before concluding his discussion of “proportion by situation” and moving into “proportion in figure,” Puttenham offers a small vignette that encapsulates the potential considerations poets had when writing poetic lines:

> To finish the learning of this division, I will set you down one example of a ditty written extempore with this device, showing not only much promptness of wit in the maker, but also great art and a notable memory. “Make me,” saith this writer to one of the company, “so many strokes or lines with your pen as ye would have your song contain verses, and let every line bear his several length, even as ye would have your verse of measure, suppose of four, five, six, or eight or more syllables, and set a figure of every number at the end of the line, whereby ye may know his measure. Then, where you will have your rhyme or concord to fall, mark it with a compassed stroke or semicircle passing over those lines, be they far or near in distance, as ye have seen before described.[50]

In this vignette, Puttenham suggests that poetic lines might even begin *as* written inscriptions drawn onto a page and not as the end products of prevailing metrical rules. Moreover, undertaking a poetic composition with foreknowledge of how it would *look*

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[49] Puttenham, 179-181

[50] Puttenham, 179.

upon finishing, Puttenham explains, is the mark the "craft's master," as this person would have the "plentiful discourse" to suddenly shape a poem according to an arbitrary and "imperfect theme or proportion in one verse," the copiousness of language "to supply your concords" or rhymes, and the "marvelous good memory" to "observe the rhymes and measures after the distances of your limitation."[51] Puttenham's is a purely technical view of poetic craft—in many ways, he describes rather than prescribes rules for poetic composition in English. When he moves on to discussing "proportion in figure," then, he explains that restraining verses "into certain geometrical figures" similarly compels the maker "to keep him within his bounds, and showeth not only more art, but serveth also much better for briefness and subtlety of device."[52] While some poets turned to overt tactics such as pattern poems, acrostics, and posies in order to achieve this kind of palpable artificiality, efforts Gabriel Harvey colorfully disparaged as "madd gugawes and crockchettes," a disposition toward poetry as a literal "speaking picture" certainly emerged.[53] James would not have had access to Puttenham's *Art*, but his disposition toward irregular or extemporaneously generated poetic forms appears to stem from a similar amiability to artificial poetic invention at the level of the form of lines as well as in terms of thematic content.

At the end of his *Revlis*, James goes through a brief survey of "maist kyndis of versis quhilks [which] are not cuttit or broken, bot alyke many feit in euery lyne of the

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[51] Puttenham, 179.

[52] Puttenham, 179

[53] Gabriel Harvey, "Letters on Reformed Versifying" *Elizabethan Critical Essays* vol. 1, ed. G. Gregory Smith (London: Oxford University Press, 1904), 123-126, esp. 126. Also see Alastair Fowler, "Anagrams," *The Yale Review* 95.3 (July, 2007): 33-43. Other writers of acrostics included John Davies, George Herbert, John Milton, Lady Anne Southwell, and Robert Perry.

verse" and explains the genre to which each form is best suited. At the end of this survey, James turns to poems regarding the "materis of loue" and first proposes what he calls "*Commoun* verse," or iambic tetrameter written in ababcc. After this, however, he loosens his rules and explains that "Lyke verse of ten fete, as this foirsaid is of aucht [eight], ze may vse lykewayis in loue materis: as also all kyndis of cuttit and brokin verse, quhairof new formes are daylie inuentit according to the Poets pleasor."[54] He repeats his somewhat detached position again at the very end of his treatise, acknowleding that "Bot besydis thir kyndes of brokin or cuttit verse, quhilks ar inuentit dayle be Poetis, as I shewe before, there are sindrie kyndes of haill verse [unbroken verse], with all thair lynis alyke lang, quihilk I haue heir omittit."[55] The repetition that new forms of "cuttit" verse are "inuentit dayle" by poets seems fairly noncommittal, until we remember that James himself names "*Inuention*" the "ane of the cheif properteis of ane Poete" and insists that poets strive not to imitate other poets. Especially telling is that James's foremost example of tired, derivative poetry is the same sort of poetry for which he allows cuttit lines: "Thairfore gif zour subiect be to prayze zour *Loue*, ze sall rather prayse her vther qualities, not her fairness, nor hir shaip: or ellis ze sall speik some lytill thing of it, and syne say, that zour wittis are sa small, and zour vttera*n*ce so barren."[56] "Cuttit or brokin" lines, then, are ways for poets to say something new in a new way, to align conceptual invention with formal invention, indicating that for James, lines are a kind of inventive utterance in and of themselves.

[54] James, *Revlis*, 82 (sig. Miiij^{v}).
[55] James, *Revlis*, 83 (sig. N^{r}).
[56] James, *Revlis*, 78 (sig. Mij^{v}).

This finally returns us to “A Colomne,” which, as the very layout of the pattern poem makes clear, is an exercise in poetic quantities both numerical and linear. Each line of the urn’s diamond shape is bracketed, like a double acrostic, with an indication of its ascending and descending number of syllables, just in case readers could not see the intricacy of its planning. In order to structure the poem in this way, James necessarily had to divide up existing lines of ten-syllable pentameter; in opposition to Gascoigne’s insistence that poets “hold the iust measure wherwith you begin your verse,” James offers a poem that presents itself first as consisting of lines with variable, though clearly not arbitrary, metrical and graphical lengths.[57] As noted above, the very appearance of the urn signals a nontraditional meter, a meter James explicitly relates only to love poetry—support for readings of “Phoenix” such as David Bergeron’s which suppose that the poem “takes us into the king’s private space through allegory and gives voice to James’s desire.”[58] More than this, however, the poem remarks upon the fragility of memory. Esmé Stewart had been one of James’s favorites since his infancy, and had even converted from Catholicism to stay with the king in Scotland, but had encountered political opposition from envious Scottish nobles and was exiled back to France, where he quickly died, apparently still resisting Catholic ministrations. His embalmed heart was returned to King James.[59] Alan Stewart recounts that though Scottish nobles had rejoiced at Esmé Stewart’s departure, within a few months of his death, “James had issued a proclamation prohibiting men, on pain of death, from speaking of [Stewart, Duke of] Lennox as anything other than a

[57] Gascoigne in Smith, v. 1, 49.
[58] Bergeron, 33.
[59] Stewart, 69-70.

true Christian."[60] The poem's opening invocation of "Echo," then, invests it with a yearning for response and temporal persistence.[61] Addressing the furies and "Pluto grim," the "Colomne" is explicitly a request to keep the memory of the departed alive: "I request / Eche greizlie ghest, that dwells beneth the Se / With all yon thre.../ ... assist me in thir twa / Repeit and sha my Tragedie full neir." The urn, the colomn, is obviously a monument to his departed friend, but as a poem, it survives through repetitions and re-readings. James even goes on to say, "Then secoundlie is best / Deuils void of rest, ye moue all that it reid / With me, indeid, like dolour thame to griv,'" because this will allow him to live in "lesser grief" himself. The recasting of the poem in two different formats, then, itself allows each word to echo on the facing page, but also presents the poem both as a persistent material memory and a verbal song written in traditional iambic meter. The aural poetic line fades away without repetition, after all, so James ensures its survival by sculpting it into a physical monument.

"A Colomne" and its expansion reveal more to us than simply the habits of artificial composition held by aspiring sixteenth-century poets; its organization on the page offers clues about the problematic definitions of authorship as they relate to printed verse. Like Hollander, who remembers asking his designer "to get the typographer to set [his poem] in the prescribed shape," James VI likely bore considerable sway over the propagation of his writings in Edinburgh (the title page of

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[60] Stewart, 71.

[61] Bergeron suggests that *Ane Metaphorical Invention* generally functions as the final "familiar letter" between the king and Stewart, one complete with an envoi (Bergeron, 33).

Essayes indicates "*Cum Privilegio Regali*").[62] In apparent ways, "Colomne" necessitates coordination if not a mutual understanding between poetic composer and print-house compositor, a line of communication that both shares and exercises the royal poet's authority. I do not view it as coincidental or happily accidental that the fourth line in the urn, "together we," presents an ironic visual pun by separating "together" and "we" and fashioning the sole significant flaw within the structure's visual coherence. This gap reappears in the 1585 printing, and avoiding this "error" would have been well within the reach of an experienced print-master such as Thomas Vautroullier.[63] Keeping this in mind, the visual pun emblematizes the sustained relation between printer and poet demanded by this particular poem—one consequently wonders about this relationship when one participant is not the king. These poems are demonstrations of superlative authorial control, and signal the king's own peculiar potency with respect to establishing national myth. As Sarah Dunnigan notes, *Ane Metaphoricall Invention* is in part a "political allegory which condems the conduct of the Scottish nobility and asserts both James's anger and authority."[64]

The act of poetic composition transformed for sixteenth century poets into an encounter with the stubbornly visible, material qualities of written or printed language. Poets gradually began to feed off of this materiality to achieve powerful new modes of poetic "making." James's prefatory poem announces itself as a "Colomne" rather than as a linguistic fragment, and it rests at the threshold to "Phoenix," which is a more

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[62] Hollander, *Shape*, xiii

[63] For more on Vautroullier's career, see Colin Clair, *A History of Printing in Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), esp. 89-93.

[64] Sarah Dunnigan, "Marian and Jacobean Literature," *Literature Compass* 2 (2005): 1-14, esp. 12.

traditional poem composed in seven-line iambic pentameter. Whereas "Phoenix" might be extricable from the pages upon which it is printed, the "Colomne" prefacing it is a material artifact inscribed permanently into the pages of James's *Essayes*; it is an occasional little handiwork fundamentally reliant on the unique capabilities of the text as image.[65] After regarding the careful intricacy of "A Colomne" (an intricacy that offers an acrostic clue for interpreting the poem to follow), is it fair to treat this print-petrified poem and the visual attention it demands as dissociable from the less materially encumbered or overtly visual "Phoenix"?

In the following section, I turn my attention onto John Donne's material lines, which are "cuttit" in precisely the way described by James. Donne, whose career-long fascination with materiality and metaphysics, I argue, vexes the legible materiality of his own poetic lines in order to interrogate the relationship between substance and spirit. Unlike George Herbert's best-known works, I argue that Donne's lines are not pictorial, but rather figures for materiality itself, though ones nevertheless torn between rules derived from aurality and the insistent presence of their visuality. By surveying some of Donne's "cuttit lines," I argue that his poetics sometimes takes advantage of the formal instability of poetic line as a way to imagine transcendence.

[65] The "Colomne" complicates the ways in which we might distinguish poems from the characteristics typically associated with more overtly material manifestations of verse, such as in posies or inscriptions. Posies are typically defined as occasional snippets of verse inscribed or engraved onto material artifacts, while poems nest themselves into broad conceptual traditions and are marked, at least in the sixteenth century, by an association with aural transmissibility. Juliet Fleming explains that the posy "is the form that poetry takes in its fully material, visual mode, as it exists in its moment, at a particular site" and that this poetry "has not achieved, and does not hope to achieve, the immaterial, abstracted status of the infinitely transmissible text." Juliet Fleming, *Graffiti and the Writing Arts of Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 19-20.

"Narrow Crooked Lanes": Reading John Donne's Lines

In this section, I argue that readers should pay more attention to the way the lines of John Donne's lyric poems rest on the printed page, because Donne occasionally uses the material fixity of the written line to work through his fascination with the interrelations of thought and expression, form and substance, or soul and body. Proposing this habit of attending to Donne's verse will likely call to mind the practices of George Herbert, whose major collection of poetry, *The Temple*, was first printed in the same year as Donne's *Poems by J. D.*, 1633. Herbert, in the centuries that followed this publication, became known for his "plain" poetic style and, of course, for being the writer of pattern poems that explicitly foreground the visuality of the poetic inscription; not an anthology of early modern English verse seems complete without a (probably inaccurate) reprinting of his pictorial typographic curiosities, "Easter Wings" and "The Altar." Donne, on the other hand, has generally endured centuries of disparagement for his "rough," "rugged," and "inharmonious" versification and his "irregular" meters.[66] Setting their respective current valuations as members of the English canon aside, I propose that Donne, like Herbert, occasionally foregrounds his lines as inscription technologies in order to construct "material metaphors" that draw attention the materiality of the elements by which metaphorical attachments are forged.[67] To be clear: I am not suggesting that John Donne was a

[66] For a critique of this traditional perspective on Donne's "irregular" meters, see Ben Saunders, *Desiring Donne: Poetry, Sexuality, Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), esp. 92-112.

[67] Donne's work, though not pictorial, does mirror Herbert's in the way described by Martin Elsky: his lines "manifest a particular kind of textuality that draws on the manifold interrelations between uttered and spatialized language inherited from Hebrew and Latin traditions in the age of print." See Elsky, 149.

writer of pattern poems. Instead, I claim that Donne engages poetic lines as material and visual signs conditioned by metrical rules; these lines, torn between a posited conceptual framework and its physical irregularity, self-reflexively interrogate the interrelations between form and substance.

Donne, like Herbert, held a perspective toward the verbal sign as opaque, obfuscating, or incomplete, and my approach to his lines brings Donne's views on verbal signs to bear on his encounters with the physical media of poetic expression. Richard Todd notes the traditional belief held by theologians in Herbert's time that "in a fallen world God reveals himself to man indirectly, by means of signs" and that "communication in any more direct sense than the significant is not possible."[68] In the Augustinian tradition that Donne, himself called by Izaak Walton a "second S. *Augustine*," considered deeply, verbal signs were impediments to divine truths.[69] Francis Cruickshank's comparative analysis of Donne and Herbert similarly claims that "in many ways a tension between the material and the poetic lies at the heart of Donne's and Herbert's versifying impulses" because both poets "resist the illusions of the physical world in their search for what they know lies beneath and beyond it." Cruickshank proposes that rather than rejecting materiality, however, the poets "look for transfiguration, the poetics of incarnation that knits divinity to earth and invests

[68] Richard Todd, *The Opacity of Signs: Acts of Interpretation in George Herbert's* The Temple (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1986), 6

[69] Katrin Ettenhuber offers a deeply researched account of the influence of Augustine on Donne in *Donne's Augustine: Renaissance Cultures of Interpretation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); citation and discussion of Walton are on page 14 and fn. 46. Thomas O. Sloane, in *Donne, Milton, and the End of Humanist Rhetoric* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), argues that "Donne's Augustinianism is of the formalistic kind," meaning that in Donne, as in Augustine, "matter precedes the thing made; the thing made is matter and form; knowledge of form, which must be the goal of our efforts, is attainable on a level of abstraction, in contemplation of the thing made" (30; 34-35).

materiality with immortal hopes."[70] Whereas Cruickshank focuses largely on metaphor as a way for these poets to develop a way of reading and writing "that recognizes the interdependence of form and matter," I turn my attention squarely upon Donne's written lines and consider how an increasingly visualized poetics allows the form of these lines to figure the process of figuration itself.

Donne's concerns with the materiality of expression extend from what Ramie Targoff describes as "the most continuous and abiding feature of his collected works": the relationship between the body and soul. Targoff herself even suggests that in his endeavors to "luxuriate in a particular instance in time, to be all there in body and soul," Donne finds that "the closest earthly equivalent to the presence he longs for in his resurrected self may come when he is engaged in the act of writing."[71] "Writing," Targoff continues, "is Donne's experience of making the world flesh"; in a later commentary on Donne's letters, she suggests that Donne recognizes that the "spiritual transmission of affection and love cannot occur without the ordinary stuff of letters…Hence the matter of the letter is the necessary embodiment of what is otherwise invisible."[72] Similarly, Stanwood and Asals point out that because "Donne cannot think of the relationship between God and man apart from the Word and the words of human art, his considerations of life and death are permeated with literary metaphors."[73] Discussions of Donne's recognition of the material properties of by his

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[70] Frances Cruickshank, *Verse and Poetics in George Herbert and John Donne* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2010), 13.

[71] Ramie Targoff, *John Donne: Body and Soul* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), esp. 5, 23.

[72] Targoff, 40

[73] P.G. Stanwood and Heather Ross Asals, *John Donne and the Theology of Language* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1986), 45.

own writings align Donne with cultural habits attending the material exchange of textual artifacts. Writing and reading were physical and visual acts of engagement for early moderns, and many scholars interested in the history of books and reading now employ "use" in addition to "read" when describing encounters with texts. Bradin Cormack and Carla Mazzio explain how "early books enabled thinking by inviting a wide range of uses, by asking readers to move within them in particular ways," a relationship vividly rendered in William H. Sherman's extended focus on early modern marginalia.[74] Juliet Fleming's readings of the materiality of sites of early modern inscription discover that "[w]ithin Renaissance poetry… the eye is granted equal importance [to the ear], and the visual dimensions of language… are accorded an affective and cognitive consequence as familiar to Renaissance readers as it has since become strange."[75] Modern readers, then, might attend to the coordination of writing on pages in a broader sense, and view the positioning of type, ornament, and whitespace as evidence of a culture encouraging active, tactical and even dialogic relationships with written artifacts.[76] In this section and the next chapter, I take some

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[74] Bradin Cormack and Carla Mazzio, *Book Use, Book Theory 1500-1700* (Chicago: University of Chicago Library, 2007) and William H. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). Also see David McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order, 1450-1830* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[75] Fleming, *Graffiti and the Writing Arts of Early Modern England*, 19. Fleming's work, and especially her series of articles on printers' flowers, has been especially transformative in the way I think about the potency of the material page. See Juliet Fleming, "How to Look at a Printed Flower," *Word & Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry* 22.2 (2006), 165-187; "How Not to Look at a Printed Flower," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38.2 (Spring 2008), 345-371; and "Changed Opinion as to Flowers," *Renaissance Paratexts*, eds. Helen Smith and Louise Wilson (New York: Cambridge UP, 2011), 48-64.

[76] As Adam Smyth shows, Herbert's own treatments of textual materiality extend beyond shaped poems; some of his works, such as "Paradise," expose a "reading culture in which the consumption of texts was regularly accompanied by the cutting up of printed and manuscript pages." Similarly, in a reconsideration of the "quieting and conspicuous interruptions" wrought by page breaks within the first quarto of *Shake-speares Sonnets* (1609), Coleman Hutchison argues persuasively for a broadening of the "ways readers conceptualize literary form" and "encounter the page as a unit of meaning." William

cues from Katherine Acheson's study of literary texts alongside early modern diagrams, in which she demonstrates how "visual modes of communication could be transferred, at the conceptual level, to works in other media, even in a mode as complex, traditional, and intertextual as poetry." [77] While the next chapter is more explicitly concerned with diagrammatic readings of poetry, here I portray a John Donne whose written lines, metrical signatures, and visual markings intertwine diagrammatically in order to generate startling poetic effects.

Donne himself has much to say about writing, and about lines. At the end of the Second Anniversary, for example, he conjures a vivid image that presents the relationship between inward spirit and outward show as akin to the translucency of a scroll written on both sides: "for shee rather was two soules, / Or like to full on both sides written Rols, / Where eyes might reade upon the outward skin, / As strong Records for God, as mindes within."[78] For Donne, the spatial plane of the material page was a site upon which the bodies of letters could come together into the ordering systems of words, and those words into the physical bodies of lines. In "Obsequies to the Lord Harrington," he analogizes the appraisal of a virtuous man's deeds to the way

N. West signals this changing disposition toward poetic texts when, in an analysis of Henry Vaughan's anxiety about the impermanence of poetic monuments, he notes how this anxiety hinges on the seventeenth-century recognition that poetry had "shifted from something that was imagined as performed to something that was understood as primarily written and read." Adam Smyth, "'Shreds of Holiness': George Herbert, Little Gidding, and Cutting Up Texts in Early Modern England," *English Literary Renaissance* (2012), 452-481, esp. 454-455. Coleman Hutchison, "Breaking the Book Known as Q," *PMLA* 121.1 (Jan., 2006), 33-66, esp 39. William N. West, "Less Well-Wrought Urns: Henry Vaughan and the Decay of the Poetic Monument," *ELH* 75.1 (Spring 2008), 197-217, esp. 200. See also Jennifer Richards and Fred Schurink, "Introduction: The Textuality and Materiality of Reading in Early Modern England," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 73.3 (September 2010), 345-361, esp. 345.

[77] Katherine Acheson, *Visual Rhetoric and Early Modern English Literature* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2013), 10.

[78] John Donne, *Poems by J. D.* (London: Printed by M[iles] F[lesher] for John Marriot, 1633), 276 (sig. Bb^{v}), Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com. Harvard University Library.

in which a "perfect" reader processes writing:

> Just as a perfect reader doth not dwell,
> On every syllable, nor stay to spell,
> Yet without doubt, hee doth distinctly see
> And lay together every A, and B;
> So, in short liv'd good men, is'not understood
> Each severall vertue, but the compound good.
> For, they all vertues paths in that pace tread,
> As Angells goe, and know, and as men read.[79]

Readers, according to Donne, actively collapse discrete elements such as letters and syllables into "compounds" without effacing the presence of these elements, just as an appreciation of a virtuous man does not account for "each severall vertue" but doubtless "distinctly sees" them. The textual presentation of this poem, at least in the 1633 edition, in turn forces the reader to attend to the constitutive materials of the object they are reading: "And lay together every A, and B," introduces another caesura marked by a comma before the final foot, thereby separating an A and a B that would more naturally lie closer together. Enacting a mixture of discrete and continuous, of sound and image, Donne creates an experiential poetics that works through the bodies of the marks made on the page. Elsewhere, when Donne's persona scratches out his own name in "A Valediction of my name in the window," he takes care to note the "points" and "dashes" comprising the word despite acknowledging that they are "but accessories to the name."[80] Foregrounding the markings presents writing as a series of images, and here we get a sense that for Donne's poetics, a line may well be the very

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[79] Donne, *Poems*, 143 (sig. T4r).
[80] Donne, *Poems*, 215 (sig. Ee4r).

scantlings of a letter and not necessarily the metrically ordered unit we might expect; as with the letters “A, and B,” reading poetry begins at the level of meaningless inscriptions. The problem with these initial, unitary scantlings, however, is that the speaker recognizes immediately afterward that his “ragged bony name” does *not* contain his whole self— accessories, name, and all remain simply a “ruinous Anatomie” without the soul, or the requisite spiritual substance that makes a sign indistinguishable from its signifier. Lines, be they the dashes comprising characters, the extensions of words on the page, or the aural units marked by metrical cadences are, only have meaning for Donne by way of an entangled relationship between substance and idea, or matter and form. Donne’s lines *mattered*, and while they certainly might not matter in the same way in every poem and perhaps not even in the same way in every instance within a poem, I contend that attributing the way his poems look to chance, convention, or “irregularity” leaves readings of Donne’s poems impoverished of a discursive rumination on matter and substance in which Donne himself engaged throughout his life.

Though Donne strongly opposed releasing his work in print, his unconventional poems’ journey to publication affords a unique opportunity to rethink the relationship between poetic composition and the technologies of inscription.[81] We cannot know, after all, how Donne placed his lines on the manuscript page, and consequently we cannot know how closely the printed iterations of these poems

[81] Ted-Larry Pebworth, in “Donne into Print: The Seventeenth-Century Collected Editions of Donne’s Poetry,” *Literature Compass* 5.4 (2008), 825-841, offers a series of compelling explanations for Donne’s hesitance toward print, including his desire to protect his “livelihood and safety,” to adhere to the norms of his social class, and perhaps to “reshape his texts and his canon at will and to share his poems with a restricted audience that he himself controlled” (826-7).

reproduce his autograph inscriptions. What we can see, however, in Donne's poetry is a variety of what James VI might call "cuttit or brokin" lines; the placement and structuring of these lines, I argue, are unconventional enough to merit consideration as aspects of Donne's poetic invention and ingenuity. Mainly through readings of three poems—"The Message," "A Nocturnal upon St. Lucy's Day," and "The Triple Fool"—with some comparisons between manuscript and print iterations, I argue Donne occasionally augments his poetics diagrammatically by foregrounding the materiality of the written line. I dwell longest upon "The Triple Fool," an enigmatic lyric that emblematizes how Donne's lines entangle poetry's multiple materialities. By leveraging the unique affordances of writing against those of sound in "The Triple Fool," Donne addresses the commonplace early modern exasperation with poetry's inability to render perfect "speaking pictures" by recasting poetic lines as a way to imagining things resistant to regulated representation and doing things typically constrained by materiality.[82]

Even though sixteenth century vernacular prosodists debated about which sort of syllabic unit, accentual or quantitative, was to be privileged, some baseline conditions existed for the making of any line of poetry. For example, Gascoigne lays out some "poynts" relating to making accentual poetry; the first and second of these

[82] In presenting the poetic line as a "technology," I draw upon Kalas's use of the term in *Frame, Glass, Verse: The Technologies of Poetic Invention in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007). Kalas argues how for many Renaissance writers, poesy was a "visual instrument, an optic like the eye, rather than a series of pictures conjured up by words" by considering the ways metaphors employing material artifacts like frames, mirrors, and windows "did not link the word to an imaginary picture so much as they demonstrated the integration of visual technologies with figurative invention, and of techne with poiesis" (2-3). Though concerned with frames and borders, Kalas's investigation of poetic making applies just as well to my conception of lines: "The shaping of language is techne: it does not simply represent labor and craft, it is in itself a form of work" (64).

relate to the "fine invention" from which a poem must stem and not waver, while the third point institutes the first practical dictum: "I will next aduise you that you hold the iust measure wherwith you begin your verse… whether it be in a verse of sixe syllables, eight, ten, twelve, etc."[83] Similarly, we might recall Campion bemoaning the inconsistency of vernacular verse lines by pointing out that "the eare is a rationall sence and a chiefe iudge of proportion; but in our kind of riming what proportion is there kept where there remaines such a confused inequalitie of sillables?"[84] Even the eminently flexible George Puttenham advises that "because your concords [rhymes] contain the chief part of music in your meter, their distances may not be too wide or far asunder, lest the ear should lose the tune and be defrauded of his delight."[85] A line, then, was the product of a pre-set *number* or *quantity* of verbal units arranged into recurring, though not utterly rigid, patterns of stresses, syllabic lengths, or rhymes. These repeating structures were crucial for Elizabethan prosodists, since they aligned poetry both with music and with classical verse; concepts like "harmony," "concord," and most importantly, "proportion," were obtained through the regularity of rhythms and the alignment of sounds.[86] Donne's centuries-long notoriety for "inharmoniousness," then, in part derives from his fatal failure in his failure, as Jonson famously proclaimed, in "keeping of accent."

Considering one of Donne's most egregious metrical experiments—an untitled

[83] Gascoigne in Smith, v. 1, 49.

[84] Campion in Smith, v. 2, 330.

[85] George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy: A Critical Edition*, eds. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 172.

[86] According to Campion, "the world is made by Simmetry and proportion, and is in that respect compared to Musick, and Musick to Poetry: for *Terence* saith speaking of Poets, *artem qui tractant musicam,* confounding musick and Poesy together" (Campion, 329).

poem now known as “The Message”—from the perspective of commentators like Gascoigne and Campion, we too might dismiss this poet as “confused”:

SEnd home my long ſtrayd eyes to mee,
Which (Oh) too long have dwelt on thee,
Yet ſince there they have learn'd ſuch ill,
Such forc'd faſhions,
And falſe paſſions,
That they be
Made by thee
Fit for no good ſight, keep them ſtill.

Figure 1.2: Untitled poem [“The Message”] from *Poems, by J. D.* (1633)[87]

Though the stanza begins with a jaunty and recognizably typical iambic tetrameter (and one that takes only a few licenses, at that), the meter unravels by the fourth line, and the stanza’s couplet-oriented rhyme scheme appears to fall away. Between “ill” and its counterpart “still,” there intervene 21 syllables, divided into lines of verse of varying lengths; lines 4-5 are dimeter, while 6-7 are, perhaps, a *creticus* – *“*a long, a short, and a long.”[88] Based on this example alone, Donne’s poetics certainly do appear potentially incompetent, indifferent, or pointedly rebellious with respect to normative prosody. While there is certainly music in these lines, the conventions of musicality associated with vernacular prosody in the period are abandoned in favor of alternative of sources of rhythm, tempo, and harmony. The syllabic shortening of lines, with the

[87] Donne, *Poems,* 186 (sig. Bb^{v}).
[88] Abraham Fraunce, *The Arcadian rhetorike* (London: Printed by Thomas Orwin, 1588), sig. C^{v}, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Bodleian Library.

closeness it creates between the rhyming couplets fashions/passions and be/thee, performs first a plodding of accented feet, and ultimately the cessation of poetic rhythm. “Made by thee” *sounds* like it should be the closing line, not one that should enjamb with an additional tetrametrical one. In a stanza commenting on a desire for the speaker’s eyes to be returned, over which the speaker comes to realize that these eyes have been infected and so comes to reject them, the poetic meter skips along until the reflective caesura implicated between the final two lines. The pseudo-pause here marks the rhetorical reversal, a rejection of these eyes, and supports Arnold Stein’s notion that the “sense” of Donne’s verse “guides the prosody.”[89]

Donne’s poetry did not function only via occasional aural performances; the multiplicity of surviving manuscript iterations indicate not only that he was one of the most popular courtly poets of his time, but also that his poems were attractive to scribal copiers.[90] While Donne was lax about maintaining his autograph copies and opposed to committing his poems to print, archives are populated by manuscript witnesses that played significant roles in the unauthorized posthumous publication of the poems in print after 1633. These copies, along with Donne’s own letters, indicate that while he resisted the popular press, he was not averse to having his poems read by

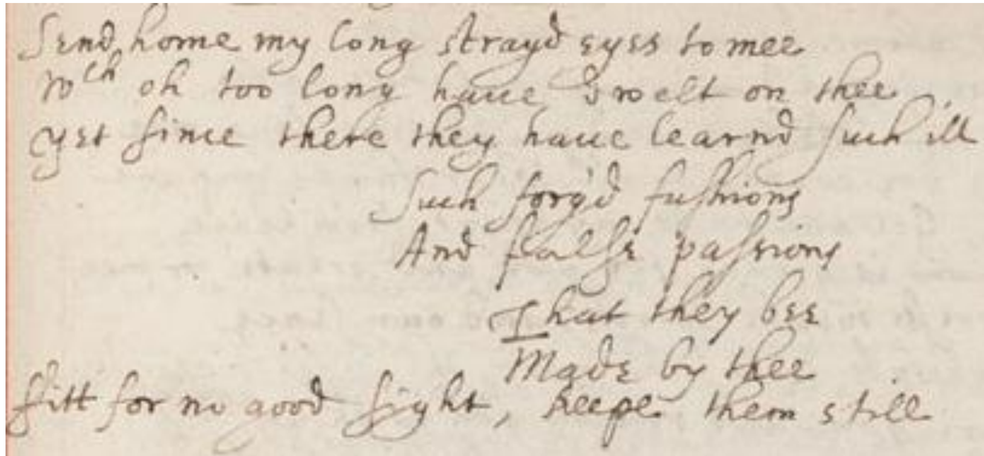
[89] Arnold Stein, “Meter and Meaning in Donne’s Verse,” *The Sewanee Review* 52.2 (Spring, 1944): 288-301, 301.

[90] Richard Todd and Helen Wilcox, “The Challenges of Editing Donne and Herbert,” *SEL* 52.1 (Winter 2012), 187-206, esp. 188. See also Ted-Larry Pebworth, “Manuscript Transmission and the Selection of Copy-Text in Renaissance Coterie Poetry,” *Text* 7 (1994), 243-261. Peter Beal, in “John Donne and the circulation of manuscripts,” *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, *vol. 4: 1557-1695*, eds. John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (New York: Cambridge UP, 2002), 122-126, introduces Donne as “the most popular English poet from the 1590s until at least the middle of the seventeenth century” (122).

people of his choosing.[91] By focusing on Donne's predominantly scribal readership, I do not mean to suggest that the sonic qualities of his poems were ever dismissed—only that new, visual ways of thinking about the work of a poem began encroaching upon the dominance of metrics conditioned largely by aspirations toward musicality. The language of early modern poetry was becoming self-conscious with regard to the complex semiotics of written texts, and in turn, Donne's "irregular" meter appears to take advantage of unexpected effects generated by the encounter between written lines and their verbal and sonic elements, such as accents and rhymes.

As the first stanza of "The Message" is, after all, about "eyes," we might think a little more about how Donne marries the sounds borne by words with the inky markings that send the reader's eyes straying. Helpfully, against literary scholarship's general indifference to the visual structure of Donne's printed verses, we can position the care of Donne's original readership, members of which apparently took pains to reproduce the visual layout of Donne's now-lost manuscript originals:

[91] The foundational resource for understanding the social milieu of Donne's poetry remains Arthur F. Marotti's *John Donne, Coterie Poet* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1986). Marotti points out that "Donne was obviously most comfortable when he knew his readers personally and they knew him" (19).



Send home my long strayd eyes to mee
wch oh too long haue dwelt on thee
yet since there they haue learnd such ill
Such forg'd fashions
And false passions
That they bee
Made by thee
fitt for no good sight, keepe them still

Figure 1.3: "The Message" from The O'Flahertie Manuscript of Donne's Poems[92]

The O' Flahertie Manuscript, the largest surviving manuscript collection of Donne's poetry, dates from October 1632.[93] Though too late to have influenced the 1633 first print edition, it appears to have been used during the compilation of a revised, expanded, and reorganized edition of *Poems, by J.D.* in 1635.[94] Aside from some slight typographic differences (such as the incidence of parentheses in line two), perhaps the main discrepancy that confronts readers comparing these versions of Donne's poem is the unavoidable expansion of whitespace in the scribal copy. The dramatic indentations in the O'Flahertie reveal that the alignment or justification of these lines does not rest upon the left-hand margin, but rather on a marriage between syllabic meter and word length. To unpack this logic, we might simply ask: why

[92] John Donne, "The O'Flahertie Manuscript," *DigitalDonne: The Online Variorum,* Texas A&M University, The Houghton Library at Harvard University, page 263, accessed on 10 March 2014 <http://digitaldonne.tamu.edu/H06-biblio.html>.

[93] "Bibliographical Description of the O'Flahertie Manuscript of Donne's Poems," *DigitalDonne: The Online* Variorum, Texas A&M University, accessed 10 March 2014 <http://digitaldonne.tamu.edu/H06-biblio.html>.

[94] Todd and Wilcox, 190-191.

would the copyist begin the fourth line, “Such forg’d fashions,” where he does? As a presumably careful reader of metrical signatures, the transcriber begins this line at the precise point where the first line of the stanza begins its final four syllables: “Such forg’d fashions” slots into a vertical column started by “strayd eyes to mee.” In a similar move, the third metrical change in the poem, when the sixth line shortens from four to three syllables, brings about another indentation, where “That they bee” begins directly under the third from last syllable of the previous line, “false,” which also aligns with the first line’s “eyes.”

These observations may be more indicative of the copyist’s metrical habits than of Donne’s, but this one copy at the very least discloses an attitude toward Donne’s poetry viewing it as akin to a grid or table upon which material words are laid out in rows and columns. Unlike in “A Valediction: of my Name in the Window,” which identified the constitutive dashes of letters as fundamentally present aspects of the written word, “The Message” offers the vertical shape of the entire stanza as a kind of line, sort of like how James’s acrostic requires vertically reading Stewart’s name. Each individual line’s indentation appears to respond to changes in meter—shorter lines are indented more—and this logic finds corroboration in other scribal witnesses such as the St. Paul’s Manuscript.[95] At the same time, it is important to recognize that the indentations in the O’Flahertie appear to derive their dimensions from the word-units that materialize upon the page in the first line, and not, as they will in the print-house, on conventions of indentation that standardize the spacing of metrically distinct

[95] John Donne, “The St. Paul’s Manuscript,” *DigitalDonne: The Online* Variorum, Web, Texas A&M University, St. Paul’s Cathedral Library, folio page 76, accessed 10 March 2014 < http://digitaldonne.tamu.edu/SP1-biblio.html>.

lines. The same logic does not hold for the second and third stanzas of the poem, as these stanzas take their cues not from their own words but from the positioning of lines in the first stanza (emphasizing how the first line sets the tone for the whole poem). Even so, both the subsequent stanzas have their shorter lines press upon the right-hand limit of the poem rather than resting them in the center like block quotes, as they do in the 1633 printed version of "The Message" and in the St. Paul's Manuscript.

The printed version and the other manuscript provide no logic of internal correspondences and alignments; their indentations appear to be mechanical observations of conventional practices anterior to the poem itself. These iterations attenuate or efface the way the O'Flahertie copy gradually relocates the viewer's attention to the right-hand margin, thereby materializing a "here" and a "there" on the space of the page and a bridge between them. The meter of the middle lines reveals more through the lens of the poem as a negotiation between sides, as in every stanza the fourth and fifth lines—"Such forg'd fashions / And false passions"—introduce bi-syllabic rhymes (fashions/passions; jestings/protestings; anguish/languish) which, by placing stress on the penultimate syllables, complicates the rhythm by dislocating and making the meter's cadence "more light."[96] The restoration of hard monosyllables in the subsequent lines further enacts the unsteady transference between the two sides. This dynamism diagrammatically complicates the speaker's assertions of severing the connection between his eyes and their object even before the final stanza, wherein he resolves that he actually does want them back, if only to "laugh and joy" at the

[96] Puttenham, 169.

beloved's pain—his eyes' darting across the page creates friction against the movements of metrical stresses, and a poem that seems to resolve with harsh disdain becomes mitigated by a formalized *psychomachia*.

Though the O'Flahertie appears somewhat unique in its treatment of the page, it offers poetic effects that are different from those achieved by printed copies, which offer a more standardized or even mechanical logic of indentation. Joseph Moxon's 1683 treatise, *Mechanick Exercises on the Whole Art of Printing*, the first English language document of this sort, gives a clear account of what it meant to translate manuscript into print.[97] In general, print-house compositors would take small metal pieces bearing a stamp for each letter, as well as pieces accounting for spaces, punctuation marks, and other elements of the page such as ornamental printers' flowers, and arrange them into a frame, holding or squeezing each line with one hand while introducing additional elements with the other.[98] Any whitespace in a printed artifact, then, would in terms of the compositor's labor receive just as much attention as the lettering, though in most cases the coordination of these spaces abided standardized "rule of thumb" protocols.[99] With respect to indentations, Moxon explains that they were fashioned by using typographic units called "Quadrats," which

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[97] Joseph Moxon, *Mechanick Exercises on the Whole Art of Printing (1683-4)*, eds. Herbert Davis and Harry Carter (London: Oxford University Press, 1958).

[98] For an illustration of this practice, see the image at Moxon, 206. Lisa Maruca describes the added physical dimensions of printing that modern readers might naturally take for granted: "In Moxon's manual… the body of print emerges as a working body, a laborer whose physical construction of print is every bit as, if not more, important than the writer who supplies text. Indeed, the print worker is understood as a *collaborator* in the construction of meaning of the printed text." Lisa Maruca, "Bodies of Type: The Work of Textual Production in English Printers' Manuals," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 36.3 (2003), 321-343, esp. 324.

[99] Jean Alice Jacobson's dissertation, "How Should a Poem Look?: The Printer's Measure and Poet's Line" (PhD. diss, University of Minnesota, 2008), includes invaluable research on "rule of thumb" print-house practices.

were sized in terms of a number of "ms," and when printing poems, Moxon suggests that "when Verses are *Indented*, two, three, or four m *Quadrats* are used, according to the number of the Feet of the Verses, but most times according to the fancy of the Author."[100] The compositor's flexibility toward poetry's printed whitespace, as variably determined by house style, formalized codes, or authorial direction, reflects the evolving compositional techniques employed by early modern poets. After all, when Puttenham cites the importance of keeping "concord" by having rhymes be not too far apart, he quickly adds that "whensoever ye see any maker use large and extraordinary distances, ye must think he doth intend to show himself more artificial than popular, and yet therein is not to be discommended."[101] For Elizabethan poets, "artificiality" was a principle virtue of poetry, as it reflected the influence of the weighty measures of classical verse forms; for many poets, accentual meters, or "rhyme," alone could not demonstrate the same degree of learned skillfulness.[102] What Moxon terms an author's "fancy" in relation to the technologies of poetic production, then, might go under the name of "artificiality" for prosodists like Puttenham or an aspect "inuention" for King James VI. Thinking about Donne's poetic lines from this perspective introduces the possibility that his poetic "fancy" and his aspirations toward "artificiality" began turning toward the material contexts of the page for poetic effects and skillful demonstrations.

Like the military and garden diagrams analyzed by Acheson, Donne's

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[100] Moxon, 217-218; 171

[101] Puttenham, 173.

[102] Roger Ascham, in his influential grammar-school text *The Scholemaster* (1570), disparages the ubiquity of rhyme composed by "rash ignorant heads, which now can easely recken up fourten sillables, and easelie stumble on every Ryme." See Ascham in Smith, v. 1, 31.

linguistic illustrations “contradict, in form and content, the representation of the world through a perspectival framework” and rather “imagine the physical world as it is measured, traversed, and used.”[103] Interrelating text and image, poems like “The Message” are both heuristically and semantically significant. In the language of early modern poetic theory, Donne discovers alternative means not only to demonstrate artificiality, but to activate what Joseph Campana describes as a conflation of *enargaia* (vividness) and *energeia* (vitality), that is, the refashioning of a poetic idea “before the eyes” of readers with an energy to share and project rather than simply illustrate the poem’s object.[104] As diagrams, Donne’s poems are not pictorial like Herbert’s, which Will West suggests “only symbolize [their referents] in another register, visually rather than linguistically,” but rather “actualize their referents” heuristically.[105] This perspective redraws the boundaries of the formal systems pertinent to Donne’s prosody; by attending to the intermingling of diagrammatic visuals and metrical poetics, we might add dimensions not only to his lyrical oeuvre, but to our understanding of Donne’s relationship to the ways poetry circulated in his era.

For Donne, as discussed, the sense of poetry’s “matter” possibly extended from the markings that constitute letters, or to individual letters themselves, or to the words and lines into which those letters congeal, or even to the stanzas to which those lines give shape. Donne, in other words, could not help but *see* his poetry. Critics have long respected the fact that a “nocturnal” in the Renaissance most typically called to mind a

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[103] Acheson, 5

[104] Joseph Campana, “On Not Defending Poetry: Spenser, Suffering, and the Energy of Affect” *PMLA* 120.1 (Jan., 2005), 33-48, esp. 36.

[105] West, “Less Well-Wrought Urns,” 201.

painting or visual artwork, a “night-piece,” but few have in turn read “A Nocturnall upon St. Lucies Day” as itself a visual artwork.[106] One look at the poem focusing on its typographic dimensions rather than on its words, however, might impart the sense of diminishing and renewal that preoccupies the poem’s speaker:

TIs the yeares midnight,and it is the dayes,
Lucies,who ſcarce ſeaven houres herſelf unmaskes,
The Sunne is ſpent,and now his flasks
Send forth light ſquibs, no conſtant rayes;
The worlds whole ſap is ſunke:
The generall balme th’hydroptique earth hath drunk,
Whither, as to the beds-feet life is ſhrunke,
Dead and enterr’d;yet all theſe ſeeme to laugh,
Compar’d with mee, who am their Epitaph.

Study me then, you who ſhall lovers bee
At the next world,that is, at the next Spring:
For I am every dead thing,
In whom love wrought new Alchimie.
For his art did expreſſe
A quinteſſence even from nothingneſſe,
From dull privations, and leane emptineſſe
He ruin’d mee, and I am re-begot
Of abſence, darkneſſe, death; things which are not.

Figure 1.4: “A nocturnall upon *S. Lucie’s Day*, Being the shortest day” from *Poems, by J.D.* (1633)[107]

[106] Winifred Stevenson traces the layered implications of “nocturnal” through Ben Jonson’s use of the term “night-piece,” and proposes that when applied to a poem, such as by Herrick and Vaughan, it functions in a “transferred sense.” See Winifred Stevenson, “Donne’s Nocturnal,” *The Seventeenth Century* 19.2 (Oct. 2004), 178-182, esp 178. Also see Chris Fitter, "The Poetic Nocturne: From Ancient Motif to Renaissance Genre," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 3.2 (September, 1997), 21-61.

[107] Donne, *Poems*, 187-188 (sig. Bb2r).

It may be a stretch to suggest that these stanzas are patterned after an hourglass; as two blocks of printed matter, they nevertheless do not enjoy the more geometrically regular rectangularity of a sonnet, much less of printed prose; they might each be described as an uneven trapezoid perched atop a ragged rectangle. More important than their shape, however, is the sense that the poem uses a diminishing metrical signature to *enact* the diminishing daylight it describes. In the poem, night encroaches on the shortest day of the year, and the melancholic speaker reflects on the "light squibs" and inconstant rays of a receding sun as he mourns his departed beloved. These "inconstant rays," when reading diagrammatically, might explain the jutting and retreating lines that produce the erratic outline of the trapezoid. While the speaker perceives life as "shrunke," proclaiming himself "every dead thing," with him readers simultaneously experience the poem's metrical and typographic truncation: what begins as pentameter dwindles, becoming first tetrameter and arriving at a plodding trimeter by the fifth line, "The worlds whole sap is sunke." Unexpectedly, the sixth line of each stanza witnesses a regeneration, a return to pentameter form, and in the second stanza the speaker paradoxically attributes this replenishing to lack itself: "From dull privations and lean emptinesse, / He ruin'd me, and I am re-begot / Of absence, darknesse, death; things which are not."

The first stanza's complex network of conceits represents the speaker not only as analogous to the diminishing daylight, but also as an "Epitaph," the stanza's shape, and even each individual line—everything diminishes. Crucially, however, because of memorial inscriptions like epitaphs, the poem implies that nothing vanishes completely. In the second stanza, the conceit expands as the speaker translates the

speeding emptiness of night into love's alchemical "art" of drawing something out of a void, of extracting a quintessence out from "nothingness." By resolving to carry, as the speaker does, as Donne might with Anne More, the immaterial soul of the departed beloved within a remaining carcass, the poem re-extends its verse lines to occupy the hollowed-out frame of a pentameter line. The stanza "expresses" the missing metrical feet, extracting a "quintessence" out from "nothingness." A chemical reaction begins between the body of each line and the crowding metrical limits, hypostatized as the whitespace void framing the poem. Distilling in order to increase, the stanza operates like an inverted alembic—"love's limbic"—and the force catalyzing the process is a metrical constraint made material.

Moxon's manual explains the conventions for indenting lines of printed poetry, and the trapezoidal shape of Donne's first few lines might indeed owe to habits that marked modulations in line length with indentations. But what if Donne's "fancy" here interrogates these habits as impositions upon language? Within "A nocturnall," the speaker presents himself first as an "Epitaph" deserving of "study." Dealing with the death of a lover, the speaker (though we might now need a new term of art for this figure) wavers between life and death, and between speech and inscription, in order to imagine the possibility of a soul's reunion with its beloved counterpart. Words fall into determining structures and bodies, such as lines, which foreclose the kind of unity the speaker proposes, even as these bodies enable presence in the face of dire absence. In order to achieve immaterial wholeness, the speaker depicts loss through language, in offensively inapt words like "death," while materializing in lines a physically impossible reunification: "But I am by her death, (which word wrongs her)/ Of the

first nothing, the Elixer grown." The lover is not merely a man, an "ordinary nothing," but a compound of two souls joined within one body. By presenting himself *as* writing and *using* writing as a technology, the speaker transmutes absence into substance, silence into syllables and lines that extend on the page and perform a reconstituted wholeness. These lines offer no proof of a spiritual alchemy or of the beloved soul's recuperation after death, but rather introduce this possibility diagrammatically. They evince a speaker fixating upon the hollow yet functional bodies of words for the promise that upon death, though their souls withdraw and leave lovers "carcasses," study and keeping "vigil" (both "a devotional *watching*" and "prayers *said* or *sung* at a nocturnal service") might lead to a reunion.[108]

Fascination with the potency of words vies with a routine dissatisfaction with them in much of Donne's poetry, and at least some of his contemporaries apprehended this tension. In his elegy for the late dean of St. Paul's, Thomas Carew depicts Donne's versification as a contest between his wit and the stern enclosures of language: "Since to the awe of thy imperious wit / Our troublesome language bends, made only fit / With her tough thick-rib'd hoopes, to gird about / Thy Gyant fancie."[109] Carew senses a physical immediacy to Donne's lines, which evoke bodily presence by exhibiting strain while enveloping his "wit." Confronting words in verses that "bend" language, Donne treats poetic lines both as avenues for communication and as physical fetters upon both spoken and penned expression. His lines foreground

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[108] "vigil, n." *OED Online*, December 2013. *Oxford University Press*, def. 1b and d, 11 March 2014 <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/223328?rskey=kE1GNd&result=1&isAdvanced=false>.

[109] Thomas Carew, "An Elegie upon the death of Doctor Donne, Deane of Pauls," *Poems* (London: Printed by I. D. for Thomas Walkley, 1640), 121-5, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library.

the obdurate materiality of words even as they marshal these words into attempts at conveying meaning. While words and syllables, and consequently lines, were often envisioned as physical "things" in the early modern period, as materials available to construction projects like the raw materials used by carpenters and joiners, Donne's writings anticipate an understanding of words and lines as both "things" and as embedded in the regulated practices by which meaning is made and apprehended.

When simply transcribing sonic effects, the poetic line first functions horizontally, then vertically; reading left to right, a schema takes shape with which each subsequent line might be compared and evaluated. For classical quantitative and accentual prosodists alike, both the aural and penned verse line manifests an iterating framework of patterns, harmonies, and rhythms. A poem was therefore a crafted thing because it was expected to organize the material components of language into artifacts. This way of reading the craft of a line, however, still holds meter as the foundation for their shape and structure. In his essay, "Poetry's Media," Thomas Ford reminds us that even when poets themselves seem to privilege the "graphocentric" or "phonocentric" dimensions of language, such as in concrete or sound poetry, "the occluded or silenced medium seems inevitably to reassert its precedence over the favored medium through a type of supplemental or deconstructive logic."[110] In a cultural milieu wherein pattern poems and acrostics contended with the music of quantitative measures and accentual beats, the resurgence of the poetic line's graphological elements is not all that surprising. The different traditions informing the

[110] Thomas Ford, "Poetry's Media," *New Literary History* 44.3 (Summer 2013), 449-469, esp. 452-453.

shape and measure of a line, such as prosodic traditions, pointed attempts at "artificiality," rule-of-thumb practices in the print-house, and even personal habits observed by manuscript copyists might all contribute to the making of Donne's lines, whose shape and length might even be imagined as preceding their metrical signatures. The fact of lines as essential to poetic form, finds Donne's career-long fascination with diffuse boundaries, crumbling categories, and inter-penetrative substances yet another outlet, then, as he investigates the audiovisual mutuality of the written line for diagrammatic and performative ends. Nowhere does his investigation manifest more pointedly, perhaps, than in "The Triple Fool."

"The Triple Fool" tells the story of a lover who attempts to resolve his pain of his love poems being rejected by committing his grief to more verse, only to find someone else setting this verse to music and delighting others, thereby transmuting and restoring his pain to him. The speaker then recognizes that only poetry that pleases when read appeases Love and Grief, as a successful poem "publishes" Love and Grief's triumph over the poet. Somehow, as a result of this observation, a new kind of foolishness, a "triple fool," emerges—perhaps as a self-reflexive commentary on this third, presumed unpleasing, poem. The central issues preoccupying the poem appear to be the difficulties inherent to composing, performing, and interpreting poetry: the speaker's expressions of love register at first as "whining," and then his expressions of grief are set to music.[111] My analysis hinges upon how poetry's media relates to these issues by focusing on the ways "The Triple Fool" signals a poetics contorted between

[111] Michael A. Winkelman, in *A Cognitive Approach to John Donne's* Songs and Sonnets (New York: Palgrave Macmilan, 2013), suggests that it is "a dispassionate meta-poem about passionate verse-making" (183).

written measures and musicality: the aural descriptor "whining" and the (at least partially) material resonances of "published" verse. When listening first for how the poem sounds, we hear the rhetorical maneuvers Donne undertakes by manipulating expectations:

The triple Foole.

I am two fooles, I know,
For loving, and for saying so
In whining Poëtry;
But where's that wiseman, that would not be I,
If she would not deny?
Then as th'earths inward narrow crooked lanes
Do purge sea waters fretfull salt away,
I thought, if I could draw my paines,
Through Rimes vexation, I should them allay,
Griefe brought to numbers cannot be so fierce,
For, he tames it, that fetters it in verse.

But when I have done so,
Some man, his art and voice to show,
Doth Set and sing my paine,
And, by delighting many, frees againe
Griefe, which verse did restraine.
To Love, and Griefe tribute of Verse belongs,
But not of such as pleases when'tis read,
Both are increased by such songs:
For both their triumphs so are published,
And I, which was two fooles, do so grow three;
Who are a little wise, the best fooles bee.

Figure 1.5: "The triple Fool" from *Poems, by J.D.* (1633)[112]

In a period wherein poetry's most coveted partner in the pantheon of arts was music, what would it mean for a poem to "whine"? The OED reveals that whining was most immediately associated with unshaped, animal outcries, like the whinny of a horse or the cry of an otter—resonances that imply dissonance or disharmony, which are anathema to early modern music, and consequently an unrestrained liberty inappropriate in poetic craft.[113] This "whining poetry," a phrase itself metrically conditioned to exaggeratedly nasalize the first syllable before spitting out a plosive, predictably meets only rejection from the beloved. Resigned to his inadequacy, the lover resolves to "draw [his] paines" in poetry and allay grief through "numbers." Now discussing a new poem, one not whining to a beloved but pondering the speaker's own grief, the poet turns to "rime" to constrain and thereby control his own emotions. The reliably iambic pentameter line, "Do purge sea waters fretful salt away," softens the violent "purge" into the sibilance of sea and salt and the tranquility of "waters" and "away" in a conceit alluding to the misinformed belief that the earth's "inward narrow crooked lanes" filter brackish seawater as it makes its way inland. [114] The final line of the stanza, "For, he tames it, that fetters it in verse," continues the pattern of prosody following sense by introducing a rhythm stunted by multiple

[112] Donne, *Poems,* sig. Dd2^{v}

[113] "whine, v." *OED Online*, December 2013, *Oxford University Press*, def. 1, 1b. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/228383 (accessed December 27, 2013).

[114] Michael Schoenfeldt, "Eloquent Blood and Deliberative Bodies: The Physiology of Metaphysical Poetry," *Renaissance Transformations: The Making of English Writing, 1500-1650*, eds. Margaret Healy and Thomas Healy (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2009), 145-160; esp. 154.

caesurae. This final line also indicates how resources other than metrical conventions, here punctuation marks, are instruments included in the poet's toolkit: the commas fetter the "fierce" rhythm of the juxtaposing and uninterrupted preceding line.[115]

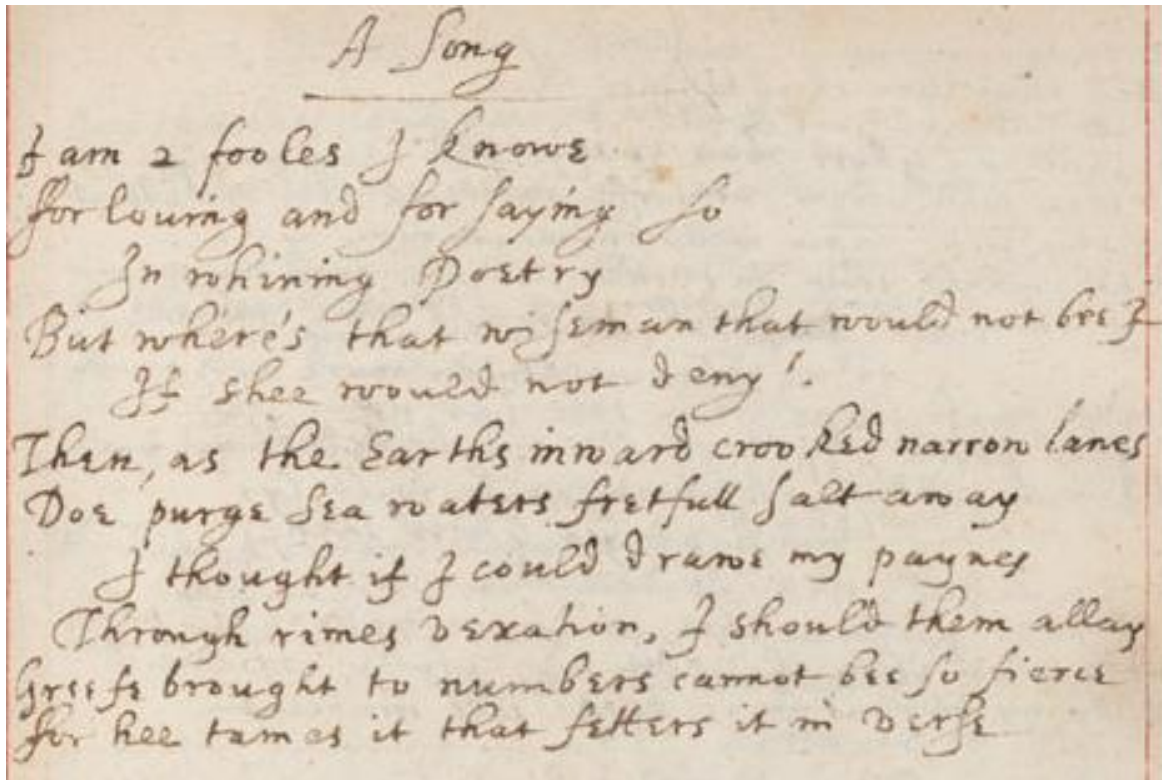
It is worth underscoring that the poems being described here – both the whining love poetry and the poem expressing grief—are not "The Triple Fool," but inaccessible anterior works. These poems are important because they establish the problem that the speaker's third poem, presumably "The Triple Fool," will strive to resolve: how to craft a poem that does what its author wants it to do. The speaker found his initial, "whining" love poetry to fail, and took recourse to temper his dissonant complaints with harsher metrical fetters—fetters more "artificial," and also, perhaps, less unrestrainedly honest. When some other man takes up this metrically stable poem and puts it to music (thereby fulfilling meter's original responsibility), the speaker witnesses his original grief restored to him because his pain is used to delight others. The "whining poetry" was *meant* to please, but did not, but in an unexpected reversal, his next poem *did* please by "delighting many" as a song. This sparks the poet's realization that "To Love and Grief tribute of verse belongs / But not of such as pleases when tis read" because verse that pleases, by being "published," increases the scope and potency of love and grief, just as his grief was increased by the pleasure his poem provided. A poem being "read" can imply both silent contemplation and aural recitation, but the point for the speaker is that if either mode of reading *pleases*, the original emotion through which the poem was composed grows. The fact that his

[115] Ben Saunders perceives effects such as these as "the kinky fun of literary formalism" in his reading, which productively engages with the poem's circularity and self-reflexivity (Saunders, 13).

second poem *did* please when "published" musically made it the functional inverse of "whining poetry"—instead of his unpleasing "whining poetry" increasing his (and plausibly the beloved's) love, it increased his grief, which he in turn turned into a pleasing poem that, by being pleasing, did not allay his grief. "The Triple Fool," then, may subsequently be read as a third attempt at composing a poem with the foolish misapprehension that in order to *decrease* grief, a poem must be unpleasing.

In early modern England, "to publish" might just have easily meant "to make known" as "to prepare and issue copies" in print or via what Harold Love terms "scribal publication."[116] In contemplating the functions of verse, the poet of "The Triple Fool" aims to compose poetry that does not please when read, thereby turning the "triumphs" of Love and Grief into unproductive poetic failures. As a representation of frustration or grief makes these sensations "known" less effectively than a projection of their effects, we might think of the poet's third poem as a diagrammatic illustration of the conflicts he faces. While many of Donne's works are labeled simply "Songs"— indeed the collection goes on to take the non-authorial title *Song and Sonnets* after the 1635 edition— the form of the written poem, entitled simply "A Song" in the manuscript and not "The Triple Fool" (or, rather, "The triple Foole") thrusts readers into a multimedia receptivity:

[116] Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-century England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).


A Song

I am 2 fooles I knowe
For louing and for saying so
In whining Poetry
But where's that wiseman that would not bee I
If shee would not deny?
Then, as the Earths inward crooked narrow lanes
Doe purge Sea waters fretfull salt away
I thought if I could drawe my paynes
Through rimes vexation, I should them allay
Greefe brought to numbers cannot bee so fierce
For hee tames it that fetters it in verse

Figure 1.6: "A Song" ["The triple Foole"], O' Flahertie Manuscript[117]

Looking at the O'Flahertie Manuscript again reveals the transcriber's conscientious respect for the justification of the poet's lines. Lines 1, 4, 6, 7, 10, and 11 are all left-justified, though the first two are trimeter while the remaining five are pentameter. Yet, line 9, also pentameter, is indented in both stanzas— seemingly to align with the second line. Whatever the logic behind this is, it is safe to assume that indented whitespace along the left-hand margin was a notable feature of Donne's original. We cannot help but notice now that the first five lines of each stanza vary their metrical structure rather agitatedly (trimeter, tetramter, trimeter, pentamter, trimeter) while the

[117] Donne, "The O'Flahertie Manuscript," p. 255.

last six resolve into a more stable pentameter course (barring the tetrameter eighth line). In the first stanza, “whining poetry” relates to the ‘winding’ syllabic counts of the first five lines, and the fettered verse of the speaker’s new poem to the final six.

Thinking again of the speaker’s attempts to “draw” his pains, we might now *see again* the “inward narrow crooked lanes” (the manuscript, it should be acknowledged, reads as “inward crooked narrow lanes”) which in his metaphor smooth out and sweeten salty seawater. Unlike the refined poem expressing grief, this poem’s seemingly arbitrarily indented lines visually signal metrical disturbance and turbulence; rather than smooth freshwater of metrically musical poetry, this poem’s lines are more akin to the purgative “narrow crooked lanes”—“The Triple Fool” identifies poetic form with the poetic speaker, presenting the emotion the poem expresses as something formal rules and author together might manipulate. Donne’s lines here preclude his poem from being conventionally musical, and by metaphorically equating the unimpeded fluidity of freshwater with not only a settled and peaceful emotional state but also with musically pleasing poetics, the ragged lines of “The Triple Fool” betray the speaker’s own failure to resolve his own pains by writing a purposefully unmusical poem. Instead of applying “Rimes vexation” to his grief, he allows grief to vex rhythm; instead of drawing his love into “numbers,” he allows his love to draw poorly measured structures. His earlier, formally confined poem unfortunately became a song, so now he “publishes” a “song” that does not resemble a poem and defies the regimes of prosodic pleasure.

The narrow crooked lanes of “The Triple Fool” are a reminder that writing is not limited to recording speech, because the word possesses an unstable materiality all

its own. The line, “Then as th’earth’s inward narrow crooked lanes,” reads horizontally like prose, but if we reconfigure our sense of lines of poetry and think of them as bodies, like words or signs, through which expression filters, we can start to apprehend its expanded dimensions. If a line mediates between the multiple available materialities of language, Donne’s layering of metaphorical resonances into “narrow crooked lanes” reveals an alternative, *vertical* poetics of print that augments the horizontal strictures of sound and meter: each stanza is also now a line, a crooked river fettered by the earthy whitespace of the page. As this particular metaphor illustrates the geographical “inscription” of salted seawater into earth, we sense the same impeded motion through the fits and starts of the poet’s quill marked by the meter’s caesurae. Donne’s “narrow crooked lanes” positions an unrestricted flow—of water, of emotion, of language—against the physical constraints imposed by their sites of inscription. (Here we might recall the smoothness privileged by eighteenth-century aesthetes such as Pope and Johnson in opposition to Donne’s “ruggedness”). The “lanes” that purge seawater’s salt away hypostatize and penetrate into the persistent earth, but invoke and require the earth’s presence to interrupt and sweeten the water. The cracked topology of a grief-stricken face across which one’s tears must traverse, in another manifestation of salt water, hinders and guides their flow, allowing these tears to be legible. Donne’s poem gestures at the “drawn” lines of verse within Donne’s wonky stanzas, as well as to the stanzas themselves—rather than an outline determining each line as in Hollander’s pattern poems, or each line determining the outline, Donne’s poetics achieve energetic vividness by way of the interplay between the two. The inscribed song, “The Triple Fool,” in this way enables a poem conscious

of the sources of prosodic delight to imagine itself unpleasing and whining by way of a form that looks frayed and unfinished and aural metrics which preclude measured harmony and concordance.

Our speaker becomes “a triple fool,” he says, by loving, saying so in poetry, and then attempting to finally allay his grief by writing poetry that frustrates audiences by not being pleasing. When the speaker confesses that he has become a “triple fool,” however, he reveals how the “little” wisdom his reflections on poetry have wrought have only made him a greater fool—he was a fool for loving and for whiningly saying so, but now he is an even greater fool expressing his *grief* in unproductive, whining poetry. As is typical with Donne, however, the conceit is richer than any attempt to explicate it. Were “The Triple Fool” conventionally metrical and musical, I suspect that it would not be nearly as enigmatic or captivating.[118] By looking to the physicality of words and the privileging limiting qualities of poetic lines, Donne makes poetic form, and the poetic line, expressive in itself. Writing poetry, the poem seems to say, is not about setting words to music, but about making words and lines carry some of the affective essence of their composer; in voicing his own foolishness—a state neither of grief nor love—then, Donne pens a delightful disorder that still pleases when ‘tis read, and especially when it is read silently to oneself.

I acknowledge that we simply cannot know how Donne’s printed lines were

[118] Ben Saunders suggests that “[the] sublime poem that expresses, tames, and then reawakens the poet’s desire not only lies behind “The triple Foole,” temporally located in the past of the speaker; it is also posited by “The triple Foole,” called into existence by it. Thus, the “unsingable song of desire that inspires “The triple Foole” is also and in a fundamental sense the *product* of “The triple Foole.” (Saunders, 11).

meant to look. We also cannot know with full certainty, however, whether the line must invariably read "inward narrow crooked lanes" instead of "narrow inward crooked lanes," or whether there should be parentheses in the second line of "The Message." Why not endeavor, then, to explore and unpack why these lines are fixed into place in the form that they are, just as we explore and unpack the aptness of one scribal transcription over another? I acknowledge that Donne does not only, or even frequently, write diagrammatic poems – but he also does not write only sonnets, either. I insist, nevertheless, that Donne pays more attention than we currently acknowledge to the way writing and reading, in the broadest senses, work—and that his ingenuity with lyrical form is not necessarily accidental. We usually do not see his lines, or when we do, we tend to see them mostly for their peculiar prosody, despite the fact that readers from Carew to Coleridge have sensed Donne's preoccupation with how bodies, forms, and matter are necessarily entangled with spirits, contents, and concepts.[119] Perhaps we might learn from Donne himself how to keep sensing that even lines have bodies, and, more importantly, how to take some delight, and even comfort, in the fact that despite their grand metaphysical aspirations, these lines remain accessibly with us, still resting on pages.

Donne's poetry presents a view of the early modern poetic line as negotiating between two media—sound and inscription, or speech and words. Though Donne still writes metrical verse, a habit derived from poetry's origins as an art of manipulating

[119] Examining the influence of Donne's verse forms on Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Anya Taylor suggests that "Donne's passion takes form in sound by analogy to the soul expressing its power in the body." Anya Taylor, "Coleridge and the Pleasures of Verse," *Studies in Romanticism* 40.4 (Winter, 2001), 547-569, esp. 550.

the sounds of speech, at times the logic of his metrical patterning becomes so unclear as to seem careless. In these moments, it is worth considering whether Donne is foregrounding the material visuality of his own lines. As a poet, and a thinker, endlessly fascinated by the interrelations of the soul and body, or of form and matter, Donne might well have recognized that though poetic craft involves an intricate regulation of the substance of words, when poetry is apprehended visually, this regulation reveals itself to be just as freighted by unruly, unworkable substance as are human bodies. Donne's lines become "carcasses" and "ruinous anatomies," but they also present the possibility of these bodies to house abstracted souls and spirits. In "The Triple Fool," Donne plays with the notion of ordered meter as communicating meaning but being hampered by the substance—and even the sounds—of words; the poem's ambiguous closing at the very least suggests that transcending substance in order to share one's thoughts is possible.

In the next chapter, I take my apprehension of the written poetic line as negotiating between metrical rules and its visual presence on the page and consider and bring it to bear on a reading of William Shakespeare's "The Phoenix and Turtle" (1601). The chapter will deal less with the visual appearance of Shakespeare's poetry, but will consider instead another transformation that occurs as poetic meter becomes relegated to pages—the status of "number" as a way to understand verse form. The vernacular verse line, understood in this chapter as criticized for being merely the product of counting, ultimately embraces accentual-syllabic counts as a ruling principle, but as the inscribed line announces its quantity materially and physically it throws into question the relationship between the concept of number and the material

world. Comparing Shakespeare’s lines to geometrical figures also labeled with numerical measurements, I see his poem commenting on how reason can come to rely overmuch on precepts. I claim that whereas Donne’s poems foreground the embodied nature of apprehending ideas and finds in this embodiment a hope for transcendence, Shakespeare’s elegy observes how abstractions threaten to overrule experience.

CHAPTER 2

Number-Lines: Diagrams of Irrationality in Shakespeare and Recorde

In the previous chapter, I attempted to expand the scope of poetic invention in the late Elizabethan period to include the decisions made by poets with respect to the measurement and positioning of the written line. Poets, faced with an increasingly self-conscious vernacular prosodic system responding simultaneously to classical, quantitative conceptions of measure and native, accentual practices, also witnessed the transformation of poetry from being a predominantly aural art to a predominantly textual one. The "music" of poetry was changing from proportional patterning rooted in long and short syllables to the harmony and concordance of rhyming, but humanist poets still influenced by the intricacy of classical meters longed for alternative means to demonstrate their inventive resourcefulness. The most obvious indicators of this persistent desire were gimmicky visual poems like acrostics or pattern poems, but these extreme cases, as I argue, reveal that even poets not aspiring to print their poems began to see their lines not only as records of sonic dynamics but also as formal elements with their own figurative capacities. This chapter moves beyond revising the formal status of the poetic line and into a consideration of how this approach to the line impacts poetry's relationship to knowledge. How did or could the materialized line, I ask, participate in a kind of invention that followed Sidney's declaration that poetry can "lead & draw us to as high a perfection, as our degenerate souls made

worse by theyr clayey lodgings, can be capable of"?[1] My earlier readings of Donne proposed that his written lines, by calling attention to their own textual fixity while also proclaiming themselves an aural form, assault the clayey lodgings of language's materiality on all fronts; in this chapter I look to Shakespeare's poetics as an example, in some ways anticipating Donne's own metaphysical poems, of poetry advancing beyond verbal representation and into a realm of diagrammatically intelligible abstractions.

If my earlier readings of poetry may be analogized to what Walter J. Ong describes as the "spatial model" of the early modern mental world advanced by Ramism (a discourse that mapped the pathways of rational invention onto printed charts and diagrams called dichotomies), then in this chapter I propose another view of the interrelations between poetic form and early modern knowledge-making that rests not only on the textual visuality of poetry but on how this material manifestation links poetry with mathematical thought.[2] In both chapters, I try to tease out the implications of viewing the line as the fundamental medium of poetic expression, of imagining poetry as a language that thinks through lines. Departing from the previous chapter's emphasis on the visual dimensions of these lines, this chapter considers how the early modern verse line essentially preserves the rule of metrical "number"– the counting of syllables so bemoaned by critics like Ascham and Campion—even as it makes this

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[1] Sidney, *Apologie*, sig. C4v.

[2] As Ong explains, "Ramus had insisted that analysis opened ideas like boxes, and it is certainly significant that the post-Ramist age produced so much more than its share of books identified by their titles as 'keys' to one thing or another. In this same age the notion of 'content' as applied to books is extended, so that statements, the words of which statements consist, and concepts or ideas themselves are habitually considered as 'containing' truth. Walter J. Ong, S.J., *Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958, reissued 2004), esp. 314-318.

rule subject to contestation by embodying it in the form of a line. Collapsing the physical manifestation of the poetic line with the regulatory efforts of number, I argue, allows poets to ponder the consequences of a numerological comprehension of the material world.

Timothy J. Reiss proposes that Ramist dichotomies were more pedagogical instruments than means for rational discovery, and situates them within a broader shift in curricular emphasis from the *trivium* (grammar, logic, and rhetoric—or, matters of the word) to the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy—or, matters of number) when it came to creating new knowledge.[3] According to Reiss, Ramus adopted the emergent mathematical world picture of the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century associated with figures such as Copernicus, Galileo, Descartes, and Bacon; this humanist construal of a mathematically accessible natural order—one that humans could master—promulgated the rise of what Reiss terms "aesthetic rationalism."[4] In a discussion of Descartes' views on proportionality in music, Reiss explains that "even as musical and artistic explanation generally came to lay less emphasis on mathematics, it set more, one may say, on a rationalism whose foundations, if not mathematical in any precise sense, were nonetheless wistfully

[3] Timothy J. Reiss responds to Ong's "spatial model" with the idea that the printed book, rather than as the point of departure for habits of thought, "was at most a catalyst, at least a corollary, of change; not its origin." See Timothy J. Reiss, "From Trivium to Quadrivium: Ramus, Method and Mathematical Technology" in *The Renaissance Computer: Knowledge Technology in the First Age of Print*, eds. Neil Rhodes and Jonathan Sawday (New York: Routledge, 2001), 45-58, esp. 46, and Timothy J. Reiss, *Knowledge, Discovery, and Imagination in Early Modern Europe: The Rise of Aesthetic Rationalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), esp. 45-69.

[4] Peter Dear offers a similar argument when he notes a growing presumption in the seventeenth century that knowledge "demanded certain demonstration," and observes the related fact that "the mathematical sciences were uncontroversially acknowledged to be supreme" in providing such demonstration. See Peter Dear, *Discipline and Experience: The Mathematical Way in the Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 3.

attached to the kind of certainty mathematics was held to enjoy."[5] I claim, drawing on scholarship highlighting the often overlooked points of contact between mathematics and literature in the early modern period, that humanist investment in mathematical concepts such as "proportion" fosters a poetics featuring lines both practically and philosophically concerned with the relationships between calculation, measurement, and the material dimensions of the literary arts.

In the wake of Reiss' work, as well in pursuit of the essays in Rhodes' and Sawday's *The Renaissance Computer* (2001), scholars over the past decade have offered sophisticated and innovative analyses of the relationships between literature and mathematics.[6] Henry Turner's work on geometry and the spatial arts, for example, offers a revisionary account of the degree to which early modern literary culture is interwoven with fields and vocations that require "practical knowledge" of mathematics. This form of knowledge, Turner explains, is a "specific intellectual formation characteristic of sixteenth-century England... that arose out of a convergence between humanist habits of reasoning inherited from classical rhetoric, dialectic, and prudence... on the one hand, and a growing interest on the part of the educated gentleman in technology and the practical geometrical fields of building,

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[5] For discussion of aesthetic rationalism, see Reiss, *Knowledge,* 190-200.

[6] Chiefly productive for me have been Paula Blank, *Shakespeare and the Mismeasure of Renaissance Man* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Henry S. Turner, *The English Renaissance Stage: Geometry, Poetics, and the Practical Spatial Arts 1580-1630* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Arielle Saiber, *Giordano Bruno and the Geometry of Language* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate 2005); and the edited collection, *Arts of Calculation: Quantifying Thought in Early Modern Europe*, eds. David Glimp and Michele R. Warren, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004). Many of these are cited throughout the chapter; ones not considered elsewhere are Shankar Raman's "Death by Numbers: Counting and Accounting in *The Winter's Tale*" in *Alternative Shakespeare* vol. 3, ed. Diana E. Henderson (New York: Routledge, 2008), 158-180. I also owe much to Jacqueline Wernimont's dissertation, "Writing Possibility: Early Modern Poetry and Mathematics" (PhD diss., Brown University, 2009).

surveying, engineering, and cartography, on the other."[7] In contrast to Turner's historiographical trace of the imprint of "practical knowledge" upon literary form, critics like Paula Blank and Arielle Saiber take a different approach and unpack how mathematical concepts and problems inform and are interrogated by literary-minded thinkers like Shakespeare and Bruno. Blank explores how Shakespeare "crosses lexical borders in part to test the limits of interdisciplinarity: his rhetoric of measurement is noteworthy insofar as it confirms the *incommensurability* of the quantifying methods of physical science…with problems of 'human' knowledge."[8] At times more literarily or historically inclined than mathematically detailed, these studies challenge readers to think about the historically contingent operations of literary compositions in new and surprising ways. As richly suggestive, persuasive, and at times dazzling as all of these engagements are, however, few of them articulate more than conceptual correspondences, such as the terminology of "plotting," "measurement," or "cipher" between discourses. These arguments rarely *do the math* before readers' eyes to demonstrate if and how the habits of thought engaged by popularized mathematics manuals were concomitant with the habits engaged by a poem.

I seek to address in small part some of the unspoken connections these studies forge by way of the figure of the line. As will be made clear, the line traces continuity between mathematics and vernacular poetics; lines illustrate shared habits of mind by compelling us to think about how the representational practices of poetics mirror those

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[7] Turner, *The English Renaissance Stage,* 14.
[8] Blank, 5.

used by diagrams in math manuals. Diagrams model a certain way of knowing by promoting a particular, and often abstracted, way of looking—they retrain the eye and the intellect in order to lead them to unexpected conclusions. The diagram below from Henry Billingsley's 1570 translation of Euclid's *Elements*, the first complete translation of this text in English (and one famously accompanied by a preface by John Dee), will not only provide a sample, but also set the scene for arguments this chapter will make later:

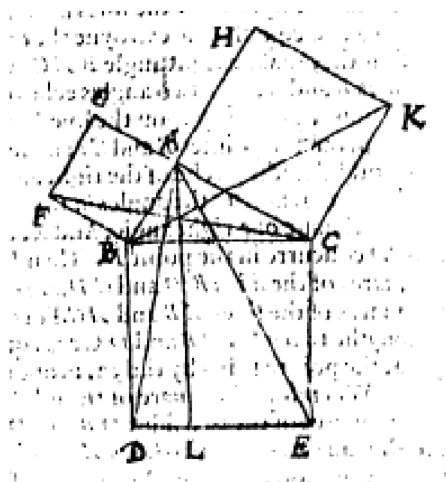

Figure 2.1: Diagram from Book 1, Theorem 33 of Billingsley's *Elements*[9]

As complicated as it might appear, this diagram merely illustrates the geometrical proof for what has come to be known as the Pythagorean Theorem. All students now learn this theorem in grade school—one might remember it as "A-squared + B-

[9] Henry Billingsley, *The Elements of Geometrie of the most auncient Philosopher Euclide of Megara* (London: John Daye, 1570), fol. 58^{r}, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

squared = C-squared," meaning that if you square (multiply by itself) the length of one side of a right triangle adjacent to the right angle and add it to the square of the other adjacent side, you get the square of the side opposite the right angle. In Billingsley's diagram, "A" and "B" would be lines *AB* and *AC* (adjacent to the right angle), and as the diagram shows, the geometrical proof involves no numbers to multiply by themselves, but literal squares made based on their lines. Euclid begins the proof by instructing the reader to "Describe (by [the] 46. proposition) vpon [the] line BC a square BDCE, and (by [the] same, vpon the lines BA and AC describe the squares ABFG and ACKH. And by the point A draw (by the 31. proposition) to either of these lines BD and CE a parallel line AL..."

My goal here is not to explain the proof (though believe me, it is much more stimulating than multiplication according to a formula!), but to note the logic of the diagram, which is here the product of a series of physical movements done with the geometrician's traditional tools, ruler and compass, and in accordance to a set of propositions already proven. When Euclid, via Billingsley, asks the student to "draw...a parallel line," he makes clear by reference to an earlier proposition that there is a way of drawing parallel lines that demonstrably ensures their status as truly parallel. Even more important is the directive to "Describe… a square," as this process is fundamental to the theorem. The set of techniques for creating demonstrably certain conclusions built upon proven foundations takes the name of "construction," and verbs such as "describe" and "draw" signal the technical maneuvers undertaken by the rigorous mathematician. Going forward, we should remember not only the demonstrative physical labor called to mind by the diagram (which is sometimes

fancifully termed “Dulcarnon,” or “two horned,” because of its imagistic qualities), but also the fact that it includes no numbers.[10] As I articulate the nature of what I call “diagrammatic poetics” in the early modern period, I envision the relationship between metrical “number” and the idea of a poetic line as mirroring the complications that arise when numbers start intruding upon geometrical constructions. When we think of this same theorem now, after all, we think about it almost entirely in terms of an arithmetical formula, just as we tend to think of accentual-syllabic poetic lines as essentially identical with their metrical measurements. If we think about poetry as potentially diagrammatic, however, we can discover relations and complications similar to those that strike us upon rediscovering the geometrical logic suppressed behind the arithmetical veneer of the Pythagorean Theorem.

For Ong, a diagram reconfirms his sense of the “evolving relationship between space and meaning in the early typographical age” through which Ramist dichotomies also operate. Diagrammatic rendering for Ong stems from the traditional allegorical tableau and “is to some extent held together by the presence of printed words,” but utilizes “schematic space” in a manner that makes meaning “independently of words.”[11] Katherine Acheson, in her book-length treatment of “visual rhetoric” in early modern literature, draws on Elizabeth Eisenstein’s notion that diagrams

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[10] An inadvertent function this particular diagram is that it comes to emblematize the difficulty of Euclidean proofs. Billingsley himself, in a postscript, notes that “This most excellent and notable Theoreme was first inuented by the greate philosopher Pithagoras, who for the exceeding ioy conceiued of the inuention thereof, offered in sacrifice an Oxe... And it it hath bene commo[n] called of barbarous writers of the latter time “Dulcarnon.” This appellation, meaning “two horns,” refers to the two squares coming off the triangle, signifies for “barbarous writers” not only the sacrificial ox, but also the maddeningly obtuse devil himself (Billingsley, fol. 58^{r}).

[11] Walter J. Ong, “From Allegory to Diagram in the Renaissance Mind: A Study in the Significance of the Allegorical Tableau,” *The Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism* 17.4 (June, 1959): 423-440; esp. 424-425.

encourage a new kind of "brainwork," which Acheson understands as "habituated thought, perception trained by exposure, active engagement, repetition, and extension."[12] Turner, associating diagrams with other "artificial constructions produced by the intellect" such as fictions, images, and figures, relates them to Charles Sanders Peirce's notion of theatrical iconicity.[13] A diagram, from this angle, enables "practical epistemology" because it constitutes "a way of coming to knowledge through representation, or, more precisely, through a mode of representation that is nothing less than a process of doing and making." Surveying geometry manuals from the sixteenth century, Turner explains how their diagrams "assist the reader in reaching solutions to a series of specific problems, and the reader's knowledge of the fundamental principles that make geometrical representation possible is achieved through a reiterated process of enacting the solutions to these particular problems."[14] John J. Roche, tracking the "semantics" of diagrammatic rendering into classical antiquity, begins with a line representing a span of time in Aristotle's *Physics* and explains that "the representation of a body by a line abandons any attempt at illustration and preserves only one feature of the body, namely the dimension of length." Roche cites this as "one example of the distinction between a diagram and an

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[12] Katherine Acheson, *Visual Rhetoric and Early Modern English Literature* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 2.

[13] Turner explains: "The icon sometimes overlaps or coincides physically with its signified, as in mimetic continuity on stage where a prop presents a fictional object of the same time, and sometimes does not...Onstage, the physical object – a wall, for instance—is a 'diagrammatic' representation of a fictive object in the sense that it corresponds to that object in structure but does not correspond at all points in detail to the fictive object it represents" (Turner, The *English Renaissance Stage*, 26-27).

[14] Turner, *The English Renaissance Stage*, 27.

illustration."[15] While there are many sorts of diagrams and they are used for a variety of purposes, one of their central features (as well as drawbacks), is that they blur the boundaries between words and images by allowing these modes to leach onto one another in order to augment the capacities of both.[16] By presenting the poetic line as a diagram, I envision it as supplemental to both aurality and verbal meaning in poetic making.

This chapter explores how poetry makes knowledge, or at least makes knowledge accessible, in the way that the mathematical diagram creates a heuristic space wherein new conceptual bridges may be forged. The self-reflexive material metaphor of the poetic line foregrounds the potential for interpenetration between words and images; a fuller understanding of this feature of the line might be garnered through a sense of the epistemological assumptions of early modern geometrical thought. Far from claiming that Shakespeare's poetry and practical mathematics directly inform one another, I aim to demonstrate how poetic making and the making of mathematical knowledge occasionally appear to operate through the same mechanisms. I begin the chapter by focusing on how early modern poets interchangeably name the products of their labor "numbers," as well as "lines" or

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[15] John J. Roche, "The Semantics of Graphics in Mathematical Natural Philosophy," *Non-verbal Communication in Science Prior to 1900*, ed. Renato G. Mazzolini (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1993), 197-234, esp. 198.

[16] In a helpful essay on the lack of definition provided by a term such as 'diagram,' Christoph Lüthy and Alexis Smets stress the contextual contingencies that attend diagrammatic renderings, and emphasize the sorts of error that attend "reading" diagrams, or what they call 'epistemic images.' Chief among these errors, for my interests, are "the unclear boundary between words and images" and "the fact that the meaning of a given image can only be grasped in the context of the epistemological, metaphysical and social assumptions within which it is embedded." See Christoph Lüthy and Alexis Smets, "Words, Lines, Diagrams, Images: Towards a History of Scientific Imagery," *Early Science and Medicine* 14 (2009), 398-439.

“verses,” and propose that this malleable nomenclature converges in poetry’s production of a rudimentary anticipation of what will ultimately become understood as the Cartesian number line, or what H. J. M. Bos describes, in his account of the redefinition of “geometrical exactness” upon the intrusion of numbers into geometrical construction, an “abstract magnitude.”[17] Descartes’ analytic geometry introduces “arithmetical terms into geometry” and ignites a new era of mathematical abstraction, but even before these developments, geometrical practice and numeration were already moving toward one another.[18] Concurrently, mathematics was becoming an intellectual exercise, concerned with purely relational concepts and at times seemingly divorced from a responsibility to explain physical phenomena. I propose that the poetic number-line, which calls into question the constitutive elements of verse even as it deploys them, similarly conjoins an “arithmetical” perspective with a “geometrical” one. This enables a poetics supplementing verisimilar mimesis and “matter” tied to real world objects with a relational mimesis that operates through demonstration and experience.

The main object of my attention will be an untitled, virtuosic elegy by Shakespeare often called “The Phoenix and Turtle” (hereafter “Phoenix”) and first published in 1601 alongside works by Shakespeare’s peers and rivals. In the middle of this short poem concerning the passing and funeral of the titular phoenix and her

[17] H. J. M Bos, *Redefining geometrical exactness : Descartes’ transformation of the early modern concept of construction* (New York: Springer, 2001), 120-121.

[18] Descartes, “Geometry,” *Discourse on Method, Optics, Geometry, and Meteorology*, trans. Paul J. Olscamp (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 2001), 177.

beloved turtledove, the concept of “Number” is “slaine” (l. 28).[19] Perceiving the death of Number as reflexively impacting the formal structure of the poetic line, my reading will consider how “Phoenix” makes the line a contested site for different ways of thinking about the materials proper to poetic invention, and as such a place to ruminate on the divarication between sensory perception and persuasive mathematical conceptions of reality. Revisiting some of the discussion Edward Wilson-Lee begins in a comparison of mathematical metaphors in “Phoenix” and *Troilus and Cressida*, in which he examines how these texts channel the fact that “dizzying perceptions of abstract mathematical truth are located in the everyday” in order to unsettle “the basic assumptions by which… characters had previously lived,” I look to Shakespeare’s poetics as a means not of only of invoking such dizziness but leading readers to the same experience by using the poetic line as a demonstrative device.[20] As such, while I initially situate “Phoenix” alongside other poetry by Shakespeare in order to contextualize its unconventional craftsmanship, my main comparison for its poetic lines is a diagrammatic line drawn into a practical manual by Cambridge-educated doctor Robert Recorde.

The series of mid-sixteenth century instructional guides by Recorde, which ignore the theoretical foundations of mathematical thought when they obscure practical instruction, introduce a mode of analysis that casually merges arithmetic and geometry and thereby makes the geometrical line a representational hybrid straddling

[19] All references to line numbers for “The Phoenix and Turtle” are derived from the *Riverside Shakespeare,* p. 1891-1892, but quotations are to the first printing, from Robert Chester, *Loves Martyr* ... (London : Imprinted for E. B., 1601), Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com.

[20] Edward Wilson-Lee, “Shakespeare by Numbers: Mathematical Crisis in *Troilus and Cressida*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 64.4 (Winter, 2013): 449-472, esp. 451

demonstrable geometrical constructions and abstract arithmetical calculation. Comparing the imaginative work within Shakespeare's written poem to the articulations of abstract ideas in Recorde's manuals, I argue that both poetry and mathematics take recourse to diagrammatic representation in order to guardedly venture past the limits of language. In "Phoenix," the poetic line formally encounters early modern uncertainty with regard to the ontology of numbers, and arrives, as mathematicians also arrive, upon the unspeakable concept of "irrationality." Irrational numbers were only beginning to be embraced by Tudor mathematicians; they represent a transformation in the number concept from describing, as Jacob Klein suggests, "a definite number of definite things" to abstractly describing continuous, rather than discrete, quantity.[21] Carla Mazzio's remarkable essay on the geometry-inspired university play *Blame Not Our Author* examines the cultural valence of irrationality via mathematical thought and identifies in the "disorienting dimensions of quantification" a connection to "emotional and aesthetic complexity."[22] Mazzio's account of subjective "disorientation" and Wilson-Lee's description of "dizzying perceptions" describe an epistemological moment in which mathematical certainty and presumptions of intellectual mastery chafe against the limits of practical and demonstrable arts of knowledge making. Whereas the nervous transformation of the number concept opens exhilarating new theoretical areas in the sciences, Shakespeare's "The Phoenix and Turtle" elegiacally responds to the destabilization of

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[21] Jacob Klein, *Greek Mathematical Thought and the Origin of Algebra* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1968), 46.

[22] Carla Mazzio, "The Three-Dimensional Self: Geometry, Melancholy, Drama," *Arts of Calculation: Quantifying Thought in Early Modern Europe*, eds. David Glimp and Michele R. Warren, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004): 39-66, esp. 39.

number by formally enacting through its lines a vertiginous encounter an abstracted mathematical worldview.

The Death of Number

"The Phoenix and Turtle," perhaps more than any other of his poems, embeds William Shakespeare within the social culture of early modern poetic craft and circulation. The poem appears to have been solicited for a curated appendix to a larger volume, Robert Chester's *Loves Martyr* (1601), and accompanies offerings by an impressive cohort of contemporaries including Ben Jonson, John Marston, and George Chapman.[23] Of this collection, only "The Phoenix and Turtle" endures as a significant success; furthermore, it holds the distinction of being periodically hailed as "baffling" or as "the most mysterious poem in English."[24] Acknowledging what James P. Bednarz, the most exhaustive recent commentator on the poem, describes as its "collective, collaborative, and competitive" backdrop, I generally view the poem as the handiwork of an ambitious poet hoping to stand out among luminous company.[25] Thematically linked to the other poems in the collection under the ostensible rubric of "married chastity," the poem recounts the funeral proceedings of phoenix and turtledove, whose death was wrought by their self-immolation in a "mutuall flame" (l.

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[23] All references made to texts in *Love's Martyr* other than "The Phoenix and Turtle" are cited by page number (see n. 19).

[24] William Empson, "The Phoenix and the Turtle," *Essays in Criticism* 16.2 (1966): 147-153, esp. 147; I. A. Richards, "The Sense of Poetry: Shakespeare's 'The Phoenix and the Turtle,' *Daedalus* 87.3 (Summer 1958): 86-94, esp. 86.

[25] For more on the "coactive, collaborative, and competitive" collection, see James P. Bednarz, *Shakespeare and the Truth of Love: The Mystery of 'The Phoenix and Turtle'* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), esp. 71-89.

24). As other birds, including the enigmatic "bird of loudest lay" that begins the poem, convene at the funeral proceedings and sing an anthem for the fallen lovers, Reason arrives and considers the birds' status as a twofold union. Deciding upon the impossibility or incomprehensibility of their union, Reason lapses into confusion and declares in a threnody appended to the end of the poem that "Beautie, Truth, and Raritie / [and] Grace in all simplicitie" (l. 53-54) have also been incinerated. Despite the remarkable pace at which these funeral proceedings become an epistemological and existential crisis, the poem's simple language makes it deceptively straightforward. My reading, however, rests upon an examination of the idiosyncratic formal complexity—perhaps motivated by competitive éclat—of its lines.

The invocation to the appendix to *Loves Martyr*, written under the name Vatum Chorus, asks that Apollo and the muses instruct the poets "how to rise/ In weighty Numbers, well pursu'd/ And varied from the Multitude."[26] While the other contributors demonstrate a degree of metrical experimentation, Shakespeare in particular seems to take this sentiment to heart; his "Numbers" demand notice:

> So they loued as loue in twaine,
> Had the essence but in one,
> Two distincts, Diuision none,
> Number there in loue was slaine.
>
> Hearts remote, yet not asunder;
> Distance and no space was seene,
> Twixt this *Turtle* and his Queene;
> But in them it were a wonder. (l. 25-32)

[26] "Invocatio" in *Loves Martyr*, 167.

My claims about the poem relate to the curious proclamation of the death of "Number" in the first stanza and this death's association with the problem of distinction without division. The problem the stanza lays out concerns dissonance between perception and conceptualization, a problem that traces back at least to the paradoxes proposed in Plato's *Parmenides* and Aristotle's *Physics* and also resonates with theological debates regarding the mystery of the holy trinity. As Bednarz points out, "the cliché would be to speak of lovers sharing a single heart, but it is by being both one and two that [Shakespeare's] Phoenix and Turtle defy convention, logic, physics, and mathematics."[27] The poem clearly accesses the confusion prompted by such paradoxes for tonal effect, but what makes this particular case interesting is what happens to the poem's own 'numbers' after Number is declared dead: "Hearts remote, yet not asunder," for the first time in the poem extends the poem's trochaic catalectic tetrameter (seven syllables in a stressed-unstressed pattern) to its natural conclusion by adding the final unstressed syllable. Can anything be said about this metrical variation, beyond reflecting upon it as at least obtusely coincidental and at most mildly witty? I contend that this subtle change not only pointedly appears elsewhere in Shakespeare's poetry as a significant technique, but claim that the operations of this technique in "Phoenix" reveal the poetic line as a site upon which physical matter and the rules imposed upon it representationally interrelate. These lines diagrammatically map the problem encountered within the poem onto the materials comprising the poem, but in order to apprehend this effect we need to refer back, as the Euclidean diagram also demands, on the suppositions and postulates by which the poem proceeds in its

[27] Bednarz, 104.

construction.

One thing is clear: Shakespeare counted his syllables, either in the process of composing or after hearing the sound of a trial verse line. Paula Blank notes how "for Shakespeare, as for so many of his contemporaries, the prestige of classical metrics (especially, its emphasis on the 'value' rather than just the 'number' of sounds) still held sway" but that Shakespeare sought "to re-create vernacular numbers as a proportional art... that worked by contrast and comparison" in ways more suited to the characteristics of English accentual metrics.[28] Blank's wide-ranging argument challenging the dominance of iambic pentameter as an interpretive framework for Shakespearean prosody offers compelling reason to believe that "although there is considerable evidence that Shakespeare counted syllables in his sonnet lines, there is no comparable evidence that he deliberately counted feet."[29] Sonnet 17, for example, openly announces that poetic composition is an act of numbering, but also indicates that lines have meaning that derives from this numeration and which stands somewhat apart from their verbal content. The sonneteer, wondering, "Who will believe my verse in time to come / If it were filled with your most high deserts" (17.1-2), pens a poem where the measurements of a sonnet—lines which have numbers affixed to them— are imagined as spatial enclosures that can be "filled," so much so that future readers might assume that their overflowing contents will "be termed a Poets rage / and stretched miter of an Antique song" (17.11-12). More than suggesting this possibility, however, the poem explicitly *enacts* this filling and stretching in an

[28] Blank, 57-58.
[29] Blank, 70

ironically apt manipulation of the numerical measure of its lines:

> If I could write the beauty of your eyes,
> And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
> The age to come would say this Poet lies,
> Such heauenly touches nere toucht earthly faces. (17.5-8)

Shakespeare appears to use the final, unstressed syllable as a sonic and numerical affirmation of the "stretched miter" future readers will apprehend; even the phrase, "stretched miter," moreover, stretches a second syllable out of the potentially monosyllabic "stretched" to fill its own line's numerical allotment. As in the poems discussed in the previous chapter, the act of composing a sonnet here traverses visual, tactile, and sonic media, as the speaker describes a "song" that is "written" in "numbers" upon "papers yellow'd with their age" (17.8). A similar effect appears most famously in Sonnet 20, which is perhaps Shakespeare's most prominent use of hendecasyllabic feminine endings; we might read these endings as critics often do, as reflexively remarking on the sonnet's gender trouble, but we might also see them through the lens of number as a discussion of poetic failure. The poem concerns the problem that the beloved is a "master-mistress" who has been spoiled for the speaker by Nature, who "by addition me of thee defeated, / By adding one thing to my purpose nothing" (20. 10-11). By adding one thing to his sonnet's lines, the speaker unmakes the proportional whole; moreover, these endings leave the junctures of each iambic line comprised of two incompatible, flaccidly unstressed syllables.

The number gimmick reappears in different fashion in Sonnet 87, which begins "Farewell, thou art too dear for my possessing" (87.1). All but two of the lines in this

sonnet are hendecasyllabic and most close with participle feminine endings; the beloved's "worth," the poem demonstrates by overflowing its own lines, exceeds the poet's means. Sonnet 145 manipulates line numeration in the opposite direction to suggest lack and suspension: "Those lips that Loues owne hand did make, / Breath'd forth the sound that said I hate" (145.1-2). This often derided sonnet's tetrameter form, with a rhyme scheme featuring a jangling similarity of vowel sounds, strikes the ear as singsong and incomplete. While making no excuses for the quality of the sonnet, I nevertheless perceive in it the same technique exercised in the other sonnets mentioned. Whereas Nature to the beloved added "one thing to my purpose nothing," the beloved by this sonnet's conclusion supplies another sort of missing piece: "I hate she alterd with an end" (145. 9). This ending adds specifically the numerical quantity of monosyllables that would rectify sonnet's immature meter: "I hate, from hate away she threw, / And sau'd my life saying not you" (145.13-14).[30] The point is not that every line could be rescued by adding "not you," but that the poem reflects upon—and reproduces—the anxiety that inhabits the space suspended within an awkwardly incomplete phrase such as "I hate...not you" by using its own verse structure to model that incompletion. Shakespeare implicitly bought into the notion that a line's physical quantity (its length, size, value, or magnitude) was determined by its number of syllables, and used a manipulation of these numbers to project onto readers a corresponding encounter with physical quantity. Supplemental to the semantic meanings of these poems' lines, then, is a sense of them as material extensions

[30] Andrew Gurr believes this to be the chronologically first sonnet, and this beloved to be Ann Hathaway because of a pun on "hate away." See Andrew Gurr, "Shakespeare's First Poem, Sonnet 145," *Essays in Criticism* 21.3 (1971): 221-226.

graduated with “numbers”; these poems demonstrate ideas that their words describe in the way that diagrams schematically render relations between their elements.

There are precedents for the change in meter in “The Phoenix and Turtle” to signify something by rendering for readers a corresponding encounter with materiality. Unlike in the sonnets, however, where themes of extension and truncation mirror metrical variations, in “Phoenix” the logic of the metrical metaphor does not transparently present itself. It is not as if number has increased or enlarged, but rather that it has *died*, and this passing reverberates in the poem as the correction of a catalexis, which does not in itself seem obviously apt. If Sonnet 17’s lines diagrammatically present how meter might be “stretched” by a hyperbolic poet, what sort of schematic relationship do the lines of “Phoenix” suggest? To assess the situation, we must take a few steps back to consider what the poem’s “numbers” were doing before they passed away. The poem, after all, is not a sonnet with well-defined metrical patterns against which such variations can conflict; it has to first establish its own patterns before disrupting them. The first thing any prosodically-inclined reader would notice about the poem, then, is the curious heptasyllabic meter. As trochaic tetrameter with a catalexis, the poem features a largely regular pattern that begins and ends each line with a stressed foot, giving each line the resigned tonality of symmetry. If meter can have metaphorical capacities distinct from their verbal content, the odd-numbered catalectic line primarily apparently connotes, for Elizabethan readers, incompletion, breakage, or disfigurement. Puttenham refers to English catalexis as “maimed verse” and disparages it in comparison to the classical Greek half-foot,

which offers “not defective or superfluous” ornamentation.[31] Similarly, in his *Revlis*, James VI recommends that poets take heed that “the nomber of zour fete in euery lyne be euin, and nocht odde… except it be in broken verse, quhilkis are out of reul and daylie inuentit by dyuers Poetis.”[32]

What might a poet achieve by taking his poem “out of reul,” and can we glean anything significant from it? Paul Hammond points out that Sonnet 87—the one cited above featuring eleven-syllable lines demonstrating, as I claim, the beloved’s excessive verse—can be sourced back to Tottel’s *Miscellany* and its citation in Puttenham’s *Arte of English Poesie*. Beyond verbal resonances, the poem’s metrical variations link the works, and Hammond explains that “Puttenham provides the example [from Tottel] to illustrate the deployment of lines with uneven numbers of syllables, seven, nine or eleven.”[33] Citing Puttenham, Hammond notes that such lines “are allowable where ‘the sharpe accent falles vpon the *penultima* or last saue one sillable of the verse, which doth so drowne the last, as he seemeth to passe away in maner vnpronounced & so make the verse seeme euen’.”[34] If someone wants to write a line with an odd number of syllables, they should probably still make it *sound* even; an unstressed odd syllable, according to Puttenham, can be “drowned and suppressed by the flat accent, and shrinks away, as it were, inaudible.”[35] In a poem such as

[31] George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesy: A Critical Edition,* eds. Frank Whigham and Wayne Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 214.
[32] James VI, “Ane Schort Treatise,” 71.
[33] Paul Hammond, “Sources for Shakespeare’s Sonnets 87 and 129 in *Tottel’s Miscellany* and Puttenham’s *The Arte of English Poesie*,” *Notes and Queries* 50.4 (December, 2003): 407-410, esp. 409. Hammond goes on to suggest that the example “suggest a scenario of how Shakespeare the craftsman studied his copy of Puttenham, read the discussion of how to deploy monosyllables, disyllables, and hypermetrical lines” (410).
[34] Hammond, 409, citing Puttenham, 161.
[35] Puttenham, 214.

"Phoenix," however, the odd syllable is unavoidably stressed, drawing attention to its oddness and insisting upon being noticed and heard.

The first line of the poem, often a shorthand name for the untitled poem itself but also the site of the poem's first mystery, also introduces the metrical pattern from which the aberrant octosyllabic line at the center of my reading swerves:

> Let the bird of lowdest lay,
> On the sole *Arabian* tree,
> Herauld sad and trumpet be:
> To whose sound chaste wings obay. (ll. 1-4)

Obviously trochaic, featuring no internal caesurae and a healthy dose of alliteration, the first line announces a confident poet. As noted, these catalectic lines begin and end with stresses, making each line of the poem sound compacted and even segmented, and creating a sense of deliberate unraveling appropriate to the ritualistic procession of the funeral being called to order. The first verb of the poem, "be", is suspended until the end of the third line, drawing out the famous mystery of the bird of "lowdest lay." This bird is to perch upon the "*Arabian* tree" and summon others; our ignorance regarding the bird's identity exacerbates into confusion when we acknowledge that this bird could actually be the self-renewing Phoenix issuing a clarion call in order to summon others to its own funeral.[36] If the bird in question is indeed the Phoenix, we

[36] Bednarz explains how the Phoenix's conventional perch atop "the sole *Arabian* tree" traces its roots to Pliny the Elder and Ovid and persists throughout early modern writings by authors such as John Lyly and John Florio (Bednarz, 124-125). Shakespeare himself demonstrates knowledge of the association in *The Tempest* when he Sebastian states that "in Arabia / There is one tree, the phoenix' throne…" (3.3.22-23). M.C. Bradbrook notes that even though the "bird which an Elizabethan would expect to find here is the Phoenix, the usual inhabitant of the sole Arabian tree," and that the reader only later learns that the Phoenix is dead, the fact remains that the poem offers the "generic term" and not

may actually hear its "herauld" both in the stressed foot capping every line and in the renewing trochaic pattern of each subsequent line; like a phoenix itself, the trochaic rhythm dies and revives in a cyclical pattern. The seventh, stressed syllable, however, calls attention to the incompleteness which characterizes the poem's overarching conceit of two lovers conjoining to make a whole, with only one returning from the flames. The bird might be the Phoenix, but is also not the Phoenix because, as we find out, the Phoenix and Turtledove are one but the Turtledove cannot return. Rising out of ashes that belonged to a version of itself that incorporated its beloved Turtledove, this bird mourns by crying out in lines of "maimed" verse, in lines functioning as discrete units repeatedly pointing to an absence, a phantom foot.[37]

The trochaic tetrameter verse form employed in "Phoenix" is not unique in Shakespeare's oeuvre, though he typically has it come out of the mouths of ethereal or supernatural entities. The fairies from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the witches in *Macbeth* both employ the form in their chiming forest spells and in their incantations. When Titania requests "a fairy song" to lull her to sleep, her train sings, "You spotted snakes with double tongue / Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen, / Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong, / Come not near our fairy queen" (*MND* 2.2.1-12). The lines begin with an iambic tetrameter pattern, but as the song clarifies, the first line is the outlier. Later, when Oberon enters and squeezes nectar into Titania's eyes, he adopts the same meter, chanting, "What thou seest when thou dost wake, / Do it for thy true-love take" (*MND*

"some other image." M. C. Bradbrook, "The Phoenix and the Turtle," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 6.3 (July 1, 1955): 356–358.

[37] Another way to think about the poem's meter, perhaps, is as acephalous iambic pentameter—that is, as "headless." This puts the burden of the poem's metrical peculiarity on the beginnings rather than the ends of its lines, and also renders a more gruesome bodily analogy for the maimed verse.

2.2.27-29). Throughout the play, Puck soliloquizes and occasionally even dialogues in this form. The singsong meter also frames the witches' unnatural charm in Act 4 of *Macbeth*, which features verses with catalexis, "Round about the cauldron go; / In the posion'd entrails throw" and a famous refrain restoring the missing foot with feminine endings: "Double, double, toil and trouble; / Fire burn, and cauldron bubble" (*Mac*. 4.1.4-5, 10-11). Now, just as iambic pentameter can obviously adapt to a variety of discursive situations, the use of trochaic tetrameter surely cannot be limited to magical songs and characters. "The Phoenix and Turtle," though concerning a funerary ritual, cannot really be thematically equated with witchcraft. Nevertheless, the associations of the meter across Shakespeare suggest a kind of otherworldliness, a removal from rule and order—emblematized, perhaps, by Theseus's "cool reason" opposed to "the poet's pen" which "gives to aery nothing / A local habitation and a name" (*MND* 5.1.6, 15-17). Associations with a realm of imagination and fancy also seem corroborated by the technical remarks levied against the form by Puttenham and James VI. Thus, when the poem remarks that "But in them it were a wonder," it establishes the problem against which Reason, when it arrives on the scene, fails to adapt.

Until now, I have been attempting to unpack why the line immediately following "Number there in love was slaine" contains an extra syllable, but in the broader context of the poem, this line foreshadows a greater metrical variation that might help clarify what numerical flux achieves in the poem. Over the course of the poem's 67 lines, there are six lines which restore the missing foot of the catalectic line; two of them are "Hearts remote, yet not asunder" and its rhyming counterpart, "But in them it were a wonder," and the other four all appear in one stanza after the

poem again explicitly problematizes the utility of number as a way to understand matter:

> Propertie was thus appalled,
> That the selfe was not the same:
> Single Natures double name,
> Neither two nor one was called.
>
> Reason in itself confounded,
> Saw Diuision grow together,
> To themselues yet either neither,
> Simple were so well compounded. (l. 37-44)

The poem reveals that because of the birds' shared "property"—because "Either was the others mine" (l. 36)—Number has no purchase in explaining their physical state. At this point, the poem unexpectedly introduces a new character, Reason, which grows "confounded" in "itself" (presented through octosyllabic lines). If something's property (*proprietas*), to Aristotle, is "the essential being or quality" of that thing, Reason is understandably "confounded" when grasping at this "either neither" for what to "call" the thing it sees.[38] "Reason," which derives from *ratio*, is specifically concerned with the capacity to count and compare. Thomas Hobbes helpfully traces this etymology and explains that numbering was itself the foundation of rational thought: "The Latins called accounts of money *rationes*, and accounting *ratiocinatio*… and thence it seems to proceed that they extended the word *ratio*, to the faculty of reckoning in all other things."[39] More precisely, however, in classical

[38] Aristotle cited and discussed in Bednarz, 114.

[39] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1994), 20, also 22-24. The OED offers that ratio derives from "classical Latin *ratio* act of reckoning, calculation, proportion, relation, act or process of reasoning, explanation, reason, descriptive account, faculty of

mathematical thought "ratio" specifically describes the relationship between two magnitudes – one magnitude is two times the size of the other, say. The OED's first citation of the term being used in this way, to Isaac Barrow's 1660 edition of Euclid's *Elements*, sees Barrow explaining that "Ratio (or rate) is the mutuall habitude or respect of two magnitudes of the same kind to each other, according to quantity."[40] The first complete English translation of the *Elements*, Henry Billingsley's 1570 edition, translates the same idea with a different, albeit by now familiar, word: "Proportion is a certaine respect of two magnitudes of one kinde, according to quantitie."[41] When Billingsley elaborates on this idea, some new (or rather, quite ancient) ways of understanding rationality surface:

> Ye must understand that there are of proportions two generall kinds, the one is called rationall, certaine, and knowen, and the other irrationall,vncertaine, and vnknowen. Such magnitudes or quantities, which may be expressed by numbre, are called *rationall* magnitudes or quantities.... And generally whensoeuer one number is compared to an other, or two lines to other magnitudes, both which may be expressed by number, the proportion between them is euer rationall, and onely the proportion of such quantities is rationall. So that in Arithmeticke all proportions are rationall, for that therein euer one number is compared to an other.[42]

"Rational," in the geometric sense, connotes two quantities that can be compared numerically, or in other words, quantities that implicitly share a common unit by which they can be measured. While obviously a roundabout way to

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reason, guiding proinciple, consideration, manner, method..." "ratio, n.", *OED Online*, June 2014, Oxford University Press, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/158484

[40] Isaac Barrow, *Euclide's elements the whole fifteen books...* (London: Printed by R. Daniel, 1660), 91, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign Campus).

[41] Billingsley, fol. 126^{v}.

[42] Billingsley, fol. 127^{r}.

metaphorically discuss rationality, the distinction between arithmetical and geometrical ways to think about relation introduce the same problem presented by in "The Phoenix and Turtle": how to reconcile systems of measurement, which allow the Phoenix and Turtledove to be "called" either "two" or "one," with geometrical relationships, which allows them to be perceived as a continuum. I do not suggest or even believe that Shakespeare was reading or thinking about mathematical problems when composing "Phoenix." Instead, I perceive that Shakespeare organically arrives at the problem of a limited conception of number being used to rationalize phenomena that resist definition. I am not the only one to hear an "echo" of Euclid in the poem. John Finnis and Patrick Martin suppose that the "cross-word-like" stanzas also central to my analysis here hint at veiled real-world analogues, Ann and Roger Line by way of a curious call-and-response scenario. Finnis and Martin read the paradoxes presented in these stanzas as essentially asking the question "What has 'distance and no space', length and no breadth,... no area?" and prompting the answer, "A line," signaling the poet's commentary on Ann Line.[43] As resourceful and perhaps strained as this reading is, I think that Shakespeare's lines are doing much more than subtly hinting at the key to an historical mystery. These lines probe a paradox, and carry the attentive reader along with them into this unsettled space—not to resolve or explain the paradox, but to poetically recreate the experience of encountering one. I argue that the corrective syllables to the poem's catalexis foreground the poem's lines in order to simulate how arithmetical mensuration and geometrical construction are incompatible.

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[43] John Finnis and Patrick Martin, "Another turn for the Turtle: Shakespeare's intercession for Love's Martyr," *The Times Literary Supplement* (London, April 18, 2003), 12-14, esp. 13

In “The Phoenix and Turtle,” when Number dies, it resurrects as a number-line.

Number and Magnitude

The paradox which leaves Reason, as well as the poem’s meter, “confounded” relates to Zeno of Elea’s assertions that the infinite divisibility of space renders motion itself impossible.[44] As Aristotle puts it, Zeno suggests “if that which is in locomotion is always occupying such a space at any moment, the flying arrow is therefore motionless” and “that which is in locomotion must arrive at the half-way stage before it arrives at the goal,” meaning that there will be an infinite number of halfway points between any two objects, so they will never touch one another.[45] Aristotle responds to these paradoxes by pointing out that 1) the arrow cannot be motionless because “time is not composed of indivisible nows any more than any other magnitude is composed of indivisibles” and 2) that Zeno “makes a false assumption in asserting that it is impossible for a thing to pass over or severally to come in contact with infinite things in a finite time,” meaning that continuous quantities like length and time are called infinite either “in respect of divisibility or in respect of their extremes” and consequently a finite distance can be traversed in a finite amount of time.

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[44] Wilson-Lee also recognizes traces of these paradoxes relating to the mathematical infinitive in Shakespeare’s works, but reads “Phoenix” as an “ontological palliative rather than as a solvent for our most cherished beliefs” (Wilson-Lee, 469-470)

[45] Aristotle claims that Zeno “makes a false assumption in asserting that it is impossible for a thing to pass over or severally to come in contact with infinite things in a finite time” because continuous quantities like length and time are called infinite either “in respect of divisibility or in respect of their extremes.” Aristotle, “Physics,” *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 1, ed. Jonathan Barnes, trans. R. P. Hardie and R. K. Gaye (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 233a22-233a31. All reference to Aristotle’s works will be to these volumes and will indicate title, volume, translator, and column reference.

This reasoning recalls something mentioned in passing during the previous chapter: Aristotle's conceptions of quantity as explained in his *Categories*. Quantities in the world were either "discrete," like numerical units or spoken syllables because they have "no common boundary at which they join together," or they were "continuous," like magnitudes (lines, surfaces, solids, and also time and space) and which could be infinitely divided.[46] These assumptions lead to apparently satisfactory answers to Zeno's paradoxes, and in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* he even goes on to proclaim that "the minute accuracy of mathematics is not to be demanded in all cases, but only in the case of things which have no matter" and that geometry differs from "mensuration" in that the latter "deals with things that we perceive, and the former with things that are not perceptible."[47] A system of "counting" essentially projected onto lines regarded as continuous technically makes each line of "Phoenix" both discrete and continuous. In this way, these lines start to resemble the diagrammatic lines drawn by the authors of practical mathematical manuals.

By belaboring emphasis on the varying syllabic counts of the lines in "Phoenix," I aim to underscore the degree to which each line's "value" derives not only from its sonic effects, but from being a numerical indication of each previous line's lack and absence. In this sense, each line functions diagrammatically, by not being an "image" of an idea but a schematic explication of relations pertaining to the idea. As "The Phoenix and Turtle" explicitly targets "Number," this assassination also alters the poem's own metrical "numbers" and appears to fashion a metaphor wherein

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[46] Aristotle, "Categories," *Complete Works,* vol. 1, trans. J. L. Ackrill, 4b24-5a14.

[47] Aristotle, "Metaphysics," *Complete Works* vol. 2, trans. W. D. Ross, 995a15-a16, 997a34-998a19.

the materials of poetry are not words, but words conflated with numerical units. Instead of "quantity," "length," or "weight" determining the shape of its lines, the poem acknowledges that its form derives at least in part from counting—from a series of stressed "units" that are intellectually conjoined into a continuous magnitude. When Campion explicitly invokes Aristotelian conceptions of quantity in his own discussion of poetic measure, saying "Number is *discreta quantitas,* so that when we speake simply of number, we intend only the disseuer'd quantity," he acknowledges that numbers do not actually have "value" until they are enlisted in poetry: "But when we speake of a Poeme written in number, we consider not only the distinct number of the sillables, but also their value, which is contained in the length or shortnes of their sound."[48] Of course, as the earlier chapter explained, Campion's sense of value rooted in "length" derives from the traditions of quantitative meter, a form that Shakespeare clearly does not entertain in "The Phoenix and Turtle." For Shakespeare, I argue, this value emerges in the bodies of poetic lines envisioned as magnitudes.

Poets like Campion saw their writing, Blank explains, "as an instrument of measure, one that proceeded quantitatively rather than qualitatively, deciding relations rather than depicting 'nature,'" and concluded that "'true' number remained an instrument of *relation*, of distributed values rather than fixed sums; simply adding up the syllables of a line didn't count."[49] George Puttenham acknowledges the main shortcoming of vernacular "rhythms" when he explains that the English have "improperly & not wel" derived the word "ryme" from the Greek *rithmos*; the label is

[48] Campion in Smith, v. 2, 328.
[49] Blank, 41, 56.

misleading “because we have no such feete or times or stirres in our meeters, by whose *simpathie*, or pleasant conveniencie with th’eare, we could take any delight.” It is clear to Puttenham that the “*rithmus* of theirs is not therefore our rime, but a certaine musicall numerosity in utterance." In contrast, English poets have only a "bare number as that of the arithmetical computation is, which therefore is not called *rithmus* but *arithmus*."[50]Looking again at Puttenham’s scene of a “master” poet being charged to extemporaneously compose verse, then, we can witness the interplay between line and number documented in the hypothetical challenge:

> Make me...so many strokes or lines with your pen as ye would have your song contain verses, and let every line bear his several length, even as ye would have your verse of measure, suppose of four, five, six, or eight or more syllables, and set a figure of every number at the end of the line, whereby ye may know his measure.[51]

When Puttenham’s master asks for some “strokes or lines” with “a figure of every number” at the end of each line, he conflates a continuous graphical quantity with the discrete aural units named by number. For poets faithful to the idea that verse could demonstrate mathematical proportionality, however, bringing number and magnitude together begs questions such as, how can two lines measure the same number of accents (discrete units) while having different “sizes” or durations (continuous units)? When excusing Chaucer’s own metrical variability, Gascoigne suggests that anyone perusing his works “shall finde that although his lines are not alwayes of one selfe same number of Syllables, yet, beyng redde by one that hath vnderstanding, the

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[50] Puttenham, 158-159.
[51] Puttenham, 179

longest verse, and that which hath the most Syllables in it, will fall (to the eare) correspondent vnto that which hath the fewest sillables in it."[52] In the wake of the general critical concurrence that Chaucer was imitating French decasyllabics (and hendecasyllabics) and not quantitative measures, Gascoigne's point seems feeble, but it nevertheless exposes the theoretical dissonance at the root of proposed solutions that merge classical proportionality rooted in "length" to vernacular proportionality founded upon "number." For Puttenham, lines mediate between "verses" and "syllables"—the number of lines indicates the number of verses, while the number captioning each line indicates the number of syllables within each line. Worth noting is the verbal and conceptual distance between a "verse" and a "line" in this scenario: "line" explicitly refers to the "strokes" of the pen, whereas the characteristics of a "verse" include "measure." The lines may each have their "several length," but verses have "measure" that must be indicated numerically. Such lines effectively become the schematic backbones of a poem, and their relations to one another afford an opportunity to think of poems "geometrically" rather than "arithmetically"—as diagrams rather than as a numbered assemblage of words.[53]

Challenges to Aristotelian conceptions of quantity on the grounds of number being an ontologically difficult category were not limited to early modern poetics. Mathematicians in the sixteenth century grew increasingly pressured to apply their knowledge of quantity, divided disciplinarily into the study of number (arithmetic) and

[52] Gascoigne in Smith, vol. 1, 50. Blank discusses Gascoigne's assumptions on pages 54-55 of *Mismeasure*.

[53] Blank closes her chapter by offering the provocative suggestion that Shakespeare's "*ars metrica* measures words 'geometrically' rather than 'arithmetically,' as dynamic and relational rather than sequenced and set by degree" (Blank, 79).

magnitude (geometry), to perceivable phenomena. Peter Dear explains that "a number of Italian philosophers… had maintained that pure mathematics (geometry and arithmetic) was not a true science in Aristotle's sense because it did not demonstrate its conclusions through causes."[54] The pure natural sciences were thought to arrive at knowledge through unpacking sensory experience and recovering motive forces, causes, and necessity; geometry and arithmetic, in contrast, were founded on propositions and postulates regarding "immaterial" things and so operated through abstraction and artifice. Teachers and advocates of the *quadrivium*, the most famous of which was Ramus himself, attempted to restore mathematics to a privileged place in the knowledge-making arts by emphasizing its utility. As demand for mathematical knowledge proliferated among a burgeoning capitalistic class consisting of vocations such as merchants, cartographers, navigators, and architects, mathematics was forced out of its theoretical domain and asked to address applied problems. In *From Discrete to Continuous: the Broadening of Number Concepts in Early Modern England* (2002), Katherine Neal points out that problem-solving oriented commentators in England and Scotland saw mathematics being called upon "to answer questions that it had not been asked before," which, as we will see, led to mathematics and the number concept itself expanding the scope of their explanatory purview.[55] Neal argues that number changed in part because of the "combined impact of both novel practical applications and algebraic notation."[56]

[54] Dear, 36.
[55] Katherine Neal, *From Discrete to Continuous : the Broadening of Number Concepts in Early Modern England* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), 7.
[56] Neal, 8-9.

Prominent among those attempting to instruct the English populace in the mathematical arts was Robert Recorde, who published five instructional manuals in the middle of the sixteenth century. In his first pamphlet on practical mathematics, *The Pathway to Knowledg*[e] (1551), Recorde states his desire to offer geometry to the "unlearned sorte" so that they might find it helpful in practices such as "measuryng of ground" and "in hedgyng, in dichyng, and in stackes makying."[57] Evidence of Recorde's accessible form of mathematical study emerges right at the start of *The Pathway*, where he follows Euclid's structure and offers definitions for the basic elements of geometry. For Euclid, and by extension for humanist mathematicians, a line was the "race or course of a point" or the "movying of a poynte," and a point the "propre end or bound of a line."[58] Billingsley clarifies that a "point is no part of quantitie or of a lyne: neither is a lyne composed of points, as number is of unities," an understanding that bears the imprint of Aristotle's *Categories*. Billingsley even echoes Aristotle's example of time as a continuous quantity by citing how "an instant in time, is neither tyme, nor part of tyme, but only the beginning and end of time, and coupleth & ioyneth partes of tyme together."[59] Recorde, however, takes a different approach to the notion of a line. He begins by asserting that geometry "teacheth the drawyng, Measuring, and proporcion of figures," and figures, for Recorde, are "made of prickes, lines, or plattformes." A "pricke" at first appears roughly synonymous with Euclid and

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[57] Robert Recorde, *The Pathway to Knowledg[e] ...* (London: Printed by Reynold Wolfe, 1551), sig. t[v] (second page of the preface), Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

[58] Dee, sig. *.j.[r]; Billingsley, fol. 1[v].

[59] Billingsley fol. 1[v]. Billingsley's example of time being continuous, and therefore being indivisible, reflects Aristotle's influence, as Aristotle lists time amongst his continuous quantities (Aristotle, "Categories," 4b24-5a14).

Billingsley's "point," that "small and unsensible shape whiche hath in it no partes," but Recorde shatters this similarity by encouraging his readers to ignore this "Theorike speculacion" and simply consider a prick "that small printe of penne, pencyle, or other instrumente, which is not moved." Though his account suggests knowledge of classical definitions of a line, Recorde presents lines as follows:

> Nowe of a great numbre of theſe prickes, is made a Lyne, as you may perceiue by this forme enſuyng. .... where as I haue ſet a numbre of prickes, ſo if you with your pen will ſet in more other prickes betweene euerye two of theſe, then wil it be a lyne, as here you may ſee ——— and this lyne, is called of Geometricians, Lengthe withoute breadth.

Figure 2.2: Definition of a line from Recorde's *Pathway to Knowledg*[e][60]

Recorde's interactive demonstration of how to make a line effectively subverts the held knowledge stated in Billingsley's comments upon Euclid; unlike the number five, which is composed of five units, or ones, a line (or any form of magnitude) may not be understood as a collection of discrete particles. Recorde's version of the line does not necessarily flout Aristotle's distinctions, but instead ignores them in the service of practical understanding—it is of no help to anyone, he seems to say, to think of lines as the movement of an invisible and indivisible object. It might just be easier to think of them as "a great numbre" of pricks. Lines go on to enable the construction of what Recorde terms "platt formes," which are effectively two-dimensional figures, or shapes. Though Recorde notes that it is technically improper to also call pricks and

[60] Recorde, *The Pathway* sig. A^{r}.

"bare lines unclosed" figures, he maintains that they should be held as such for this "lighter forme of teachying."[61] In this manner, Recorde's geometrical line leaps out of the space of pure abstraction and lands, as a figure for itself, in applied geometry. John Dee, in his well-known preface to Billingsley's *Elements*, remarks on the role of practical allowances such as Recorde's in the incipient dismantling of Aristotle's distinctions of quantity:

> Practise hath led *Numbers* farther, and hath framed them, to take upon them, the shew of *Magnitudes* propertie: Which is *Incommensurabilitie* and *Irrationalitie*. (For in pure *Arithmetick*, an *Unit*, is the common Measure of all Numbers.) And, here, Numbers are become, as Lines, Plaines and Solides, sometimes *Rationall*, sometimes *Irrationall*.[62]

Suffice to say, number does ultimately take on magnitude's property; Descartes' number line in the seventeenth century as the basis for analytical geometry stands as the ultimate product of this gradual transformation. How number and magnitude become entangled, or coterminous, has a lot to do with how those attempting to engage mathematical principles in practical applications dealt with emergent problems that confounded basic classical tenets. When the Phoenix and the Turtle inadvertently kill Number in the poem through their two-fold union, the charge against them might be explained as forcing an abstract conception of number rooted in "pure *Arithmetike*" to confront a physical scenario in which its foundational element, the "unit" is

[61] Recorde, *Pathway* A-Aiii

[62] Though Dee's preface initially appeared in 1570 accompanying Billingsley's translation, I employ a later, more legible edition here. See John Dee, "The Mathematicall Preface", *Euclides Elements of Geometry: the first VI Books* (London: Printed by Robert and William Leybourn, 1651), sig. C[v], Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

radically destabilized by being equated with a geometrical point. The "arithmetical" numbers of poetry, when embodied in lines that extend upon the page, are in "Phoenix" similarly challenged to do double-duty as numbers and as magnitudes.

The early modern poetic line has the capacity to present as a hybrid prosodic form interchangeably referred to as both "number" and "line," with these aspects of its composition inscrutably interrelated. The lines derive their form not only from metrical patterns—from "counting"—but also from a quantitative character that values magnitudinal *size* and *relation* alongside stated numerical measurement. In this respect, they resemble what historians of mathematics call the emergent "general magnitudes" or "abstract magnitudes" of the seventeenth century.[63] Prior to the early modern period, geometrical magnitudes were heuristics that contributed to knowledge-making through the practice of construction, an example of which appeared earlier, in my discussion of the Euclidean diagram. H. J. M. Bos explains that construction indicates arriving at a genuinely "known" mathematical entity by way of "acceptable means" such as "ruler and compass, or rather straight lines and circles." Bos argues, however, that the early modern period experienced a redefinition of the nature of geometrical "exactness" because of compromises to construction.[64] As practice led early modern mathematicians like Recorde and François Viète to have geometrical magnitudes bear measurements as opposed to simply relative sizes, the "straightedge

[63] Klein discusses how for the Greeks, number always intends "*determinate* numbers of units of measurements" rather than generalizable methods, and observes a "conceptual transformation which permits the ancient *arithmos* to appear as 'number' ('Zahl')—as opposed to 'numbered assemblage' ('Anzahl')—*and concomitantly, as* '*general magnitude*'" (122-125, esp. 125; emphasis in original). Bos adapts the idea of "general magnitudes" and names them "abstract magnitudes"; these new magnitudes can be understood as "mathematical entities that, like geometrical magnitudes, could be joined, separated, and compared, but whose further nature was left unspecified" (Bos, 121).

[64] Bos, 3-4.

and curve" constructions that brought to light geometrical "truths" became arithmetical exercises in numerical precision based on measurements drawn from arbitrarily numbered implements.[65] In this way, abstract magnitudes essentially dismantle the disciplinary distinction between arithmetic and geometry, and we see in this change the same conceptual maneuvers taking place in vernacular poetics, which started using accentual "numbers" to curtail speech and to describe lines on the space of the page. Like Recorde's series of pricks congealing into a continuous line, the abstract magnitude requires an apprehension of number and magnitude playing off of one another.

In the next section, I propose that Reason's eighth syllable, as a metrical response to the death of Number, is hopefully restorative—a last ditch attempt from a fading perspective to assert a materially grounded view of number in the face of the creeping intellectual dominance of abstraction. A pointed battleground upon which these epistemological factions converge, I argue, is the inarticulable concept of irrationality. Whereas mathematicians grow to embrace the metaphysical nature of abstract magnitudes and eventually displace their sense of number as discrete, Shakespeare's poem confronts Number's (and by extension, meter's) transition into abstraction and the other side of rationality warily, despite deploying a prosodic scheme that engages irrationality as part of its poetics.[66]

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[65] John Dee decries the shift from classical to "vulgar" geometry as diminishing "the puritie, absolutenes, and Immaterialitie of Principall *Geometrie*." Vulgar geometry concerns the "Arte of measuring sensible magnitudes" by "due applying of Cumpase, Rule, Square, Yard, Ell, Perch, Pole, Line, Gauging rod, (or such like instrument) to the Length, Plaine, or Solide measured" (Dee, sig. E3[v]).

[66] Neal argues that the concept of number changed because of the "combined impact of both novel practical applications and algebraic notation" (Neal, 8-9).

The Speaking Surd

The "length" of a line might be predicated by a number of syllables, as in Puttenham's example of a line captioned with a number. It might also retain the physicality and presence of a material "length" that determines its measurement, such as when Shakespeare's meter seems "stretched" because of an excess of syllables. For most practicing poets, it is likely that the unresolved dissonance in the substance of a line wrought by prosodic compromises rarely mattered. However, when these poets reflected upon the unsuitability of their poetic materials (which were, after a point, exclusively accentual syllables) to the conceits they were hoping to build, they might have sensed the oppositional philosophical associations their craft held with both musically proportional "songs" and with verisimilar mimesis. Interestingly, the logic of proportion applies in both associations—Andrew Mattison discusses how for early moderns, proportion "allows for a recreation of a thing on a different scale to be a closer representation of the original than an image can be" because by taking precise measurements and adjusting them as a system of relations, an object can be accurately reproduced at any scale. The proportional mode of representation, however, "stops being useful when we get into the particular details," because schematic measurements exist only in abstraction; the material contingencies of reproduction introduce error, compromise, and flux.[67] A poem could either be crafted with precise proportionality—either in terms of its mathematically precise musical components or in terms of the

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[67] Andrew Mattison, *The Unimagined in the English Renaissance* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2013), 95, 96.

“aptness” or “decorousness” of its figuration with respect to its object—but it could not necessarily conflate mathematical form with sensory representation. Paula Blank argues a similar point when asserting that for Shakespeare, “the proportions of human art do not operate according to a ‘fixed plan’: instead of espousing a faith in ‘true’ proportions, Shakespeare imagines unsettled, unstable, and uncertain relations among the parts of his created works.”[68]   Returning to the problem of the self-reflexive disproportion in “The Phoenix and Turtle,” I claim that by rectifying its own catalectic lines the poem critiques the limits of “rational” aesthetics—that is, an aesthetics simply coordinated by numbering. Just as Donne laments in “The First Anniversary” that “The Worlds proportion disfigur’d is” by the death of Elizabeth Drury, the conclusion of “The Phoenix and Turtle” declares Beauty, Truth, Rarity, and Grace to have passed away in accordance with the passing of the Phoenix and Turtle. To render this melancholy for readers, the artificially aberrant non-catalectic lines make the poem’s other lines appear flawed, lacking, and bearing affective traces of memory incompatible with the cold rationality of proportion and order. Amassing against prosodic “number” in these lines are the other resources available to poetic lines: sounds, syntax, whitespace, and even punctuation. Together, these features establish how the materials of poetry might work relationally, schematically, or heuristically in addition to verbally. The poem’s central conceit of the two lovers forming a union, however commonplace, is recognized as a challenge to rationality; to unpack this challenge, poem ruminates upon the mechanics of this conceit by re-creating it

[68] Blank, 42-43.

through its lines.[69] Here, again, are the lines with which I began:

> So they loved as love in twaine,
> Had the essence but in one,
> Two distincts Division none,
> Number there in love was slaine.
>
> Hearts remote, yet not asunder;
> Distance and no space was seene,
> Twixt the *Turtle* and his Queene;
> But in them it were a wonder.

If the middle two lines of the first stanza quoted above are enjambed and read as continuous, they count "one, / Two" and implicitly direct readers to enumerate the quantity of birds. This quantity quickly resists counting, though, as "twaine" becomes "one" and then again becomes "Two," albeit with "Division none." This fluctuation might compel readers to understand the birds as continuous with one another, but continuous quantity as a mode of understanding this new object surfaces only in the negative as the birds retain their syntactical separation: "Distance and no space was seene,/ Twixt the *Turtle* and his Queene." Instead of considering the Phoenix and the Turtledove grounded and physically stable objects, readers are to imagine them as a singular "wonder," a quantity that strains the distinction between discrete and continuous and its expression through language.[70] Number, used to apprehend the

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[69] Sidney sees complete love as able to “womanize a man” and make him an “Amazon” in “The Old Arcadia," ed, Katherine Duncan-Jones, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 18. Spenser channels Ovid, and describes the loving reunion of Amoret and Scudamor physiologically: "Had ye them seene, ye would have surely thought, / That they had been that faire *Hermaphrodite.*" See Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. Thomas P. Roche, Jr. (Penguin Books, 1987), 562.

[70] Karl Steel interprets Reason's claims at the end of the poem as demanding that "devotees recognize the Phoenix and Turtledove only as rational truths, even the greatest of truths" and suggests that "because the two birds are lost to the world, they can be experienced only as an absence to be longed for, so that longing itself is the experience of truth." See Karl Steel, 'The Phoenix and the Turtle':

individual birds, also applies to the syllables of accentual-syllabic meter. If we understand lines of verse to exist as a sequence of spoken accents given quantity by a continuous printed magnitude, the poem's "maimed" verse exposes how these syllables have been unnaturally forced together. The broken trochee containing "one" and anticipating "Two" implies a severed extension; the poem represents this space as a caesura separating the syllables and marking the line's end. However, it also locates the same space within the caesura in line 24, "Two distincts Division none." This caesura similarly splits a trochee, but the figured poetic line, as a printed record of this aural break in meter, contains the aporia without erasing it. In effect, metrical feet and lines here behave as both continuous and as discrete, as do the Phoenix and Turtledove.

The "wonder" of the material continuity between discrete elements also glimmers through the poem's compositional structure, which counterpoints within its lines the competing compositional affordances of meter, stanza, sentence, and image. The lines, as well as the relationship between them, emblematize the titular birds, who, the poem insists, must be seen as both in isolation and as coterminous with one another. The structure of the entire poem then tests readers' ability to categorize and distinguish. Earlier, I suggested that the catalectic lines are capped and isolated by their trochaic rhythm, as they both begin and end with stresses, and that we might "hear" these stresses as evoking the Phoenix's rebirth. Another way to apprehend these lines might regard them as unbroken, continuous magnitudes. They are perfectly

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Number There in Love was Slain," *Shakesqueer: A Queer Companion to the Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. Madhavi Menon, (Duke UP, 2011), 271-277, esp. 273.

symmetrical heptasyllabic sequences (/ `/ `/ `/) pivoting around a central unstressed syllable uniting the line's two halves. Each line, bounded by stressed "points," makes the central, unstressed syllable an unassuming agent of continuity. A similar effect is generated by the ABBA rhyme scheme, which marries separation with proximity by juxtaposing the typographic "distance" between the lines bounding the stanza against the couplet formed by the two internal lines. Even the end-stopped clauses, which characterize every line in this poem, perform the spectacle of "distincts" conjoining: each clause contributes to an enjambed, isolated, and undivided stanzaic sentence. If we consider these lines simply records of measured speech, we overlook the way their visual structure encapsulates and contains breaks, tears, and ruptures, and the way their organization on the page manipulates space and distance. Moreover, the poem notoriously contains three phases which are hard to untangle from one another; obviously, the "Threnos" composed by Reason that closes the poem is its own distinct artifact, and it is formally marked as such by bearing three lines in each stanza as opposed to four. At line 22, however, the poem begins transcribing the "anthem" sung at the birds' funeral, a song whose bounds cannot be easily determined, and might even encompass Reason's threnody. Though the poem initially installs as its governing conceit an artificial "rule" that equates the discrete with the continuous, after establishing this governing conceit, the poem breaks its rules in order to reflect upon how the rational materials of numbered poetry are inadequate to the particular task at hand. Reading each line as an emanation of speech, meter, and print presents readers attentive to the poem's array of compositional assets with the same epistemological conundrum faced by Reason, who can no longer rely on Number to

comprehend the objects it perceives but also cannot relinquish Number as an instrument of comprehension.

The problem encountered in the poem is not the existence of the Phoenix and Turtledove's twofold unity— it is the problem of simultaneously accepting this unity as fact and recognizing one's inability to rationally speak about it or capture it via (poetic) numbers. This sort of problem crops up in the poem at the same juncture as it does in Recorde's mathematical manual: at a point at which number cannot describe a relation of magnitudes. This example appears, as a diagrammatic, in Recorde's 1557 manual of arithmetic, *The Whetstone of Witte*. Written as a conversation between a Master and a Scholar, the *Whetstone* largely explains how to do different arithmetical problems; when offering instruction on how to find the square root of a given number, Recorde provides a sample scenario in which doing this might be useful:

There be. 2. tounes, as *Chichester* and *Yorke*, whiche lye Southe and Northe, and betwene them. 220. miles. A thirde toune as *Excester*, lieth plaine Weste frō *Chichester*. 120. miles. I desire to knowe the iuste distaunce of *Yorke* from *Excester*.

Scholar. I must set those. 3. tounes, in forme of a Triangle, with their distaunces: As here is represented. Where *A*. stādeth for *Excester*, *B*. for *Chichester*, & *C*. for *Yorke*.

And then accordyng to the rule, I multiplie. 120. squarely: and it maketh. 14400. Likewaies I dooe multiplie. 220. and it yeldeth. 48400.

These bothe nombers I shall ioyne in one, and so haue I. 62800. whose roote is very nigh. 250. miles and 3/5 of a mile.

And that is the true distaunce of *Yorke* and *Excester*.

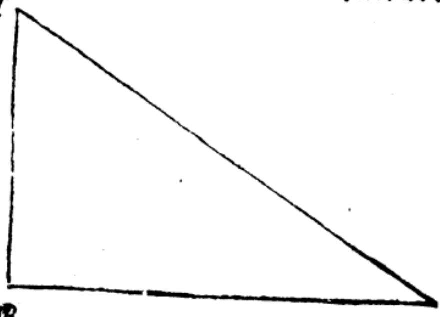

Figure 2.3: Sample problem from Recorde's *Whetstone of Witte* (1557) [71]

Prior to this example (and the few similar problems preceding it), the Master explained to the student the longhand way of determining a given number's square root. Now, we find the Scholar being tested on what he has learned. The geometrical figure presented alongside the transcribed conversation—a literal "speaking picture," if you will—helps us imagine the cities and place them schematically, like the vertices of the diagram from Billingsley's *Elements* above. This is, after all, a problem that involves the same set of constructions; it is one that requires the Pythagorean Theorem. Just as Euclid's proof cites earlier postulates, the "rule" cited by the

[71] Robert Recorde, *The Whetstone of Witte* (London: Printed by Ihon Kyngston, 1557), sig. N.ii.v, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

Scholar—"And then accordying to the rule, I multiplie 120. squarely…"— can be determined as the one Recorde himself establishes in *The Pathway* as his version of the theorem, because an earlier example a few pages before this one concerns a ladder leaning against a wall and so also features a right triangle. In this earlier problem, the Scholar pointedly invokes Recorde's geometry manual (in the process instructing readers to do so as well): "This figure doth occasio[n] me to reme[m]ber the 33. theoreme of the pathewaie" (in Recorde, who follows Euclid's own sequencing, the theorem is the thirty-third of the first book).[72] If we cheat and do the problem with a calculator, we find that the "true distaunce" between York and Excester is 250.59928172…, which confirms, to some extent, the Scholar's answer of "very nigh. 250 miles and 3/5 of a mile." Like this answer, however, ours is also an approximation, or even a representation, of the "true" value, made possible by virtue of the conventional ellipsis that follows it and indicates its infinite extension.

Recorde's ability to only express an answer "very nigh" to the exact one points at a concept silently lurking in the margins of the early modern concept of number: the "surd." Recorde introduces this term for irrational numbers to the English language; it derives from the Latin *surdus*, which adjectivally indicates that something is silent, mute, dumb, dull or indistinct.[73] Thomas Hobbes describes the "absurd" in human thought more generally as follows: "But when we Reason in Words of generall signification, and fall upon a generall inference which is false; though it be commonly

[72] Recorde, *Whetstone*, sig. N.i.^{r}.

[73] *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, June 2014), s. v. "surd, adj. and n.," http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/194860?rskey=wHocDj&result=1&isAdvanced=false (accessed August 13, 2014).

called Error, it is indeed an ABSURDITY, or senseless Speech." Examples Hobbes provides for the absurd vary, but retain in them the essence of something paradoxical, inexpressible, or self-contradictory: "a Round Quadrangle; or Accidents Of Bread In Cheese; or Immaterial Substances…"[74] Line *AC* measuring a surd as such implies an infinitesimally small, asymptotic space at its bounds, one that cannot be drawn or perceived and may only be gestured at by the Scholar's "very nigh." Similarly, the solution to this problem cannot be exactly expressed with numbers, even though problem involves arithmetic, because discrete number cannot express continuous quantity. It little surprises, then, that neither Recorde nor our calculators can pronounce the solution. Travis Williams describes Recorde's dialogues as "[requiring] a reader to construct and then inhabit an ethos appropriate to mathematical activity in its eloquential fittingness with the rhetorical aims of mathematics as a cultural and social practice." Though Recorde's project promotes what Williams calls "mathematical subjectivity," it also "contains from the start the likelihood of its failure, suggesting limits for dialogue as a viable form for mathematics."[75] While the Scholar and Master seem generally satisfied with their approach to this problem, the discrepancies indicated by the language of the master desiring to know the "iuste distaunce" between the cities and the Scholar responding with the "true distaunce" with an answer that can only be expressed as "very nigh" appears as a site of the kind of failure Williams describes. The "surd" names that which can be called "neither two

[74] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1994), 22-24.

[75] Travis D. Williams, "The Dialogue of Early Modern Mathematical Subjectivity," *Configurations* 21.1 (Winter, 2013): 53-84, esp. 54, 55.

nor one."

Centuries later, we recognize that in Recorde's problem, the line segments effectively serve as algebraic variables (the innovation is certainly not his), though algebra itself did not fully take root in England until later in the sixteenth century. As Jaqueline Stedall points out, the title *The Whetstone of Witte* playfully alludes to algebraic methods since "whetstone" in Latin was *cos*, and algebra in England also known by an anglicized variation of the Italian "regula cosa"— the "Rule of Cosse."[76] Significantly, Recorde's *Whestone* treats on cossic numbers immediately after his explication of the extraction of roots; cossic numbers are numbers attached to "certain figures" that indicate an operation that may be done to them as an unknown quantity. Importantly, Recorde notes that "those figures that serve in Cossike nobers bee the figures also of all irrationalle nombers" and as a result "serve in bothe places commodiously."[77] In the last section of the *Whetstone*, Recorde explains that "the *Square roote* of 10, or of 8. or of any nomber that is not square….is called a *Surde* nomber" and describes them as "nothyng els, but soche a nomber set for a roote, as can not be expressed by any other nomber absolute."[78] Recorde's investigation of surd numbers alongside a form of mathematics employing symbolic designations for different arithmetical functions suggests, according to Stedall, "at least the beginning of a generalized symbolic arithmetic."[79] Line *AC* as an unknown quantity, I argue, ceases being merely a geometrical figure and becomes, to some extent, a symbol

[76] Jacqueline A Stedall, *A Discourse Concerning Algebra : English algebra to 1685* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 41.
[77] Recorde, *Whetstone*, sig. S.i^{v}.
[78] Recorde, *Whetstone*, sig. Ll.iii^{r}.
[79] Stedall, 44.

employed in the arithmetical approach to the problem. It must necessarily serve as a symbol because it cannot, by virtue of being a geometrical entity known as an "irrational line," be a measurable and knowable object based on problem's starting conditions. Line *AC* thus portrays how an irrational line in geometry becomes a "surd" or irrational number in arithmetic, and in their access to the "unspeakable" and unspeaking surd, they shift mathematics more broadly into an abstract, figural register.

Without getting too technical, in geometry an irrational line suggests for early moderns a line incommensurable with a rational line. Simply put, a rational line is the first line drawn; it is merely the "given" magnitude against which other magnitudes, following geometrical construction, are considered. Billingsley, in his translation of Book X of *Elements*, describes it as "that right line so set forth" which may be "any line whatsoever, of what length, or shortnes ye will."[80] Both legs of triangle *ABC* would be rational lines, and through their relationship, line *AC* reveals itself as an irrational magnitude because it does not share a "common measure" with either of the other two lines. In arithmetic, this common measure would be understood as unity, or one, but proving incommensurability in geometry relies on geometrical constructions. Billingsley, like Recorde, wants to expand mathematical knowledge to a broader base of practical application, and so he elaborates on Euclid's own constructions by introducing numbers to Euclid. Billingsley confesses at the start of Book X that this longest and most complex section of Euclid's work has caused "many of the well learned" to complain of its "darkenes and difficultie." These scholars, Billingsley recounts, have found it "impossible to attayine the right and full understanding of this

[80] Billingsley, fol. 230^{r}.

booke, without the ayde and help of some other knowledge and learnyng," specifically "the knowledge of that more secret and subtill part of Arithmetike commonly called Algebra."[81]

Though Billingsley states that Euclid "is himself a sufficient teacher and instructer and needeth not the helpe of any other," and his later translation of the postulate proving this definition is true to the geometrical construction employed by Euclid, for the moment he attempts to assuage the book's "hardnes and obscuritie" by resorting to how "easily sene" the concept of commensurability is in number rather than in magnitude, since "all numbers are commensurable one to another":

> And although Euclide in this definition comprehendeth purposedly, only magnitudes which are continuall quantities, as are lines, superficies, and bodies, yet undoubtedly the explication of this and such like places, is aptly to be sought of numbers as well rationall and irrationall. For that all quantities commensurable have that proportion the one to the other, which number hath to numbers. In numbers therefore, 9 and 12 are commensurable, because there is one common measure which measureth them both, namely, the number 3.[82]

All numbers "have one common measure which measure them both, if none other, yet have they unitie, which is a common part and measure to all numbers."[83] The analogy to number to explain commensurable magnitudes, though, would obviously fall apart simply by using 9 and 13 instead of 9 and 12 as the example. "Unitie," we were to understand from Book I, is "no number" yet behaves as a number in order to account for the commensurability of all numbers. One is like a point in that it is "indivisible,"

[81] Billingsley, fol. 228^{v}.
[82] Billingsley, fol. 228^{r}-228^{v}.
[83] Billingsley, fol. 228^{r}.

but not all magnitudes are commensurable because they do not share a point as a common measure, since points do not carry any measure. Our translator here reveals his awareness that his proof diverges from Euclid's original designs, but finds his application of number to magnitude "apt" as it might help in the explication of "rationall and irrationall" numbers, an explication of which remains sought. The moves and gestures Billingsley makes in this brief elaboration of Euclid's definitions do not damage or corrupt his translation; if anything they help bring Euclid's difficult work into conversation with prevailing trends in early modern mathematics and geometry. Book X deals with irrational magnitudes, and Billingsley here recognizes an opportunity for the book to help readers and scholars in wrestling with a perplexing problem.

Early modern encounters with surds, as byproducts of arithmetical encounters with irrational magnitudes, I should note, were not traumatic glimpses into the unknown, but rather inconvenient, "theorike" problems that were often sidestepped. Practically-oriented mathematicians like Recorde and Leonard Digges found ways to excuse them or work around them, either by providing approximations or techniques for reducing them to integers.[84] This is where Recorde's engagement with the problem of measured magnitudes, then, differs from Shakespeare's: rather than burying the confusion in diagrammatic ambiguity, "The Phoenix and Turtle" willfully throws its

[84] In *Pantometria* (London: Printed by Henrie Bynneman, 1571), mathematician Leonard Digges sidesteps the emerging problem of surds: "Now because long working with irrational numbers, may breede confusion in such as are not perfect in the rules of Algebra, ye may by the rule of proportion… reduce surd numbers to integers, although not so exactly as the subtilitie of geometricall demonstration requireth (considering these cordes cannot precisely be expressed in rationall numbers) yet for any Mechanicall operation or manual mensuration, the difference shall not be sensible" (sig. U.i.[r], accessed on EEBO, July 6, 2013)

confusion to the foreground. By resolving the catalexis in line 29 and giving voice to that otherwise immeasurable missing foot, the poem exposes its poetic lines as chimeras, as artifacts derived equally from numerical metrical patterns, stanzaic ordering, and magnitudinal extension. Upon the death of Number, the poem ponders the central issue of collapsing discrete quantities —two birds, or metrical feet— into a continuous one. Shortly after the death of Number, the poem reports the alarm generated the two birds' rationally untenable union by declaring Reason "in itself confounded."

As hinted at above, the stanza introducing Reason takes the metrical aberration introduced by "Hearts remote, yet not asunder" as an organizing principle, and contains only lines bearing eight syllables. The polysyllabic feminine rhymes at each line's end resolve the pattern of catalexis the poem had been exercising. As it is the only complete stanza that employs this distinct metrical scheme, it also appears to offer an alternative frame and with it a different perspective, as does the formally distinct "threnos" being delivered in Reason's voice. Unlike most of the poem's lines, which close themselves off metrically but are entangled with one another stanzaically, the lines of this stanza all bear caesuras at their ends, with no feet or syllables or phantom limbs left dangling in the no-man's land of metrical excess. Readers witness formalization allowing for lines of poetry describing the birds, such as "Two distincts, Division none," being discarded and replaced by recuperative lines conveying the effect the birds inflict upon rational faculties.[85] Reason cannot brook incomplete

[85] Patricia Parker similarly suggests that the "linear or sequential form" of the poem is "also a part of the recuperation of reason, a placing of partitions or walls against something which threatens to obliterate them." See Patricia Parker, "Anagogic Metaphor: Breaking Down the Wall of Partition," in

trochees, or individual syllables linking separate halves, or lines that renew without completing, just as it cannot comprehend the mystery of the Phoenix and Turtle. Numbers should not stretch and distend, and Reason's stanza resists the way number, and by extension accented syllables, have been infused with "magnitude's property." The final line of the stanza, "Simple were so well compounded," alludes to a strange alchemy wherein individual units are "compounded" and indistinguishable from one another; this alchemy might describe not only the Phoenix and Turtle's union, but also the way the poem uses metrical number and spatial composition in order to make its syllables unite with one another at the level of line.

Reason composes the "Threnos" comprising the final fifteen lines of the poem, and the metrical variations introduced by this poem eulogize "Truth" while locating artistic craft in a realm distinct from it. The thrust of its composition, written in five tercets, is that because of the death of the Phoenix and the Turtle, or maybe because of their interrelated status while alive, Truth and Beauty have also died:

> Truth may seeme, but cannot be,
> Beautie bragge, but tis not she,
> Truth and Beautie buried be. (ll. 62-64).

What does it mean for "Truth" to die, in the context of a metaphysical poem about an impossible union? If we think about how Recorde's Master inquires after the "iuste distaunce" between Chichester and Yorke, we might conclude that the "Truth" that Reason charges with mere seeming doubles as the "true distaunce" the Scholar offers

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Centre and Labyrinth: Essays in Honour of Northrop Frye, ed. Eleanor Cook, et. al. (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1983): 38-58, esp. 42.

as an approximate solution. With Number dead, or at least being actively refashioned into a line, Reason, whose essential function is counting and comparing, has cause to doubt itself, and in doing so it forces readers to decide whether the poem before them is composed in terms of observable, distinguishable units of print or continuous spoken language, or whether these lines should be measured by their accents or by their geometrical proportions. The poem's unconventional artificiality—James VI might include it as an example of a newly invented form—effectively enables it to present conceits not reliant on stable referents, just as mathematicians embrace mathematical concepts without obvious real-world grounding.

Despite an increasing social apprehension of this move towards abstraction, "The Phoenix and Turtle" hesitates before the epistemological consequences of taking up a purely artificial mode of knowledge production. It is telling that Reason's resolution at the end of the poem offers yet another material artwork, an "urne," as a monument to the Phoenix and Turtle:

> To this vrne let those repaire,
> That are either true or faire,
> For these dead Birds, sigh a prayer. (l. 65-67)

The physical, deictic instruction, "To this urne let those repaire," presumably indicates the well-wrought Threnos or even Shakespeare's highly "artificial" poem in general; turning to it at the poem's end underscores the necessity for art when faced with experiences beyond the bounds of rationality. The additional directive to "sigh a prayer" imagines the bodily encounter with the urn, the poem, and the line—if the

poem is an urn, the act of reading it might be analogized with "sighing." When Donne revisits the mystery of the phoenix in "The Canonization," saying "The Phoenix ridle hath more wit / By us, we two being one, are it," he offers a similar conceit with respect to the recourse of true lovers in the face of material constraints:

> We can dye by it, if not live by love,
>   And if unfit for tombes and hearse,
> Our legends bee, it will be fit for verse;
>   And if no peece of Chronicle we prove,
>   We'll build in sonnets pretty roomes;
>   As well a well wrought urne becomes
> The greatest ashes, as half-acre tombes,
>   And by these hymns, all shall approve
>   Us *Canoniz'd* for Love.[86]

In his characteristically uneven lines, Donne gradually decreases the metrical "size" of his lines from the decasyllabic lines that start each stanza to the trimeter lines that close them. In the middle of each stanza, however, rests a tetrameter couplet which artificially unites the stanza around two lines that not only share a metrical rule but also a rhyme. Every other rhyme in the stanza is kept apart by either an indentation or a metrical shift; even the line rhyming with "roomes" and "becomes"—"The greatest ashes, as half-acre tombes"—is dislocated. Attaining this tacit harmony in the midst of shifting terrain, Donne seems to suggest, is like claiming a "pretty room" within a troubled world. Whereas in Shakespeare, poetic lines glimpse into the irrational, looking beyond the bounds of reason and into a space of disorder and chaos, in Donne, lines resolve a worldly disturbance recreated in meter into an apotheosis of rhyme and

[86] John Donne, "The Canonization," *Poems, by J. D.,* sig. Dd^{v}-Dd2^{v}.

harmony. Donne and Shakespeare's distinct treatments of an impossible union that cannot be characterized by numbers reveal their poetic lines to be potential tools for engaging with the material limits of human perception. These lines, far from merely organizing language or emanating from the envisioned sound of a poem, pressure readers to look beyond words and into the matter with which words convey ideas. Whether with trepidation or placid optimism, their poetics figure transcendence by way of the figurative and conceptual density of the material line.

"The Phoenix and the Turtle," like Donne's poetry in the previous chapter, demonstrates how poetic lines chart a course for thinking through, around, and despite language. Words in these poems, because they are organized into lines, do not just point to ideas, but insist on the grounding of these ideas in human experience. Shakespeare's poem does not simply declare that Reason has met its limit at the union of two into one, but systematically enacts reason's inability to account for this union by allowing the material bodies of its lines to both conform with and contest the system of numeration that distinguishes them into lines. As in Donne's poetry, these lines enable language to figure forth ideas that words alone cannot compass—but Shakespeare, like Donne, allows his lines, and the rules by which these lines implicitly announce their poetic function, to materialize and remind us that such rules are imposed upon lived experience as much as they are drawn from it. The case of the irrational line, which charts a course toward a conception of number entirely divorced from sensory perception, exemplifies how a physical line that has merged with a concept of number, a rule that has become a ruler, can both observe and perpetuate a rational system but implicitly (or blatantly) pronounce this rational system as confined

to human endeavor. Art, emblematized by the urn at the end of "The Phoenix and Turtle," is presented as a means to contemplate the limits of human understanding in the face of ideas that humans cannot compass. The line, as a purposive intervention of rational processes geared at giving ideas form, but which nevertheless always maintains its status as an embodied figure for these processes, thus becomes how poets imagine the space beyond reason's reach while remaining nevertheless circumscribed by reason's rules. As my study of the line moves into its second phase, which concerns the dramatic line and its relationship to the production of space, the capacity of lines to foster the experience of being both within and without, inside and outside of the rules, will be central to my understanding of dramatic representation.

CHAPTER 3

The Dramatic Line

The first half of this dissertation argued that poets in early modern England recognized the line as the medium of their artistic expression, and used their lines in order to promote new ways of thinking through language. Lines of poetic verse, I argued, begin to be understood not merely as recordings of speech or as “scores” for poems aspiring toward musicality, but also as graphical marks capable of varied and intricate new forms of poetic making at least partly aligned with visual culture. As discussed in Chapter 1, the orthographically indicated quantity of a line of verse, especially when read from the perspective of classically trained humanists, was primarily a way to announce the written poem as organized around sonic duration. As poetry’s medium increasingly became the page, however, the visuality of the printed line began to challenge the rules imposed upon it by aurality—the written line became a figure, and became capable of making other figures. Chapter 2, building from this apprehension of the poetic line as a visual artifact, explored how the association of the visualized line with a system of measurement, metrical “numbers,” produces an artifact that interrogates the relationships between matter and form. In both chapters, I find that poetic lines promote habits of thought, but also expose those habits and make them vulnerable them to experiential reconsideration. A poem’s numerical ordering system, as in “The Phoenix and Turtle,” thus becomes by way of its lines a challenge to assumptions about the processes by which things are brought into knowledge. These

lines demonstrate how applying even the slightest self-reflective pressure to rationally-ordered and abstracted representational systems, such as the metrical scheme imposed on language in order to generate poetry, reveals these systems' detachment from the insuperable strangeness of lived experience.

The second half of my dissertation departs from the poetic line but brings the same bifocal approach to the figure of the line to bear on a formal entity that I call "the dramatic line." Whereas my discussions of poetry aimed to restore significance to the textuality and fixity of the line as a written figure, the next two chapters seek to tease the line off of the printed page and imagine it as an active process in the buzzing atmosphere of the early modern playhouse. Despite the inversion of direction—lines pulled off pages rather than placed upon them—my readings of dramatic lines continue my investigation of how lines become the essential medium of literary art, as they announce literary language's discursive separation from everyday speech by observing unspoken rules. These rules might amount to actors speaking in meter, but as I will argue, the dramatic line is a separate entity from the verse line in many respects. As in my analysis of poetry, the lines undergirding theatrical composition themselves can potentially betray, or even contest, the rules they are charged with observing if their presence is felt. In this sense, these rules coordinating the theatrical spectacle—namely, its script—would be made apparent if an actor is perceived as obviously speaking in lines. Just as seeing lines on the printed page compels readers to treat poetry as a unique discourse with its own expectations, apprehending the lineated quality of theatrical dialogue fashions a representational environment engaging habits for reception peculiar to theatrical discourse. Paralleling the aims of my first chapter,

which understood the verse line anew by redefining it with attention to material inscription, this second half, which reevaluates the role of the line in theatrical representation, begins by reassessing what exactly our referent is when we describe theatrical dialogue in terms of lines.

My study of the dramatic line has aims similar to those of my chapters on the poetic line in that I endeavor here to broaden critical approaches of literary form using recent scholarship on material and textual culture. Whereas my work on the poetic line explored in part how analytical bibliography could enrich encounters with poetic texts, these chapters bring important scholarship on the collaborative practices of early modern playing companies to bear on readings of early modern plays. My definition of the dramatic line thus begins with the insights provided by Simon Palfrey and Tiffany Stern's *Shakespeare in Parts* (2007), which persuasively explores how "the physicality of [the] circulating, multiplying part… might modify our very picture of a 'play-text.'"[1] Actors' parts, which were distributed among a company's players prior to a performance, consisted solely of an actor's speeches and his cues, or the last few words his onstage interlocutor would be speaking. Surveying an assortment of surviving actors' parts from the period, Palfrey and Stern unpack how actors and playing companies must have used these documents every day in their professional activities. The only complete surviving actor's part from the period is the part of Orlando from a version of Robert Greene's *Orlando Furioso* (1595). The reproduction of a section of it below (fig. 3.1) gives an indication of its organization.

[1] Simon Palfrey and Tiffany Stern, *Shakespeare in Parts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 7.

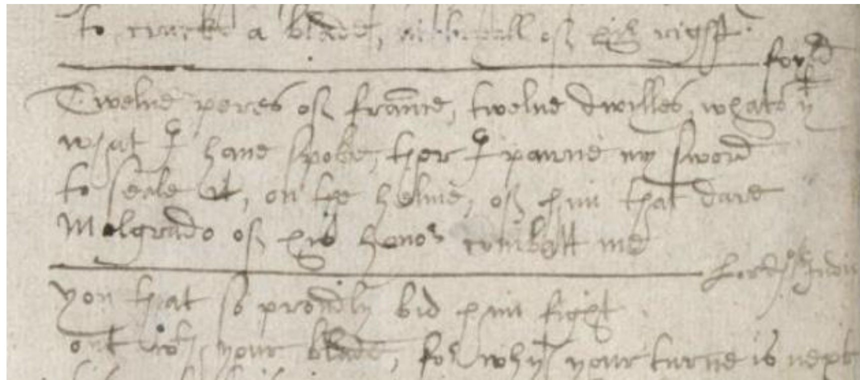

Figure 3.1: Detail of actors' part from *Orlando Furioso* (1596)[2]

My interest in actors' parts rests largely upon those horizontal inscriptions dividing the actor's speeches into sections. These lines, called "cue tails," are how an actor knows to stop speaking—when Flute in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is reprimanded for speaking "all [his] part at once, cues and all" (*MND* 3.1.100), his error suggests a failure to apprehend the function of these inscriptions. The tail, Palfrey and Stern explain, "gestures toward anything and everything that might be said by other actors in between one's own speeches" and also explicitly "parcel[s] the blocs of speeches off from one another, almost like self-sufficient entities."[3] As lines, these cue-tails are spatial figures for temporal duration provided only to actors, but it is important to remember that they are also involved in the composition of plays. James Marino, digesting the information provided by Palfrey and Stern, looks to cues in order to

[2] *Copy of the part of Orlando in Robert Green's play Orlando Furioso*, MSS 1, Article 138, 01^{r}, digital photograph of manuscript, from Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project, http://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-138/08r.html

[3] Palfrey and Stern, 84.

better understand how plays were revised. Actors' parts and theatrical plots, Marino explains, afford opportunities for "continuing incremental revisions" because of the absences introduced by cue-tails; changes could be made to a single actor's lines quite easily because these revisions did not have to disturb the cues required by other actors. Parts and plots were distinct from the censored manuscript and the book-keeper's control text, then, because whereas those texts represent "a plan for a performance, the play in theory," the documents actually used and engaged with by the players were "the script put into practice."[4] Adopting a similar set of assumptions, Paul Menzer's analysis of the multiple iterations of *Hamlet* observes how "the division of a play into its various parts and its reassembly on stage through the medium of its cues" were vital steps in "the process of a script from playwright to player." For Menzer, "cues are not just dialogue; they are a collaborative apparatus"—they are not only the ligatures of scripted onstage interactions, but are "of paramount importance to theatrical continuity within a regime of part distribution."[5] Understanding cues as "an essential performance technology," Menzer's book studies the cues in *Hamlet* as a way to "trace textual divergence and alliance among its multiple texts."[6] Studies like Marino's and Menzer's demonstrate, at the very least, that cues were important elements of composition, and that even in scenarios where a single author produced a

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[4] James Marino, *Owning William Shakespeare: The King's Men and Intellectual Property* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 79, 89. Marino's close analysis reveals how different character names could be considered either "loosely or tightly bound" into a play—as a text and as an event produced and reproduced in theaters—depending on how many different actors said the name out loud onstage. The sense of parts "binding" names to a play offers a way to think about how parts bind to one another and, in the process of binding, introduce stability, though not permanence, to the re-producibility of a play.

[5] Paul Menzer, *The Hamlets: Cues, Qs, and Remembered Texts* (Newark, NJ: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 33, 35.

[6] Menzer, *Hamlets*, 36

stable playtext to be embodied onstage, the text itself was first cut-up into parts (perhaps not even by the playwright himself) making it so each actor would only get partial glimpses of the scenes in which they would participate. In a professional culture featuring multiple plays a week and few opportunities for rehearsal, cues might the then understood as players' and playwrights' primary defense against contingency.[7]

Beyond novel interventions on editorial practice, explorations of the professional mechanics of theater can impact our understanding of dramatic representation and even the idea of what exactly we mean when we call something a "play."[8] Over roughly the past decade, scholars have offered substantive and transformative engagements with material elements as varied as the spaces, costuming, sounds, and smells of the theater, but I choose to focus on the lines as an integral, and as *the* integrative, aspect of the logic of live performance.[9] Reconstructing the dramatic line on the basis of the cues which bind it into the

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[7] As Stern points out in *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), "there is no evidence to indicate that more than one group rehearsal was normal" (77).

[8] Terms such as "text" and "performance" have become increasingly destabilized in recent scholarship, and new critical approaches attempt, following Barbara Hogdon and W.B. Worthen's discussion in "Renaissance and/or Early Modern Drama and/or Theater and/or Performance: A Dialogue," *Renaissance Drama* 40 (2012): 19-28, to take up "a gaze that began with and on the material theater" (28). Worthen, in his *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), argues that "regarding performance as realization represses the institutional practices already inscribed in the theatre, in gesture and intonation, in the body and its behaviors, the textualizing formalities that render theatre significant. To do so is to disqualify the processes that produce meaning in the theatre as legitimate objects of attention and scrutiny. A variety of such practices intervene between the text and its stage production, much as they do between the text and its production as reading experience or critical activity" (169).

[9] See Erika T. Lin, *Shakespeare and the Materiality of Performance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Bruce R. Smith *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-factor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Jonathan Gil Harris, *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), especially ch. 4, p. 119-140. See also *Shakespeare's Theatres and the Effects of Performance*, eds. Farah Karim-Cooper and Tiffany Stern (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2013).

collaborative practice of theater, I offer a reappraisal of the role of the line with respect to theatrical form. In a recent chapter specifically addressing lines, Menzer notes that "the difficulty of distinguishing what a line *is* in performance seems inversely proportionate to—or the generative cause for—the amount of attention it attracts from both prosodists and performers, between whom there is a general consensus that early modern playwrights—Shakespeare in particular—made meaning on, around, and through the line."[10] Menzer's thoughtful critique of the line as a locus for interpreting theater argues that "attention to the line holds us hostage to protocols of type largely unrelated to embodied fictions." Underscoring the discrepancy between the "graphic" or "physical" lines that populate actors' parts (such as the ones seen in the figure above) and the "poetic" or "metaphysical" lines to which we refer when we talk about "lines of dialogue," Menzer explains that "the transition from manuscript to print magnified one kind of line [the poetic/metaphysical] at the expense of another [the graphic/physical]."[11] Menzer's binary, while certainly useful in reintroducing the material conditions of theatrical practice into considerations of the line, seems to treat these two aspects of "lines" involved in theater as mutually exclusive. Though he acknowledges that "the line in the early modern period had not yet achieved escape velocity, had not detached from its physical origins to attain the metaphysical status it attains today," Menzer does not explore how during a theatrical event the "text" of a play as we understand it (the one with everyone's speeches included) symbiotically adheres to a hypothetical document consisting entirely of graphic lines and short

[10] Paul Menzer, "Lines," *Early Modern Theatricality,* ed. Henry S. Turner (New York: Oxford University Press): 113-132, esp. 113-114.
[11] Menzer, "Lines," 115, 121.

cues.[12] All speeches issued on stage—not just verse speech, but prose dialogue, songs, and offstage echoes—exist for players in the company in far more iterations as graphical lines, because only one actor would actually have gotten the words. In addition to Menzer's "graphic line" and "metaphysical line," then, I propose a new category, "the dramatic line," pointing to the material and technical functions performed by lines dramaturgically and representationally. These lines are understood first as being bounded by cues, and as such are elements of a collaborative practice that gives shape to the space wherein a theatrical event might occur.

With the dramatic line, I aim to restore the figure of the line to our understanding of theatrical form, but not as a component of poetic verse. My readings are therefore less interested in the poetics of theatrical speech than in the techniques used by playwrights scripting language that change the way a speaker is perceived—openly speaking in verse, in this sense, might become a marker of affectation. Thinking in terms of dramatic lines leads us to imagine theater as an event circumscribed by rules, albeit flexible and invisible ones, and consider theatrical authorship a negotiation between a written blueprint and live, embodied action. My opening salvo in defining the dramatic line, then, is to declare that what we typically understand as a "line from Shakespeare," such as "Now is the winter of our discontent," is *not* a line in terms of the formal logic of early modern theater *as* theater. It is a *segment* of a line—in my understanding, Richard Gloucester/ Richard Burbage's "line" here extends from "Now is the winter of our discontent" through to the end of the soliloquy, which closes with "Dive, thoughts, down to my soul, here

[12] Menzer, "Lines," 116.

Clarence comes!" (*R3* 1.1.1-41). Even the conventions for citing this speech resist my assertion (this constitutes roughly forty 'lines,' not one!), I insist on this perspective, however, because onstage, the whitespace pauses between Richard's lines, even perfectly iambic pentameter ones, would be challenging to apprehend during a live performance (unless you are the insufferable sort who brings a copy of the play along). As far as a live audience is concerned, Richard starts at "Now" and ends at "comes!" without interruption; for the duration, the actor is left to his own devices to recall and deliver the speech. His line's final word, in the technical logic of theatrical production, is a cue for the actor playing Clarence to enter the stage, at which point the actor playing Richard is prompted to issue another line: "Brother, good day. What means this armed guard / That waits upon your grace?" (*R3* 1.1.42-43). Despite the line break, this enjambed phrase is the first complete "line of dialogue" in the play. Accordingly, the actor playing Clarence would likely only have seen something like "-----------comes!" followed by a prompt to enter, and then "--------------your grace?" at the top of his part.

The dramatic line is an essential component of what makes early modern theatrical performance distinct from other kinds of *extempore* performances that are not prepared or speeches that are not studied. The line's status as a line, as speech bounded by responsibilities to other players, becomes evident not only through cues, however, but also through the practical techniques players employ in order to make sure everyone arrives upon their cues with punctuality. The dramatic line fosters and is predicated upon memorization. Evelyn Tribble's investigation of how companies of players could memorize and perform such a great number of plays at so rapid a pace

describes a “distributed or dynamic-systems approach” wherein the manifold material practices of playing “[point] the way to a model of group practice that emphasizes its potential productiveness and creativity, its ways of bringing about the ‘artful accomplishment’ of a particular time-constrained task.” [13] Tribble suggests that early modern theater companies turned to "repetition and the use of patterns of tropes and figures" to aid recall. Mnemonic features like iambic pentameter, rhyme schemes, and patterned rhetorical habits – such as euphuism—help constitute what Tribble describes as a "framework not just for memory, but also for *fluent forgetting*," a situation in which actors can misremember lines but proceed without halting or stumbling because they might substitute something formally equivalent in the place of what they have forgotten.[14] Cues join the mnemonic and rhythmic aspects of scripted dialogue as elements of “distributed cognition” in the early modern theater and are in this sense are an element of the “glue of coordination.”[15] The diverse assortment of linguistic features that mark language issued on stage as differentiated from everyday speech relies on the cues bounding this speech to ensure that this differentiation persists; inversely, the cues themselves require those linguistic features as mnemonic aids for speakers so that they might remember to say their cues. A crucial quality of the dramatic line, then, is that they enable actors speaking them to adhere to one another

[13] Evelyn Tribble, *Cognition in the Globe: Attention and Memory in Shakespeare’s Theater* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 15, 27, 67.

[14] Tribble, 72. Worthen notes that “memorial reconstruction— or, more fairly, the transmission of 'texts' by non-textual means— is not only an essential element of theatre, but a multiple and variable one, intrinsic to theatre and a culture on the border between orality and literacy, and still intrinsic to an institution fundamentally reliant on oral means of production." W. B. Worthen, "Prefixing the Author: Print, Plays, and Performance," *A Companion to Shakespeare and Performance*, eds. Barbara Hodgdon and W. B. Worthen (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005):198-230, 220. Tribble also notes a “hybrid system” in which “the demand for textual fidelity is mapped onto a strong residue of orality” (74).

[15] Tribble, 58.

as professionals undertaking a collaborative task. A fundamental goal of this task is the establishment and reconfirmation of a boundary between actors and spectators.

Importantly, cue-bounded dramatic lines were a technology that was not invisible or unknown to theater audiences. Palfrey and Stern point that the cue was "the thing that often defined the actor in popular parlance" and cite anti-theatricalist Samuel Harnett's usage of the term "cue-fellows" to denigrate players by referencing their acting from "moment to moment, dangerously unbeholden to any visibly unifying script."[16] Rather than presuming actors as "unbeholden" to a unifying plan, references to cues and actors' parts on the stage and elsewhere suggest instead that cue-bounded dialogue marked actors as cooperative producers of precarious system always vulnerable to unexpected or uncontrollable disruptions. Shakespeare's Sonnet 23 uses the image of a "sad actor set beside his part" to convey a lover's anxiety at finding himself unexpectedly wordless. In *Much Ado about Nothing*, Beatrice's line directed at Claudio, "Speak, Count, 'tis your cue" (*MA* 2.1.305) after Don Pedro has won Hero for him ironically makes the word "cue" Claudio's *actual* cue—the actor's silence here inheres in the play-text. The explicit nature of Beatrice's prodding, then, for the attuned audience brings into relief not only how Claudio is himself a sad actor, but also how thoroughly manipulated he is and can be by theatrical technologies. Even as early as Nathaniel Woodes's *The Conflict of Conscience* (1581), plays reflect upon their own technology as a metaphorical resource, such as when the character Hypocrisy laughs at its own ability to choreograph the entrance of Avarice and Tyranny into the world: "But if that neither of these twayne, can to my trayne them

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[16] Stern and Palfrey, 87.

wynde, / Then, at his Cue (to play his part, [*sic*] doth Tiranny begynne."[17] These mentions of cues position them as self-reflexive "material metaphors," since referring to cues exposes the context and conditions within which theatrical representation can function—cues are central to the peculiar idiom of professional theatricality. If, as stated above, a main function of the dramatic line is to separate actors from audience, dramatic lines that "speak" as lines by metatheatrically laying bare the logic of professional theater threaten, or at least test, this presumed boundary without ruining the theatrical event. Charged with being both containers for theatrical spectacle and means by which the protocols of enclosure are practically redefined, the dramatic line negotiates for the late Elizabethan play a productively unsettled theatrical space located somewhere between a static script and unfettered, embodied action.

As a potentially volatile instrument with which players practice their craft, the dramatic line loosens the tethers between the space of a play and its material circumstances. The dramatic line may not only articulate an imaginary environment, but can also subject it to subversive disruptions without collapsing the space wherein the "play" happens—the space of a "play" does not terminate, in other words, at the bounds of the stage or the limits of the imagined setting. Instead of institutionalizing a dichotomy between "stage" and "audience," the dramatic line generates a three-dimensional, participatory, and protean theatrical environment. In this chapter, I explain how theatrical form and meaning by necessity incorporate the organization of language into lines—or, in other words, how early modern theatricality is a function of

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[17] Nathaniel Woodes, *An excellent new commedie intituled, The Conflict of Conscience...* (London: Printed by Richard Bradocke, 1581), sig. Dij^{r}, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

artificial unit I call "the dramatic line." After briefly situating my reappraisal of the line amid recent critical examinations of the nature of the early modern theatrical space, I will turn to separate readings from plays by John Lyly and George Peele as examples of how their dramatic lines expose the logic of early modern theatricality as one that transports the audience into spaces that, depending on the play, may be illuminating or disorienting, coherent or fantastical. Despite their diversity, these theatrical spaces all indicate the concerted elevation of audience experience as part of a mode of representation founded upon dramatic lines.

Making Theatrical Space

Plays, by which I specifically mean coordinated happenings put on by a company of actors for/before paying or audiences, are products of labor that skillfully organizes theatrical materials; players, from playwrights to prompters to actors, were in this sense laborers. Douglas Bruster, in his study of early modern quotation as a kind of playwriting *bricolage*, discusses the handiwork-oriented backgrounds of many playwrights:

> Henry Chettle was the son of a dyer; Robert Greene, a saddler; Jonson's stepfather was a bricklayer—as was Middleton's own father; Kyd was the son of a scrivener; Marlowe was fathered by a shoemaker, Munday by a draper, Shakespeare by a sometime glover and whittawer, and Webster by a cartwright.[18]

[18] Douglas Bruster, *Quoting Shakespeare: Form and Culture in Early Modern Drama* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 24.

The sense that many players had backgrounds in material and commercial crafts is amplified by the prologue to Robert Wilson's 1584 comedy, *The Three Ladies of London,* which asks audiences to "come and behold our wares, & buy them all." Beyond merely referring to theatrical spectacles as "wares," Wilson's appeal takes the perspective that they might be taken up as aesthetic crafts at the local market: "Then if our wares shall seeme to you, well wouen, good & fine / VVe hope we shall your custome haue againe another time."[19] Keeping this in mind, I understand the mechanics of playcraft in relation to the "patchily written" textuality of theatrical production: a commercial "play" may be apprehended as a putting together of various elements—parts, people, properties, etc. — before the eyes and ears of a live audience.[20] Henry Turner, echoing Bruster's emphasis on the commercial backgrounds of many playwrights, proposes that "we must adjust our sense of the playwright's epistemological presuppositions" and imagine the playwright "less as a modern 'author'…than as a figure who is more similar to the contemporary surveyor, engineer, mason, and carpenter than we might expect."[21] One way to re-imagine the theatrical composition, then, is not in terms of mimetic artworks like painting or sculpture, which Lomazzo explains are essentially similar in that "both of them [intend] nothing else, but to resemble things as neere to the *life* as may be" but rather more like architecture, which does not strive for direct imitation of objects in the real

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[19] Robert Wilson, *A right excellent and famous comedy, called The three ladies of London* (London: Printed by Roger VVarde, 1584), sig Aiir, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com.

[20] Tiffany Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 2.

[21] Henry S. Turner, *The English Renaissance Stage: Geometry, Poetics, and the Practical Spatial Arts 1580-1630* (New York: Oxford UP, 2006), 14-15.

world but rather material and perspectival reconstructions of relations, structures, and patterns.[22] In other words, dramaturgy participates in the measured, rational coordination sought in aesthetic crafts in a variety of media, including, as explored earlier, poetry. A building is not evaluated in terms of its verisimilitude, after all, because ultimately its aims during the Renaissance are to materialize traditions of hierarchy and conceptions of cosmological order. I am not suggesting that verisimilitude is unimportant to theatrical representation, but that in the appraisal of theatrical craft, stage representations function both in terms of the construction of images of people and places and also in terms of imitating conceptions of social and political organization.

As witnessed during my discussions of poetry, literary invention during the late Elizabethan period started perceiving the imposition of abstract, rational organizational patterns in art as impeded or obstructed in part by the materials with which artists worked. The idea was not new with Elizabethans, but their anxieties about it led to artwork that specifically engaged or at least encountered this problem. The classical forefather of architecture, Vitruvius, explains that architecture consists of "that which signifies and that which is signified"—the signified is "the thing proposed about which we speak" and the signifier is "the demonstration unfolded in systems of precepts."[23] Vitruvius's attention to *demonstration* via *precepts*—apparently a progression of impressions filtered through intellectual experience—finds rebirth in the work of humanist polymath Leone Battista Alberti, who posits in his *De re*

[22] Lomazzo, 5.
[23] Vitruvius, *On Architecture*, trans. Frank Granger (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931), 7.

aedificatoria, that

> The whole Feate of Architecture in buildyng, consisteth in Lineamentes, and in Framyng. And the whole power and skill of Lineamentes, tendeth to this: that the right and absolute way may be had, of Coaptying and ioyning Lines and angels: by which, the face of the building or frame, may be comprehended and concluded.[24]

Alberti then explains that "lineaments" can be understood as "the certain and constant prescribing, conceived in mind: made in lines and angles: and finished with a learned mind and wit."[25] For John Dee, Alberti's translator (and, importantly, excerpter), the materials of the construction are secondary to the mental prescription. Dee, whose focus in his "Mathematicall Preface" is the utility of mathematics, compliments Alberti for recognizing architecture's "Mathematicall perfection" since "lineaments" imply building "by certain order, number, form, figure, and *Symmetrie* mental" with "all natural and sensible stuffe set apart."[26] For Elizabethans, a schism had formed between the intellectual architect and the manual laborer, or artisan.[27] For them, architecture imagines a final product (the building), which, mainly in its "face" or façade, illustrates in a "comprehended and concluded" manner the conceptual principles guiding the project. This approach to architecture became a "fashionable

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[24] Dee, sig. D4^{r}.

[25] Dee, sig. L3^{v}.

[26] Dee, sig. D4^{r}.

[27] Mark Girouard, *Elizabethan Architecture: Its Rise and Fall, 1540-1640* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2009), 51-52. Mario Carpo notes that the "Renaissance architect was no longer required to matriculate in any guild, as he was no longer an artisan but an artist" and also that "the techniques of representing a plan (drawings or three-dimensional models) changed because of an increasing separation and estrangement between design and building site." See Mario Carpo, "The Making of the Typographical Architect," *Paper Palaces: The Rise of the Renaissance Architectural Treatise*, eds. Vaughan Hart with Peter Hicks (New Haven: Yale UP, 1998): 158-169, esp. 158-159.

interest" for humanist courtiers, for whom devising and drawing "plots" was akin to writing poetry or practicing the arts of calculation; for example, in a letter to a friend, Sir Philip Sidney writes that in addition to practicing at soldiering, one "should do well to use your hands in drawing of a plot, and practice of arithmetic."[28] When Henry Wotton perpetuates this view of the architect in 1624 and declares that the architect's "glory doth more consist, in the Designement and *Idea* of the whole *Worke*, and his truest ambition should be to make the *Forme*, which is the nobler Part (as it were) triumph ouer the *Matter,*" his language recalls Sidney's notion of the "*Idea*, or fore-conceite" necessary to the execution of a poetic work.[29] Sidney, who was himself a proponent of courtiers learning how to draw (but not necessarily build) architectural devices, also aligns dramatic composition with poetic labor: "And doe they not knowe, that a Tragedie is tied to the lawes of Poesie, and not of Historie?"[30] Beyond simply recapitulating Aristotelian tenets, Sidney presents a view of theatrical representation distinguished from historical mimesis by liberally privileging proportional contrivance in defining composition. This distinction mirrors the one Sidney makes between poetic language and "words as they chanceably fall from the mouth," since poets write by "peyzing each sillable of each worde by iust proportion according to the dignitie of the subiect."[31] However, as my discussion of poetry demonstrated, Sidney's ideas about poetic proportionality were troubled in his own practice. Playwrights, I assert, were

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[28] Girouard, 61.

[29] Henry Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture* (London: Printed by Iohn Bill, 1624), sig. B2-B2^{v}, Early English Books Online, http://eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library.

[30] Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie* (London: Printed for Henry Olney, 1595), Early English Books Online, http://eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library, sig. K^{v}.

[31] Sidney, sig. C4^{r}

also self-consciously "peyzing" the elements of their plays together just as poets were doing with their syllables, and these elements exceeded simply narrative "plotting" and incorporated the material and physical realities of live performance. In other words, players framed their scenes by way of the logic of dramatic lines.

Thinking of theatrical productions in relation to architectural practice might give one the impression that players coordinate the mechanical activity of reciting lines in order to generate well-defined, impenetrable envelopes for their performance. As long as actors hit their cues, it might seem as if the "play" remains at a remove from audience activity; this kind of theatrical environment certainly persists today, when plays happen as if behind a screen while audiences silently sit in the dark. It has become a critical commonplace, however, to acknowledge that the early modern theatrical event, which was often held outdoors during the daytime, was a wildly different affair characterized by audience interruptions, jeering, and attempts at participation. Erika T. Lin, citing the "fluid relationship" between theater and other forms of entertainment and "leisure pursuits," such as dances, jigs, and games, explains how early modern audiences did not anticipate a "fidelity to a verisimilar frame."[32] Lin's reappraisal of the materiality of performance stems from a revision to Robert Weimann's concepts of *locus* and *platea*, or at least a clarification of how these terms might be most usefully employed. For Weimann, *locus* and *platea* derive from the material conditions of medieval playing, which designated areas of performance characterized respectively by spectacle and by subversive commentary upon that spectacle. The *locus* would exist at a remove from the audience, while the *platea*

[32] Lin, 15, 16.

would be closest to the audience and posit fluidity between the representation and reality. Weimann's terminology is often shorthanded as "upstage" and "downstage," but instead of thinking of *locus* and *platea* as necessarily rooted in stage geography and actor-audience interactions, Lin proposes that we might think about it in terms of the stability of onstage representations. Lin focuses on the development of "theatrical privilege" via characters' control over the means of signification employed on stage: "the more characters are aware of the playhouse conventions through which visual, aural, and verbal cues onstage come to signify within the represented fiction, the more they are in the *platea*."[33] Characters in the *platea* inhabit a position of power wherein representation becomes an active process, while *locus* characters reside in a space of presentation. As "upstage" on a thrust stage for some spectators is actually "downstage" for others, new techniques needed to emerge for classifying theatrical spaces. These new spaces are not architecturally or physically marked, but exist fluidly within the complex dimensionality of the theatrical space. I propose that these spaces are negotiated in large part through the operations of dramatic lines.

Reverence for the well-structured face or "façade" of dramaturgical composition was not only not required, it even became an object of self-referential mockery for players themselves. Richard Preiss's recent study of theatrical clowns in relation to the emergence of the early modern dramatic "author" lucidly explains the stakes of treating plays as "texts" when he suggests that doing "theater history through playbooks" turns "theatre history into literary criticism."[34] Preiss, exploring how

[33] Lin, 35.

[34] Richard Preiss, *Clowning and Authorship in Early Modern Theatre* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 6-7.

audiences could recognize "the play" as both "live, malleable social event and as ahistorical, impermeable text," suggests that for many playgoers, the play was what "interrupted" the event's "other evanescent ludic forms."[35] The signal example of the palpable lack of material differentiation between actors and audiences is probably the interruption at the start of Francis Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1607), wherein players pretending to be members of the audience ascend onto the stage and change the course of the prepared performance by adding characters and storylines. This complex dramaturgical moment exposes the framework propping up the theatrical event: the integrity of a "play" does not necessarily stem from the integrity of the represented world, or even from the material boundaries of the stage, but from the way scripted dramatic lines interrelate and transcend these imagined and physical spaces.

Audiences always know that theatrical action is not extemporaneous, and early modern plays, as anyone familiar with them will recall, are especially prone to pointing out their own constructedness. While self-reflexive dramatic lines may simply be designated "metatheatrical," this move conceals their operations behind the veil of a term that stops short of naming anything other than a symptom of larger representational issues. William Egginton's intellectually expansive *How The World Became A Stage* (2003) distinguishes modern *theatricality* from the medieval notion of *presence* by way of their relation to space. For Egginton, *presence* "names the capacity to experience the meaning of spectacle as occupying the same dimension, the same space of perception as the material of which the spectacle is formed" whereas

[35] Preiss, 8-9.

theatricality refers to "the capacity to experience meaning as separable from the substantial dimension of spectacle, as occupying another spatial realm existing in mimetic relationship to the real, substantial one."[36] I argue, however, that instances of early modern metatheater function somewhat differently in that they position these two different modes of representationality against one another without necessarily privileging one or the other. Early-modern metatheater, rather than striving for realism, queries instead the interaction between a space seemingly materially continuous with spectators and a space at an imaginary distance. The dramatic line is responsible for the constitution of both of these spaces –both spaces are, ultimately, fabrications of scripted language. The line's vulnerability to contingency, however, makes these discrete spaces porous and loosely bound.[37] As figuring devices as well as figures of the conditions of playing, dramatic lines thus afford apertures into the relationship between the conditions of playing and the signifying order that has been mapped onto them.

In what follows, I borrow the language of early modern architectural theory and practice in order to offer readings of two plays that demonstrate how dramatic

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[36] William Egginton, *How the World Became A Stage: Presence, Theatricality, and the Question of Modernity*, New York: SUNY Press, 2003: 85-86

[37] Keir Elam resists the idea that metatheater "ruptures" the boundaries between theater and reality, instead suggesting that while these plays "appear to be cases of 'breaking frame', since the actor is required to step out of his role and acknowledge the presence of the public, … in practice they are licensed means of confirming the frame by pointing out the pure facticity of the representation." Poststructuralist works such as Richard Hornby's follow Elam and hinge upon the ways metatheater exposes one "layer" of performance by confronting it with another. The binarism of this self-reflection often assumes that one "layer" exists in the frame associated with or closer to reality whereas the other in the realm of mimesis. To be fair, however, this assumption is not rigid, and Hornby indicates that for a play within a play to be "fully metadramatic," the inner play and the outer play must both have "characters and plot," or more simply, "there must be two sharply distinguishable layers of performance." See Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, 2nd edition, (New York: Routledge, 2002), 81 and Richard Hornby, *Drama, Metadrama, and Perception* (Toronto: Bucknell University Press, 1986), 35.

lines challenge architectural space in order to constitute a kind of space unique to theatrical representation. The first section, "John Lyly's Ruined Façades," offers a reading of Lyly's *Galatea* (1588) as an example of theatrical dialogue fashioning, or rather failing to fashion, an artful screen over onstage activity by way of meticulously ordered language. The second section, "George Peele's Theatrical Joinery," considers how Peele's *The Old Wives Tale* (1595) insists upon how the theatrical event rests upon a support-structure of lines that mechanically join together, even if those parts do not amount to an artful whole. Though these plays are structurally, thematically, and stylistically profoundly different—Lyly's lines are superficial and contrived, whereas Peele's are scattered, heterogeneous, and seemingly naturalistic—in both of my readings I find evidence of how the dramatic line positions theatrical space somewhere within the poles of static image and vibrant experience, design and structure, or façade and joints. *Galatea*, a play populated by characters either in disguise or pretending to be something they are not, I argue, exposes the inevitable inadequacies of human craft thematically even as it relies on the craftsmanship of its dramatic lines to sustain its illusion. Peele's *Old Wives Tale*, conversely, openly offers an unstable narrative founded upon imperfect recollection, but nevertheless manages to find representational order in disjunction, rather than in proportion or harmony. The dramatic line, as a horizon as well as a closed figure, enables modes of representation that allow the theatrical event to transgress the limits presumed to inhere in mimetic representation. Rather than simply presenting narratives, both plays design flexible experiences in which playgoers are invited to participate.

John Lyly's Ruined Façades

> Yet as the Athenians were most curious that the lawn wherewith Minerva was covered should be without spot or wrinkle, so have we endeavored with all care that what we present Your Highness should neither offend in scene nor syllable…(*Galatea*, Prologue.11-15)[38]

We tend to perceive theater as an object produced *for* an audience, perhaps even with mechanical precision; actors hit their marks and catch their cues, and everything proceeds according to an invisible guiding plan. As countless critics have stressed, however, early modern theater simply did not work this way—it was an irreverent, festive, and participatory affair. Despite this knowledge, imagining the atmosphere of an early modern playhouse remains as challenging as it is ineluctable for modern critics. Engaging with how this atmosphere actually affected the formal composition of plays proves an even more difficult endeavor, even as it becomes clear that theatrical events fully engaged thematically and materially with the sites of their production.[39] Nevertheless, a "play" is neither a community festival nor an interactive game; despite its instability and unreliability, the "play-text" still constitutes an essential barrier between spectators and participants. Actors' utterances, however improvisational, are still generally prescribed by the technologies of company performance. Certainly, as companies grew in sophistication and professionalization, players developed ordering mechanisms for theatrical exchanges, systems we perhaps too readily apprehend as a kind of poeticization of theater. When the prologue to

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[38] John Lyly, "Galatea", *Galatea / Midas*, ed. George K. Hunter and David Bevington (New York: Manchester University Press, 2000). All quotations will be from this edition and marked in text by act, scene, and line numbers.

[39] Among others, see Mariko Ichikawa, *The Shakespearean Stage Space* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Marlowe's *Tamburlaine, pt. 1* declares that the play will abandon the "jigging veins of rhyming mother-wits" in favor of "high astounding terms" penned in sturdy blank verse, this impulse toward metrical rigidity seems overwhelming.[40] Similarly, when John Lyly announces in his prologue to *Galatea* that he has taken pains to present Queen Elizabeth with a play that "should neither offend in scene nor syllable," our first instinct might be to imagine the machinery of an ordered scenography driving the play following the logic of its well-ordered syllables. I propose, however, that acknowledging the role of dramatic lines in Lyly's *Galatea* encourages us to read past the textual fixity we tend to assign to plays. I see Lyly's lines as an extreme case of theatrical artificiality in that they blatantly attempt to demonstrate their proportionality, but even (or especially) at this extreme, Lyly's dramatic lines become sites of negotiation between design and the structure, or *lineamenta* and *materia*. By allowing his lines to appear lineated, Lyly creates in the Elizabethan court a theatrical space both continuous with and abstracted from the play's physical setting.

John Lyly's work notoriously epitomizes a peculiar late-Elizabethan courtly affectation founded upon scrupulous attention to detail, and the texture of his language seems like an impenetrable screen of artificiality.[41] Lyly rapidly ascended to fame within a courtly atmosphere marked by heightened self-consciousness and English nationalism by championing a form of vernacular eloquence that came to be popularly

[40] Christopher Marlowe, "Tamburlaine the Great, part 1," *The Complete Plays*, eds. Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey (New York: Penguin Books 2003): 69-154, 74 [Prologue 1, 5].

[41] Joseph W. Houppert, in his biography, *John Lyly* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1975), summarizes Lyly's career succinctly: "Compared to William Shakespeare or Edmund Spenser, Lyly's literary output was slight. The royal promotions and pensions he so ardently sought were continually denied him. His fame as a literary artist was short indeed. Yet he married well, and lived his life in comfortable, if not lavish, circumstances" (14).

called “euphuism,” after his two wildly successful and oft imitated prose works, *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578) and *Euphues: His England* (1580). Characterized by “superficial cleverness” and overwrought syntactical structures known for their symmetry, parallelism, and balance, euphuism gained traction by being unrelentingly and palpably mannered, decorous, and witty.[42] In a euphuistic sentence, each linguistic element plays a structural role that corresponds with another through what has been described as an occasionally irrational “obsession with symmetry.”[43] So, when Lyly’s Prologue to *Galatea* announces that his play endeavors to be flawless by not offending “in scene nor syllable,” he implicitly promises a sort of euphuistic theater, wherein “scenes” are measured and weighed like each “syllable” in a rigidly structured utterance. As Lyly was one of the most influential prose writers of his era, his dramaturgy affords us an opportunity to think about the dramatic line as divorced from the verse line and predominantly in terms of the representational techniques it makes available to players. Lyly’s prose sentences are subject to the same logic of mnemonic patterns and cues that characterize all theatrical speech, but I argue that in *Galatea*, the stern artificiality of these lines actually allows Lyly to reflect upon how the artificial space of a theatrical environment is just as flimsy as the artificiality of spoken euphuistic phrases. His dramaturgy in turn tests the theater’s presumption that artificiality might cast a screen over the wooden floorboards,

[42] Leah Scragg, “‘Any Shape One Would Conceive’: From a Prose Style to Lyly’s Plays for the First Blackfriars Theater,” *Contexts of Renaissance Comedy*, eds. Janet Clare and Roy Eriksen, (Oslo: Novus Press, 1997), 61-76, esp. 63. For more on euphuism at its height, see Leah Guethner, ‘To Parley Euphuism’: Fashioning English as a Linguistic Fad,” *Renaissance Studies* 16.1 (2002), 23-35, esp. 27.

[43] Shimon Sandbank, “Euphuistic Symmetry and the Image,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 11.1 (Winter, 1971): 1-13, 1.

repurposed costumes, and cross-dressing boys comprising the theatrical spectacle.

Lyly's allusion to the "lawn wherewith Minerva was covered" in his prologue, probably referring to the linen shroud adorning the statue of Athena Polias, invokes a common Elizabethan analogy between theatrical texts and textiles and proffers the play as a tangibly material object.[44] Jonson enlarges this etymological correspondence in *Every Man in His Humour* (1598) when two gallants commend the acting of their servant, Brainworm: "An artificer! An architect! Except a man had studied begging all his lifetime, and been a weaver of language, from his infancy, for the clothing of it!"[45] Such associations between theater and material craft exhibit how after the rise of purpose-built theaters in London, plays were transforming from being seen as activities or sometime spectacles into commercial commodities open to appraisal. In her dissertation on the architectural façade as a site of transformation for early modern subjectivity, Mimi Yiu unpacks how Alberti's insistently symmetrical conception of the façade, which "projects a coherent social and spatial identity to the world at large," transitions during the Italian Renaissance from "the fortress-like impenetrability of medieval keeps" to staging "an aesthetically persuasive rhetoric of privacy, of realms enclosed through tacit social codes that govern access."[46] Yiu explains how Alberti's theory "privileges, above all else, a façade that looks both inwards to its lineaments and outwards towards the viewer"; more than just a composition, the façade "ensnares

[44] See Bevington and Hunter's footnote for Prologue.11-13 (pg. 30). See also Gregory S. Aldrete, Scott Bartell, and Alicia Aldrete, *Reconstructing Ancient Linen Body Armor: Unraveling the Linothorax Mystery* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), esp. 161.

[45] Ben Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour*, ed. Martin Seymour-Smith (New York: W.W. Norton and Company Inc., 1966), 70 [3.2.231-33].

[46] Mimi Sheung Hang Yiu, "Building Platforms: Staging the Architecture of Early Modern Subjectivity" (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2005), 7.

the gaze" and invites the outside world inside.[47] In thinking about sentences as "harmonious" and "congruent," and theatrical dialogue as tightly constructed, it is important to remember that these outward faces of language also often concealed an interior that promises, but does not necessarily satisfy, continuity with the façade's declaration of order.[48] In order to think about the kind of space Lyly's play cultivates, then, I propose the model of the ruined façade—the porous, airy, ruptured rational structure that demonstrates matter's betrayal of an order imposed upon it. The screen *Galatea* casts over its world by way of its highly stylized lines, I argue, becomes, over time, unsustainable. While the destruction of this façade occurs onstage most obviously through the repeated failure of characters' disguises, I argue that the mechanism by which this disintegration occurs stems from Lyly's manipulation of his dramatic lines.

Utterances onstage dynamically install representational fields in order to figure forth imaginary environments, as acts of verbal description are sustained by a representational envelope reliant upon the collaborative technical apparatus of dramatic lines. The first lines spoken in *Galatea*, which may be imagined as the play's textual "façade" via the same analogy Tasso applies to the first stanza of a poem, certainly exhibit an architectural reckoning.[49] Beyond noting their rhetorical

[47] Yiu, 35.

[48] Yiu offers a series of examples wherein Alberti's insistence on a consistent theory governing architectural work confronts discord and disjunctions arising from "pragmatically infelicitous conditions." Mark Girouard similarly acknowledges that in sixteenth century England, the "main fronts of a new house of any size were now almost invariably symmetrical... but behind the facades the arrangements of rooms differed comparatively little from that of the later Middle ages." See Yiu, 43 and Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 88.

[49] Roy Eriksen offers a translation from Tasso's *Discorsi*: "As Torquato Tasso reminds us, the first stanza of poems was often a place for a certain artifice: '[it] should be full of grandeur, magnificence

structuring, however, I also present them as exposing some of the additional performative work they do as theatrical technology:

> *Tityrus:* The sun doth beat upon the plain fields; wherefore let us sit down, Galatea, under this fair oak, by whose broad leaves being defended from the warm beams we may enjoy the fresh air, which softly breathes from Humber floods (*Gal.* 1.1.1-5).

Euphuism orders language in such a way that each element of an utterance, down to individual letters or sounds, strikes correspondences with other elements through antithesis and parallelism. These rhetorical schemes involve counterpointing and balancing, and in euphuism they are promoted "by the use of schemes or figures of sound, notably isocolon (the repetition of clauses of the same length), parison (similarly structured sentences) and paramoion (sound patterning, e.g. syllabic repetition, assonance, and alliteration)."[50] These schemes clearly govern the adjective-noun formations ("plain fields", "fair oak", "broad leaves", "warm beams", "fresh air"), assonance (fields/ leaves/ beams and plain/ fair/ air), and alliterative reiteration (fields/ fair/ fresh/ floods; beat/ broad/ beams/ breathes) in the speech above. In his valuable chapter specifically addressing the rhetorical schemes isocolon and parison, Russ McDonald notes the consistency of "the figure of balance in both the emerging Tudor prose style and in contemporary architectural projects" as indicative of a

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and splendor, like the façade of palaces'." See Roy Eriksen, *The Building in the Text: Alberti to Shakespeare and Milton* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), xv.

[50] Leah Scragg, "Introduction," *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit and Euphues and His England* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2003), 3.

"governing principle of Elizabethan design."[51] To put it another way, Lyly's prose language is always itself bounded, controlled, or plotted – Lyly writes in lines even when not writing for the stage. As the play's façade, these lines hint at a "comprehended and concluded" logic behind the entire composition, and its narrative in some ways mirrors this formal structure by being driven by parallelisms and mirrored plots: the play's central narrative concerns two daughters, Galatea and Phillida, who are both disguised as boys by their respective fathers, Tityrus and Melibeus, so that they might escape a commandment that the fairest virgin in the land be sacrificed to Neptune for the good of the community.

I am certainly not the first to note the relationship between Lyly's prose and the paralleled composition of narrative in *Galatea*. For example, Kent Cartwright notes that in Lyly's plays, "language and ideas become ironical as they are reiterated" through a series of "internal correspondences and contrasts," in a "dramaturgy akin to this writer's prose style," and Leah Scragg adds that *Galatea* "constitutes the dramatist's ultimate achievement in the transference of his narrative style to the stage" through the way Lyly creates a "dramatic idiom rich in parallelism and antithetical construction."[52] Views of Lyly's dramaturgy limited to the patterning of his syllables, I argue, merely gaze upon the façade offered by the printed page without examining the dynamic legibility of other modes of signifying available to the stage. Just as a work of architecture is not simply an image, a theatrical work in performance cannot

[51] Russ McDonald, "Compar or parison: measure for measure," *Renaissance Figures of Speech*, eds. Sylvia Adamson, Gavin Alexander, and Katrin Ettenhuber (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 39-60, esp. 41.

[52] Kent Cartwright, "The Confusions of *Gallathea*: John Lyly as Popular Dramatist," *Comparative Drama* 32.2 (1998): 207-239, 212. Scragg, 'Any Shape One Would Conceive', 71

be received all at once as a complete product, but is rather parceled out in a procession of discrete lines, scenes, and acts. While I agree with critics recognizing that the symmetry and antithesis apparent in Lyly's narrative plotting relates to the proportional balancing of syntactical units along the tenets of euphuism, I contend that this observation does not take into account how the play as an unfolding theatrical performance operates. Tityrus's speech, for instance, is the first one delivered during the play and it consequently serves a prolocutory function that allows the actor to offer a systematic and vivid account of the play's setting. The patterning of his language, by indexing climate and topology, recalls a chorography, a narrative account of space, and through its structuring the audience hears the actor building an ostensibly harmonious and balanced pastoral world. While the prose style does in a sense set the tone for the narrative plotting of the play, its incantatory qualities here also remind us that it is theatrical language that strives, through architectural precision, to reconcile the conflicting aural and visual media available to the stage—these lines make bare floorboards into the an imaginary landscape.

Soon after the start of the play, however, Tityrus expands his description and brings into view an environment characterized by transience, decline, and ruination:

> *Tityrus:* In times past, where thou seest a heap of small pebbles stood a stately temple of white marble which was dedicated to the God of the Sea (and, in right, being so near the sea). Hither came all such as either ventured by long travel to see countries or by great traffic to use merchandise, offering sacrifice by fire to get safety by water, yielding thanks for perils past and making prayers for good success to come… Then might you see ships sail where sheep fed, anchors cast where ploughs go, fishermen throw their nets where husbandmen sow their corn, and fishes throw their scales where fowls do breed their quills. Then might you gather froth where now is dew, rotten weeds for

> sweet roses, and take view of monstrous mermaids instead of passing fair maids.
>
> *Galatea:* To hear these sweet marvels I would mine eyes were turned also into ears. (*Gal.* 1.1.15-41)

Tityrus's exemplarily euphuistic speech goes on for about 30 lines and establishes the dramatic setting by invoking features such as "dew" and "rotten weeds" while also suggesting that these were once "froth" and "sweet roses." Galatea, the sole on-stage auditor to her father's speech, then self-consciously interpolates the audience's mode of visualizing imagined theatrical objects based on what performers say by wishing that her "eyes were turned also into ears"— here, "seeing with the ear" becomes not simply a habit of reception but an implied necessity.[53] Accessing Tityrus's imagined world depends upon hearing the careful syntactical patterning of verbal stones and their composition into topographical features; 'seeing with the ear,' is how the heap of pebbles Galatea sees might actually be replaced by a stately temple. The schematics of Tityrus' utterance allow his verbal artificiality to posit an imaginary spatial grid wherein coordinates are transformed through syntactical equation. For spectators, however, the stage itself would have possessed very little ornamentation, and they would have relied on these balanced auditory cues to envision the absent elements Tityrus mourns—ships sailing—being immediately replaced by the invisible elements he points at as present—sheep feeding.[54] As auditors as well as participants, their

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[53] Patricia Parker's discussion of "sound effects" or "sound defects" informs my analysis here a great deal. See Patricia Parker, "Shakespeare's Sound Government: Sound Defects, Polyglot Sounds, and Sounding Out," *Oral Tradition*, 24.2 (2009): 359-372, esp. 361.

[54] Editor George K. Hunter notes that the play "makes very little demand on staging" and that perhaps only the tree at the start is needed as a set-piece ("Introduction," 20).

access to Tityrus's world entails imagining both construction and ruination, presence and absence, cyclically. Tityrus begins by pointing to the "small pebbles" Galatea can ostensibly see but then erasing them as he recalls their history as a "stately temple." Later, the ordering inverts and leaves auditors with the remnants, placing "froth" before "dew." These lines when enacted nest one manner of artifice, rhetorical construction, within another, theatrical spectacle, but then interrelate their operations: the "scene" becomes framed by the "syllables" issued upon it, while at the same time the syllables gain evocative power by being issued within the representational space of a scene.

The exchange between Galatea and Tityrus underscores the extent to which what audiences at a theatrical event "see" first necessarily passes through their ears – what Galatea *wishes* would happen must actually happen for spectators. The balancing act of each line, and its swift inversion of direction, however, also reveals the precariousness of vision subject to speech happening over time. A façade such as Tityrus's opening line may a triumph of proportional form over the physical matter of language, but plays, like buildings, are also apprehended less as a flash of recognition but as a design unfolding over time. It is not just the addition of time that makes theatrical space distinct from other kinds of spaces, however, though thinking about the role of temporal traversal in architecture will give a clearer sense of how dramatic lines build theatrical spaces. Anne M. Myers challenges purely visual and totalizing views of English architecture by noting that English architectural writings present "conflicting modes of architectural literacy." Myers balances William Camden's native understanding of architecture as inviting "historical interpretations" against the

Italianate tradition taken up by Wotton, John Shute, and others that prioritize the visuality of façades.[55] Explaining that Englishmen's relationship to architectural works was not only determined by the iconicity of a building or its façade but also through a narrative legitimizing the property owner, Myers invokes de Certeau's notion of "building stories" that implicate architectural writing "in the production of narratives and texts, in the fields of literature and historiography, as it is in those of visual or material culture."[56] Italian-influenced English architects like Wotton and John Shute focus on principles of design and correspondence that present visually, eliding in the process the material spacing essential for architecture to illustrate its proportionality and sound its harmonies. The relationship between the façade and the total experience of a designed space was at once of crucial practical importance to aspiring Elizabethan architects and theoretically underdeveloped. In some ways, practice accommodates the discrepancy by folding narrative or procession into an architectural space that conditions the reception and perception of people passing through.

An example of their practice, one which also concretizes a notion of processional design of space, may be witnessed in the Earl of Hertford's preparation of his land for a royal visit from Queen Elizabeth in 1591: "His Honor with all expedition set Artificers a work, to the number of three hundred, many daies before her Maiesties arriuall." Hertford's renovations entailed building a "*Ship Ile*," a "*Fort*," and a *"Snayl mount*" situated "equally distant from the sides of the ponde, and euerie

[55] Anne M. Myers, *Literature and Architecture in Early Modern England* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 18-19.
[56] Myers, 49.

one by a iust measured proportion distant from other."[57] Processions and pageantry were by the 1590's Queen Elizabeth's hallmark, but the rapid construction project undertaken at Elvetham reveals the degree of attention paid to the "proportional" interrelations between spectacular parts, interrelations that also warranted, even demanded, attention and appreciation. The renovations at Elvetham also happen to illustrate the atmosphere surrounding performances like that of *Galatea*, as along with being a topographical homage to the Queen's iconography, Elvetham was also the site of a series of "Entertainments" now attributed (albeit without certainty) to Lyly.[58] To imagine inhabiting this cultural milieu, we need to view artificiality in plays as not undermining mimesis, but as an auxiliary source of aesthetic pleasure and even metaphorical meaning. *Galatea*'s treatment of theatrical artificiality invokes, in some ways, habits of reception cultivated by specifically Elizabethan attitudes toward architecture, attitudes which treated an architectural work as a network of rational correspondences.

Theatrical space, however, is not designed around the movements of audiences but around the presentational dynamics of actors—theater cannot funnel audiences through a built environment, but must rather create a multidimensional space wherein audiences feel transported. Revisiting the means by which early modern audiences were compelled to invest in theater's represented fictions, to "explore being out of place" in a familiar building, Lyly's lines of dialogue encourage audiences to see the

[57] John Lyly, *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, vol. 1, ed. Richard Warwick Bond (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), 432-433.

[58] Editor Richard Warwick Bond makes the case for Lyly's authorship in his Biographical Appendix, pp, 378-386.

artificial nature of theatrical speech as they might an elaborate façade. Though Lyly's technical aspiration in *Galatea* deceptively seems to be the fulfilment of a euphuistic dramaturgy that can render a theater as rationalized in "scenes" as well as "syllables," *Galatea* itself dramatizes the inevitable disintegration of this living architecture. Rather than a perfectly rationalized and coherent theatrical edifice, Lyly's play imagines theatrical space as an architectural ruin: a spatially porous remnant implying the material disintegration of an ordered plot. As a result, we might think of the play as paradoxically presenting its own conceit as the impossibility of materially rendering conceits.[59]

Tityrus's speeches to Galatea forecast the precariousness of human craftsmanship, even as these ruins are sonically embedded within the palpable fixity of euphuistic ordering. What was once a "stately temple" has been reduced to "a heap of small pebbles," and this condition of design meeting inevitable decay signals how we might consider the material realities of Lyly's own dramaturgical design. For Alberti, ruins are the source of abject disappointment in mankind:

> I call Heaven to Witness, that I am often filled with the highest Indignation when I see Buildings demolished and going to Ruin by the Carelessness, not to say abominable Avarice of the Owners, Buildings whose Majesty has saved them from the Fury of the most barbarous and enraged Enemies, and which Time himself, that perverse and obstinate Destroyer, seems to have destined to Eternity.[60]

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[59] G. K. Hunter, in *John Lyly: The Humanist as Courtier* (London: Routledge, 1962), arrives at a proximal reading when he notes that "almost all the plot material [in Galatea] is made out of one motif— the attempt to deceive destiny by means of disguise" (198). Disguise, I argue, links the material practices of playing to the "dressed-up" prose of the play's dialogue, to the catalyst behind the play's narrative; the play thus paradoxically argues *against* disguise by sustaining and relying upon the efficacy of this technology.

[60] Leone Batista Alberti, *Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. James Leoni, ed. Joseph Rykwert (London: Alec Tiranti, 1965), 209.

Ruins, in Alberti's view, are evidence of human frailty and "carelessness." Ruined buildings, designed in humanity's image, are also evidence of humanity's flaws. Sebastiano Serlio, another influential Italian architect, echoes Alberti's distaste of ruins when discussing how a painter might damage an architectural façade, saying "if they haue a Forefront or Facie of a house to paynt, it is certayne, there is no opennesse to be left... for those break the building; and of a thing that is massy and close, they transforme it into an open weake forme, like a ruinous and unperfit building."[61] In early modern England, ruins held an almost mystical appeal—for a nation obsessed with peering into its own history as inheritors to classical Rome, ruins were evidence of an impressive backstory.[62] In *The most notable Antiquity of Great Britain, vulgarly called Stone-Heng* (1655), Inigo Jones even makes the claim that Stonehenge is a Roman building, and creatively reduces "into *Design*," that is, into a graphical rendering in the treatise, "not onely as the ruine thereof now appears, but as... it was in its pristine perfection."[63] Artistically, the stylistic influence of Latin authors on humanists could also be perceived as reconstitutions—both Willy Maley and Rebeca Helfer see in Spenser's Virgilian influence and maintenance of archaic dialects a kind of poetics of ruin.[64] My interest in ruins with respect to Lyly's *Galatea* rests on a

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[61] Sebastiano Serlio, *The Five Books of Architecture: An Unabridged Reprint of the English Edition of 1611* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1982), fol. 66^{v}.

[62] See Tessa Morrison, "Solomon's Temple, Stonehenge, and Divine Architecture in the English Enlightenment," *Parergon* 29.1 (2012): 135-163.

[63] Inigo Jones, *The most notable antiquity of Great Britain, vulgarly called Stone-Heng on Salisbury plain* (London: Printed by James Flesher, 1655), 56, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

[64] Willy Maley, "Spenser's Languages: Writing in the Ruins of English," *The Cambridge Companion to Spenser*, ed. Andrew Hadfield (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 162-179;

ruin's ability to provoke in the imagination a completed design even as the incomplete, discordant, or even incomprehensible material reality that the ruin has become constrains this imaginative endeavor. In a recent study on early modern aesthetics, Chloe Porter interrogates "what 'finished', 'incomplete' or 'under construction' meant for early modern playwrights and the contemporaries who watched their plays" by focusing on how "playwrights are interested in image-making as a process that engages with visual 'matter.'"[65] *Galatea*, despite its flashy superficiality, exposes the fragility of its crafting by disintegrating the theatrical function of its dramatic lines from their shows of artificiality; speeches, disguises, and plots that need to function as façades routinely become ineffective.

All speeches on early modern stages were "confinde within certain measures" – cues that bounded them—in the manner by which Samuel Daniel defines poetic lines, including ones not written in verse. As a set of prefabricated speech-acts, these lines are also dependent upon a mode of presentation distinguished from "ordinary" speech.[66] Part of what enables them to remain distinct, even when they are not floridly poetic or rigidly metrical, is that they were delivered by a company of professionals with its own protocols for performance, protocols that would have been familiar to frequenters of plays. When Lyly uses the plural pronoun "we" in saying that "we endeavored" in his prologue, he really does mean a company, in this case of boy actors, that used the lines of their individual "Parts" as the raw materials of the

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Rebeca Helfer, "The Death of the 'New Poete': Virgilian Ruin and Ciceronian Recollection in Spenser's 'The Shepheardes Calender,'" *Renaissance Quarterly* 56.3 (Autumn, 2003): 723-756.

[65] Chloe Porter, *Making and Unmaking in Early Modern English Drama: Spectators, Aesthetics and Incompletion* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2013), 9.

[66] Daniel in Smith, v. 2, 359.

performance, tossing them to one another and forging correspondences in real time. Even though actors were given some license, their improvisations and verbal resourcefulness were nevertheless curtailed by cues, which were the "inviolable" joints of any company production. Actors thus played their parts not only as personations of their characters, but also as professionals executing a task that centrally involved assiduously *listening to and for* each other's lines; in such an environment, audiences naturally might also learn to hear dialogue as prefabricated gobbets of speech being handed from one player to another. I have been presenting Lyly's cue-bounded line not only as a rhetorical composition but as a technology of playing, as yet another element of performance that was integral to dramaturgy. The line draws upon a variety of mnemonic and cognitive strategies, strategies which also leant themselves to be recognizable as shaping forces: euphuistic prose, like metrical verse, aided actors by being rhythmic, alliterative, and repetitive. Beyond simply verbal schemes, actors' lines were necessarily "enclosed" into shapes by the necessities of cue-bounded cooperative theater. These techniques fostered the production of an event built upon actors' collaboration and trust, and techniques for maintaining the integrity of the representational space. *Galatea*, despite being a play that appears to thrive on the coordination and balancing of "scenes" and "syllables," quickly becomes a play in which "craft" itself—and especially theatrical craft—becomes "craftiness," and transitions from providing the scaffolding of the play to becoming the object of its scrutiny.

Though *Galatea* hinges on Tityrus and Meliboeus dressing their daughters in men's clothes in order to avoid sacrifice, their plot not only fails, but offends the

watchful god, Neptune: “Their sleights may blear men; deceive me they cannot. I will be here at the hour, and show as great cruelty as they have done craft, and well they shall know that Neptune should have been entreated, not cozened” (*Gal.* 4.3.6-9). The play goes on to critique the very techniques employed by all players, and failed craftiness surfaces again after the other townspeople offer Hebe, a different virgin not known to be particularly fair, to Neptune in place of Galatea or Phillida. In response, a fuming Neptune lashes out: “And do men begin to be equal with gods, seeking by craft to overreach them that by power oversee them?” (*Gal.* 5.3.11-12). While it makes sense that Neptune can “see through” the humans’ disguises, I argue that the climactic moments exhibiting the transparency of the play’s artifice are actually witnessed when its cue-bounded lines are also laid bare as disguises. Throughout the play, the two leads, Galatea and Phillida necessarily couch their language in euphuistic circumlocution so as to conceal themselves. When the goddess Diana and her train of nymphs speak to each of them, the girls are equated through their circuitous responses: “These boys are both agreed; either they are very pleasant or too perverse. You were best, lady, make them tusk these woods whilst we stand with our bows, and so use them as beagles, since they have so good mouths” (*Gal.* 2.1.58-61). Galatea and Phillida, both doubly-disguised players (boys dressed as girls dressed as boys), are presented in the world of the play as possessing habits of speech that are recognizably contrived.

The play’s pivotal scene occurs when the characters, who have inevitably fallen in love, finally speak to one another in Act 3:

> *Galatea.* There is a tree in Tylos, whose nuts have shells like fire, and being cracked, the kernel is but water.
> *Phillida*. What a toy is it to tell me of that tree, being nothing to the purpose? I say it is pity you are not a woman.
> *Galatea*. I would not wish to be a woman, unless it were because thou art a man.
> *Phillida*. Nay, do not wish to be a woman, for then I should not love thee. For I have sworn never to love a woman. (*Gal.* 3.2.4-13)

The scene, at first, relies on the dramatic irony that the two girls are in love with one another but struggle to find ways to articulate their desires as disguised boys. Their balanced exchange is both stichomythic and euphuistic: tree/ Tylos/ toy. It also holds Galatea's overtly metaphorical "water" against Phillida's "woman" to drive the point home. Their discussion circles around the "matter" disguised by their equivocal speeches frustratingly, with a series of subjunctive and conditional declarations and ripostes, until the frame of the exchange and the bounds of their communal performance become apparent to both participants:

> *Phillida*. *[Aside]* What doubtful speeches be these! I fear me he is as I am, a maiden.
> *Galatea.* *[Aside]* What dread riseth in my mind! I fear the boy to be as I am, a maiden.
> …
> *Galatea [Aside]* Ay me, he is as I am, for his speeches be as mine are.
> *Phillida [Aside]* What shall I do? Either he is subtle or my sex simple.
> (*Gal.* 3.2.31-34; 44-47)

The same Galatea that earlier wanted to transform her eyes into ears because she perceives that Tityrus's words cannot remove the pebbles from her sight in turn finds that her ears enable her to see through Phillida's disguise—her ears have become her eyes. In this way, this complex piece of theater models a mode of reception for the

audience, who also must rely on their ears to see. Both girls, discovering in their interlocutor's language the imprint of their own habits of speech, cut through veil of disguise. In an instant, they feel the contours of the other's protocols of self-representation as an extension of their own, and must confront each other as they 'really' are. The audience, all the while suspending its incredulity at these characters' speech patterns (because no one speaks like this!), is here forced to confront their own suspension of disbelief. They know that this is a play; similarly, Galatea and Phillida can each finally acknowledge that she loves the other because she knows her own identity as a performer and not as an actual man. Prior to this moment, each girl was issuing lines under the presumption that there was only one character in disguise—they assumed that the rules of their performance did not extend outward into the world, that the care they put into their self-fashioning separated them from the interference of others. The lesson they come to learn, however, is that by disguising themselves in lines, they become vulnerable to others apprehending those lines.

Like the "small pebbles" of Tityrus's opening speech, however, these characters remain at an abstracted remove from the audience—Galatea and Phillida do not reveal themselves, ultimately, to be the boy actors playing girls. The audience witnesses with their ears how carefully crafted speech might engender pebbles as well as the temple they are said to descend from, and through the same mechanism apprehends the balanced illusion of how a boy actor's body might bear a feminine character figured in masculine attire. The line that separates carefully prepared speech from everyday utterance, or poetry from words that "chanceably fall from the mouth," has shifted outward in order to contain not only the patently artificial but also a space

in which this artifice is apparent, a space wherein actors are also listening to and taking cues from one another's lines. What had been theatrically working in the play no longer remains convincing, because the play has exposed its own techniques to be subject to flaws. Lyly's dramaturgy so achieves a kind of artfulness that allows his dialogue to function in an environment where its status *as* prefabricated itself contributes to a sense of the play as a complete composition.

In some ways, the play's critique of its own artificiality matches what scholars have perceived in Lyly's own prose works, and what Lyly himself has to say about the artificiality of his famous protagonist. Lyly opens his famous prose work with the disclaimer that if "the first sight of *Euphues* shall seem too light to be read of the wise or too foolish to be regarded of the learned," readers should relate these inadequacies to "the necessity of the history." Euphues himself, Lyly explains, "beginneth with love as allured by wit, but endeth not with lust as bereft of wisdom." Indeed, the perfection of wit for its own sake seems to be a central object of critique in *Euphues*, despite the fact that the text's linguistic patterns became a rigid model for Elizabethan wit. Right at the start, Lyly notes that "most men believe, that in all perfect shapes a blemish bringeth rather a liking every way to the eyes than a loathing any way to the mind."[67] Catherine Nicholson argues that Lyly's *Euphues* itself anticipates and even prescribes "responses to the extremity of its rhetoric" by transforming "the conventional romance plot into an ironic and insightful critique of the English pursuit of eloquence."[68]

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[67] John Lyly, *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit and Euphues and his England*, ed. Leah Scragg (New York: Manchester University Press, 2003), 28,32.

[68] Catherine Nicholson, *Uncommon Tongues: Eloquence and Eccentricity in the English Renaissance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 72-73.

Relating Lyly's ironic perspective towards prose to his dramatic techniques, Andy Kesson proposes that among other original contributions, Lyly "found a new voice for subversive irony and showed his contemporaries how to rewrite the rules for dramatic composition." Focusing specifically on *Campaspe* and *Endymion*, Kesson proposes that Lyly's theater uses the "locational meaning of the stage" through scripts that "routinely demand movement, gesture, and rhythm from the actors speaking their lines."[69] To Kesson's assessments of Lyly's "locational meaning," I add that Lyly's infrastructure of dramatic lines are a source for theatrical meaning, as they ironize the craftsmanship of theater even as they are the source of its integrity.

I conclude this section with another example of how attending to the architectural mechanics of playing, especially as they relate to theatrical dialogue, opens up new interpretive possibilities. In this case, I take the always popular route of spoiling a joke. One of the play's sub-plots features three shipwrecked pages seeking apprenticeships in order to make their way in the world. Their first attempt at learning a trade involves asking the mariner with whom they've been stranded to teach them "his cunning at the cards" so that they might "live by cozenage" (*Gal.* 1.4. 40-41), referring simultaneously to both the mariner's compass card and a pack of cards used for tricks. After the mariner explains that "there is not a clout nor card, nor board nor post, that hath not a special name or singular nature," he attempts to teach one of them, Dick, the "points" on the compass:

[69] Andy Kesson, *John Lyly and Early Modern Authorship* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2014), 4, 108.

> *Mariner.* North. North and by east. North northeast. North-east and by north. Northeast. Northeast and by east. East northeast. East and by north. East--
>
> *Dick.* I'll say it. North. Northeast. Northeast. Nore nore and by nore-east. I shall never do it. (*Gal.* 1.4.50-60)

Throughout this scene, characters speak in decidedly less euphuistic prose than in prior scenes, and even approximate something like an unadorned vernacular. This is not to say that the apprentices' dialogue is devoid of ornament (alliteration such as "cunning at the cards" still finds a way into their language), but that they rely less on consciously formal language. Indeed, the entire apprentice subplot deals with the pages' inability to train their tongues and learn specialized jargon; their story focuses on one brother, Rafe, who encounters an alchemist and an astronomer whose beguiling tactics and big words repeatedly lead to Rafe's disillusionment. It is telling, then, that our introduction to this sub-plot sees Dick encountering an utterance representing the bare bones of euphuistic mnemonic patterning: the repetitive and mirrored "quarter" of navigational points starting with North and ending in East, with each term balanced with another equivalent term. Through this exchange, the play implicitly makes light of the fact that the mnemonic devices available to the actors for their lines do not extend to their characters, just as the boy actor's body does not extend to Galatea's ability to present herself as male. Dick fails at Lylean playing just as he would fail at seafaring, though his failures only enlarge our awareness of the machinery underlying the other lines issued on stage. This ironic scenario might as a result be more impactful for an audience cognizant of a technical joke involved; for us, the effect might channel the self-conscious pleasure of watching an actor perfectly reproducing,

night after night, a meticulously crafted failure to remember his lines. Obviously, works of theater are not architectural buildings, but in remembering that plays are not confined to the surfaces of texts, and that "scenes" are as important as "syllables" to dramaturgy, we might reclaim more of the depth of what it might have felt like to navigate through the space of an early modern play.

George Peele's Theatrical Joinery

The previous section explored how John Lyly's *Galatea* uses the overt artificiality of its own lines of dialogue as a way to critique aspirations toward ideal and enduring craftsmanship. The euphuistic dramatic line, as a technique by which players collaborate in building their illusions, constitutes a theatrical facade in a perpetual progression toward ruination – this facade's proportional design is only as successful as its ability to fold spectators into its system of order. When Galatea and Phillida peer past one another's lines, the artificiality of onstage spoken language becomes glaringly apparent, and the play's promise of harmony and order resolves into a reflection on the limits of art itself. In this section, I approach theatrical space from a different direction. Rather than starting with a conception of a play as a stable text composed of rhetorically sturdy prose, I begin with the idea of a play as an event seeking shape and structure. Lyly's rhetorical style attempts to map itself onto actors' bodies and the surface of the stage, but the play ultimately resolves into a kind of ruin wherein design confronts the inconveniences of material reality. Conversely, George Peele's *The Old Wives Tale* seems to routinely undercut its own style, space, and narrative through a series of staged interruptions, only to arrive, I argue, ultimately at a

piece of theater that hangs together through, rather than despite, its fragmentation. Whereas the dramatic lines of Lyly's play appear to foreground their function as contributing to an intricately plotted theatrical facade, the lines of Peele's play insist upon the necessity of cues as the "inviolable" joints of company production. As with an architectural edifice, theatrical joints are typically meant to fade behind or coalesce into well-conceived and "comprehended" whole, into the patterned "face" or façade. Joints, as Joseph Moxon explains in his practical manual on joinery, fit pieces of wood together so that they might "*seem one intire Piece*."[70] When flawlessly executed, lines of dialogue rest flush with one another like the segments of an archway, and define the contours of a sturdy representational space. They appear (or sound) like well proportioned crafts, as objects built from words that are, like poetry, distinguished from everyday speech.

Taking my own cues from Patricia Parker's analysis of the rude mechanicals in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which she explains how joinery "was also routinely employed in the period as the figure for other kinds of joining, a metaphorical translation or extension that made this material craft the basis for a whole range of other conjunctions," I locate for live playcraft an analog in architectural practice. While Parker focuses on the way vernacular treatises on rhetoric viewed the proper "joining" of words and sentences as the "foundation not only of order in discourse but of 'Order' more generally," my appropriation of the metaphor focuses not simply on

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[70] Joseph Moxon, *Mechanick Exercises* (London: Printed and Sold by J. Moxon, 1694), 59 (sig. K^r), emphasis in original, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Bodleian Library.

rhetoric but on the practices constitutive of theatricality.[71] I claim that lines of dialogue shape and hold together plays like architectural joints help a building materialize, and that their contributions to a play's structure were not necessarily invisible to audiences. During a play, scripted lines constitute the foundation of an overarching theatrical "plot"—a term evoking both narrative and the spatial coordination of actors entering and exiting the playing surface. An interruption, which etymologically connotes a "breaking between," might challenge the manufactured integrity achieved by such lines, but a *staged* interruption, which effaces itself by perpetuating a theatrical design, destabilizes the audience's sense of what lines of dialogue actually come together to construct.[72] Peele's "pleasant conceited Comedy" offers a dramaturgy driven by staged interruptions; by noting how these localized breakages are essential to its mode of representation, I argue that the play exuberantly privileges the festive and divertive possibilities of theater over the requirements of storytelling—specifically, of the telling of an old wife's tale.

Like an arresting architectural façade standing out from its surroundings, the first line of each work of early modern theater functions as an interruption. This first line, especially if preceded by trumpets, would jar audience members out of their bustling inattention and establish the fundamental sense of disparity between actors and auditors requisite for theater. The opening line of *The Old Wives Tale* is no different, and it begins the process by which performers cultivate their own

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[71] Patricia Parker, *Shakespeare from the Margins*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 89, 94, 107.

[72] *Oxford English Dictionary Online,* "interrupt," verb, def. 1a, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/98273 (accessed February 14, 2014).

represented environments:

> Antic: How now, fellow Frolic! What, all amort? Doth this sadness become thy madness? What though we have lost our way in the woods? Yet never hang the head as thou hadst no hope to live till tomorrow. For Fantastic and I will warrant thy life tonight for twenty in the hundred. (*OWT* 1-6) [73]

As an invocation or installation, the opening line of a play establishes a pseudo-stable representational space functioning alongside and within the theatrical architecture.[74] In addition to the prolocutory labor of announcing and ushering, this first line completes other conventional responsibilities: introducing characters and their relationships, indicating a geographical setting, and establishing a problem.[75] More than just a prologue, however, this line completes other performative functions responsible for constructing the space of performance. As it issues from the boy actor playing Antic's mouth, the line engenders a representation of space with limits that reaffirm the physical limits of the stage. First populating the playing surface with characters bearing names such as "Frolic" rather than with boy players, the line goes on to grant the playing surface the aspect of a labyrinthine wood. The persistence of this wood in the audience's imagination then requires the actor playing Frolic to corroborate and

[73] George Peele, "The Old Wife's Tale," *Three Sixteenth-Century Comedies*, ed. Charles W. Whitworth, Jr. (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1984): 215-272; title page facsimile on 214. All quotations from play will appear in-text and indicate line numbers from this edition.

[74] Peggy Phelan explains how the architecture of the Globe was itself disruptive, as it sought to satisfy "the paradoxical desire to set aside a space and to explore being out of place, to inhabit, however fleetingly, a kind of no-place." Peggy Phelan, "Reconstructing Love: *King Lear* and Theatre Architecture," *A Companion to Shakespeare and Performance*, eds. Barbara Hodgdon and W. B. Worthen (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005): 13-35, esp. 16

[75] Douglas Bruster and Robert Weimann explain how early modern prologues ushered playgoers over "an imaginary threshold" and performed a "differentiating function" that "helped isolate dramatic form from non-verbal types of performances." See Douglas Bruster and Robert Weimann, *Prologues to Shakespeare's Theater: Performance and Liminality in Early Modern Drama* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 37.

continue the charade—which he does mechanically, as he also sustains the representation by vocalizing right away the name of the only as-yet unnamed character: "Antic and Fantastic, as I am frolic franion, never in my life was I so dead slain" (*OWT* 7-8). In this way, the lines of dialogue beginning *The Old Wives Tale* announce and anticipate modes of reception typical to theatrical events; through them, the play appears grounded in a story about the navigational troubles of these three characters.

While lines of dialogue might build semi-durable represented spaces by invoking geographical features, the scripted lines also delimit representational spaces—conceptual clearings within which represented spaces may take shape— by engaging in the formal function of joining. During a theatrical production, the spaces of playing take shape not only through verbal description but also through the technical and mnemonic practices which inhere in dramatic lines; as demonstrated in the previous section, the space of a play is not limited to the stage, but can shift outward to a perspective that recognizes a play as continuous with an environment that recognizes but permits the artificiality of dramatic lines. These dramatic lines work only if they join with one another, after all, so each line's contents might be evaluated in terms of architectural function. For example, we might pay attention to the internal rhymes (sadness/madness) or alliteration (way/wood; hang/head) in Antic's lines above as facilitating the speaking actor's recollection. These features not only sustain the performance, but signal to receptive audiences the differences between scripted language and everyday speech. We might even speculate about how the introductory line bears an overhanging sticky end, "I will warrant thy life," which anticipates

joining with Frolic's "never in my life." Cues, by marking the end of one actor's speech and connecting it to another's, were the joints of a play, but lines in general might be imagined as the sealed imaginary walls enclosing a production's representational space.[76]

Peele's play, by staging a series of interruptions, demonstrates the integrity of theatrical space as anterior to or more fundamental than written textuality or a guiding authorial plan—its lines appear to jar and overlap almost as often as they fit flush with one another. Shortly after the audience encounters Antic, Frolic, and Fantastic, the three lost pages are interrupted. While Antic sings a song to soothe Frolic's desperation, Fantastic cuts him off, hearing a sound from offstage: "Hush! A dog in the wood, or a wooden dog! O comfortable hearing!" (23-24). This "wooden dog" belongs to Clunch, a local smith and husband to the titular Old Wife, and as Clunch and his dog enter, the three pages are swiftly transported into a new environment, the front of Clunch's cottage. Fantastic's "Hush!"— disrupting the performance being put on by the singing Antic—offers readers insight into the functional relationship between hearing and space in the early modern theater. Antic's song, which proclaims "I in the wood, and thou on the ground, / And Jack sleeps in the tree" (21-22), serves as a wall into which the dog's unexpected barking makes a portal. Fantastic's praise of "comfortable hearing" in turn models for audiences a way to "read" this play—inasmuch as the sound of barking comforts (consoles) the distraught travelers, hearing comforts (strengthens and fortifies [*confortare*]) the play by enabling its transition

[76] Palfrey and Stern, 93

from one moment/space to the next.[77] In the original 1595 quarto, there are no stage directions for the dog's entrance or for his barking, but it is clear that the actor playing Fantastic's cue here is a bark, and not the final few words of Antic's line. This interruption, the first of several internal to Peele's play, allows readers to apprehend what live audiences would intuit: that this play works by bringing new spaces to characters, rather than by moving characters to new spaces or by clearing the stage and having characters define their locations shortly after entering. The dog's bark reminds viewers and readers of the supplementarity of sounds and bodies to a play's written textuality; as an undocumented but crucial element, the bark separates for readers those aspects of each line of dialogue which lie beyond its semantic meaning. Moreover, by being not only a cue but an *interruption*, the bark destabilizes the imagined, represented space (deep in a wood) even as it bolsters the imaginative, representational one (the platform stage). Cues join actors and plots together, and we might view them as the constitutive of represented spaces. Peele's play, however, breaches its represented spaces via cued interruptions; his cues are corridors as well as corners, suggesting that the represented spaces are of less consequence than the theatrical space in which illusions can be conveniently traded for one another.

It is easy to imagine or perhaps even personally recall what happens when a cue is flubbed or misapplied: the illusory wall of theater breaks until a prompter or deft actor spackles it back together (these days, evincing Menzer's sense of the term's metaphysicality, the actor might call out "line!" when actually searching for words).

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[77] *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. "comfortable," adjective. def. 1 and 3. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/36892?redirectedFrom=comfortable (accessed February 12, 2014).

Though we might think of the theatrical space as crafted by the deft hands of professionals, as a space completely boxed off from the audience, this simply is not the kind of environment that existed in the early modern playhouse. Plays were not, at least until Inigo Jones's partnership with Ben Jonson, concerned with building architecturally stable environments—the jigs, games, and other festive activities that occurred in the playhouse made the entire experience one of fluidity and participation. Architectural practice can in some ways describe this environment, as architecture can accommodate discrepancies through an enveloping narrative or procession, through the joining or "blending" of discrete moments into a conceptual whole. We might, as visiting bodies moving through space, apprehend patterns and proportions and connect them together intellectually despite not witnessing discrete elements as linked to a broader environment—buildings consist of more than just façades. In the theater, the force of narrative certainly can hold the material "members" of a play together, but a play is not simply a stable narrative that is "comprehended" all at once like the artful façade of a building. In some ways, the story being told was not even the most important thing happening in the theater.

The bulk of Peele's play *Old Wives Tale* ostensibly follows Madge's "winter's tale" (*OWT* 93), which begins, laying bare its haphazard conventionality, with "Once upon a time, there was a king or a lord or a duke that had a fair daughter" (*OWT* 106-107). Over the course of the play, new characters and subplots to this "tale" are introduced, and evoke conventional elements from romance and folklore. In brief: a conjurer, Sacrapant, has captured a maiden, Delia, and transformed a young man into an old man by day and a bear by night; her brothers and her beloved, Eumenides,

separately venture out to rescue her and encounter the same transformed man; this man also helps direct the stories of a father with two troublesome daughters and of a bombastic knight named Huanebango and his squire, Booby. Eventually, the conjurer is defeated with the aid of a ghost named Jack who helps the Eumenides rescue Delia because Eumenides shows generosity (following the transformed man's advice) to those attempting to give Jack's body a proper burial. As a kind of hodge-podge mixture of a variety of different generic and stylistic forms, the "tale" itself seems to actively undermine congruity; the story it "builds" has too many parts, and the ways they come together appears contrived rather than effortless.

The multiple running plotlines as well as the dizzying pace of the short play make the narrative hard to follow or focus on, and it is clear that neither realism nor character development are especially esteemed. The flimsiness of the narrative's realism is pointed out at the very start: when Madge says that this king or lord "sent all his men to seek out his daughter," Frolic rudely interjects with "Who dressed his dinner then?" (*OWT* 111). Madge brushes him aside with, "Nay, either hear my tale or kiss my tail!" (*OWT* 112), but the moment recalls scenes such as Act 5 of *Love's Labours Lost*, wherein interruptions performatively undermine attempts at representation. Soon after Madge resumes her tale, she is given a reprieve from her scattered attempts at recollection by the play's third and most important interruption:

> *Madge*: O Lord, I quite forgot! There was a conjurer, and this conjurer could do anything, and he turned himself into a great dragon and carried the king's daughter away in his mouth to a castle he made of stone, and there he kept her I know not how long, till at last all the king's men went out so long that her two brothers went to seek her. O, I forget: she—he, I would say—turned a

> proper young man to a bear in the night and a man in the day, and keeps by a cross that parts three several ways, and he made his lady run mad. God's me bones! Who comes here?
>
> *Enter the two Brothers.*
>
> *Frolic:* Soft Gammer, here some come to tell your tale for you.
>
> (*OWT* 115-126)

Madge's paratactic narration consists of a series of clauses spilling out of her mouth and over one another. She adds details and explanations as they come to her, and she pieces the story together through accretion until two characters materialize and step on her lines. Recalling Fantastic's "Hush!" upon hearing the "wooden dog," Frolic's "Soft Gammer!" marks another interruption: this time, Frolic's "cue" consists of the bodies of two actors, playing the two brothers mentioned by Madge, entering. Their arrival transforms the stage into yet another geographical locale, as the First Brother serves as prologue to his own story: "Upon these chalky cliffs of Albion / We are arrived now with tedious toil…" (*OWT* 128-129). In stark contrast with Madge's winding and unstructured speech, the brothers clear space on stage for the delivery of metrically sturdy lines. Exhibiting what Douglas Bruster might call a "decorous coordination of various discursive forms" by modulating the style of speech along with the spaces of representation, the brothers' lines supplant Madge and the pages' prose dialogue with verse in order to formally and aurally mark a movement from one realm into another. [78] Moreover, the shift in formal register makes legible the difference between the task given the boy actor playing Madge and those playing the two brothers: the latter are aided in recollection by the rhythmic, repetitive, and

[78] Douglas Bruster, "Christopher Marlowe and the Verse/Prose Bilingual System," *Marlowe Studies* 1 (2011): 141-165, esp. 143.

alliterative affordances of verse, while the former must recollect (or improvise) lines pointedly lacking structure or order. Together, the play's combination of these unequal and mismatched lines allows language itself to "serve as an embodied spectacle" and delimit on stage a discursive barrier between *locus* and *platea*, even though in this scenario the *locus* stems from the *platea* by way of Madge's narration.[79]

The newly established zone featuring the two brothers is itself breached just a few moments after it takes shape by another interruption which cuts the Second Brother short:

> O fortune cruel, cruel and unkind,
> Unkind in that we cannot find our sister,
> Our hapless sister in her cruel chance—
> Soft! Who have we here? (*OWT* 133-136)

At this point, the brothers encounter an Old Man, who is eventually discovered to be the "young man" that was turned into a bear from Madge's story. This meeting causes the brothers to abruptly transition into prose as they converse with the stranger—"Now father, God be your speed. What do you gather there?"(*OWT* 138). After a brief dialogue, the brothers exit, and the Old Man starts his own prologue, again in verse: "Now sit thee here and tell a heavy tale" (*OWT* 173). Shortly after explaining how the aforementioned conjurer cursed him, he also transitions back into prose when he is himself interrupted: "But here comes Lampriscus, my discontented neighbor—" (*OWT* 196). Lampriscus then goes on to explain his own peculiar plight regarding his two troublesome daughters: one "clamours" and is as "curst as a wasp" (*OWT* 219-224),

[79] Lin, 99.

and the other is “foul and ill faced” (*OWT* 229), making the pair of them synecdoche for the audiovisual indecorousness of a poorly constructed play. The first two thirds of *The Old Wives Tale* nests a series of interruptions within one another as new characters, plotlines, and even theatrical elements are introduced—Huanebango and Booby (who will ultimately be paired with Lampriscus’s daughters), the wandering knight Eumenides, and the ghostly Jack remain to be introduced. The disorder of the proceedings is not lost on Madge’s onstage auditors— after Lampriscus and the Old Man leave, Frolic comments, “Why, this goes round without a fiddling stick” (*OWT* 237) before asking for some clarification on who the characters he just saw were. Madge’s explanation is then itself interrupted, as she overhears something—“But soft, who comes here? O, these are the harvest men. Ten to one, they sing a song of mowing” (*OWT* 241-242).The play features not one but two interludes featuring singing “Harvest-men” who take center-stage while the Madge, seemingly out of annoyance at being mowed down in the middle of her own tale, instructs the others to “sit still and let them alone” (*OWT* 520).

The play’s design unfolds by inscrutably nailing together theatrical elements such as scenes, interludes, and verse forms, suggesting that the play, like its closest relation, Beaumont’s *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1607), is ultimately about playing. Through an insightful discussion of the likely physical layout of the stage, Susan T. Viguers argues that central dynamic of *The Old Wives Tale* is the conflict its “two primary powers,” Madge and Sacrapant, and their associations with two opposed

views of art.[80] These views of art are made apparent in the characters' relationship to the theatrical space. For Madge, space "is not static, but 'becoming'" and can be identified with the protean representational nature of the wood outside her cottage, while for Sacrapant, space is "limited" and authorized, and takes the form of his permanent mansion and the domain it oversees. Madge's storytelling allows elements to transform and shift, while Sacrapant's magic hopes to render its objects, like the Old Man or the captured maiden, fixed. If Viguers' analysis is pushed further, however, it becomes evident that the resolution to Madge's tale specifically hinges on the way plays come together in a theater, and how spoken lines can create, disrupt, and transform represented spaces and objects.

The conclusion unsurprisingly arrives through the play's most theatrically embedded character, the figure of Jack, who is a ghost pretending to be Eumenides's squire. Preceding the final encounter between Eumenides and Sacrapant, Jack disarms Sacrapant by advising Eumenides to take the foundation of theatrical representation away from the conjurer: "And because you shall not be enticed with his enchanting speeches, with this same wool I'll stop your ears" (*OWT* 780-782). When Sacrapant enters, Jack arms himself with theatricality again by becoming invisible, though this special effect becomes clear only after Sacrapant articulates his confusion: "What hand invades the head of Sacrapant? / What hateful fury doth envy my happy state?" (*OWT* 789-790). That Sacrapant's power could be reduced to his voice, and overcome simply by not listening, brings the façade distinguishing the play's representational

[80] Susan T. Viguers, "The Hearth and the Cell: Art in *The Old Wives Tale*" *SEL* 21 (1981): 209-221.

space from the space of the theater crashing down. Sacrapant's silent entrance inverts that of the barking dog which began the play; his entrance does not register at all for a deafened Euminedes and he therefore cannot conjure anything. After Jack's work is done, he spectacularly vanishes using the most obvious trick of the platform stage: he "*leaps down in the ground*" (*OWT* 887, s.d.). One way to interpret this final turn of events follows Viguers, who proposes that Eumenides' location during this scene puts him "symbolically within Madge's power," because Madge presents "her art as artifice" as opposed to Sacrapant, whose power seeks permanence.[81] Another interpretation, however, remembers not only that it was Madge's narration that infused Sacrapant with his power, but that by the end of the play, Madge's story gets away from her entirely. After all of the other characters exit the stage, Fantastic remarks, "What, gammer, asleep? (*OWT* 892), indicating that sometime between line 545 and line 891, Madge nods off and abandons her characters to their own devices, halting her own shoddy construction project. After a certain point, the theatricalized characters become bereft of the guiding blueprint of a story, and they solve their problems through the specific technologies of theatrical art.

Peele's play *performs* the habits of a confused, half-remembering old wife. Its slips in structure are emphasized by the multiplicity of formal registers: some characters speak common prose, others verse, and others at times spout euphuistic rhetoric and romantic bombast. These registers indicate not only alternative represented spaces, but also provide actors different mnemonic frameworks for remembering and delivering their lines, wavering between improvisation, clear

[81] Viguers, 221

memorization, and generic archetypes. Variations on the phrase "Soft! Who have we here?" appear in this play at least six times (*OWT* 126, 136, 241, 381, 519, 525), and in each context they shift the focus of the narration and dislocate the audience's attention. This phrase, one also singled out as dramaturgically crucial by Joan Marx, renders equivalent each plane of Madge's tale, including the choral interludes by the harvesters, and creates in the play what critics acknowledge as a "festive" or "folk" atmosphere.[82] Anticipating the characters' interruptions are Madge's own punctuating ejaculations from the very start: "O Lord, I quite forgot! There was a conjurer…" and "O, I forget: she—he, I would say—turned a proper young man to a bear…" Each "O" materializes spatially as a portal through which new characters might arrive and interrupt her tale. This style of storytelling actually seems purposively indecorous and disjoint, and it suggests that the play is named after Madge's technique rather than after the tale itself (which is why I stick to calling it *The Old Wives Tale*, following the quarto, rather than *The Old Wife's Tale*). Robert Peterson's 1576 translation of Giovanni Della Casa's treatise on manners, *Galateo*, indicates Madge, the archetypal old wife, possesses almost all of the traits of a bad storyteller. The treatise, echoing Albertian notions of architectural design, advises readers that in order to convey a long tale well, "you must have the matter, the tale, or the story, you take upon you to tell, perfect in your minde: and words so redy and fit, that you neede not say in the end:

[82] Joan Marx, "'Soft, Who Have We Here?': The Dramatic Technique of *The Old Wives Tale*," *Renaissance Drama* 12 (1981), 117-143. Marx argues that the play is a "comedy composed of several genres: folktale, romance, folk ritual, and farce" and that these genres are juxtaposed with one another without any of them ruling the entire play (118). She goes on to describe the dramatic technique of the play as consisting in "slipping suddenly from one genre to another" in moves that "create a mixture of surprise and daring— a comic sauciness— chiefly resembling, though differing from, the effect of parody" (118-119).

'That thing, and tother thing: This man, what doe you call him: That matter, helpe me to terme it': And, 'remember what his name is.'[83] Tellingly, right before Della Casa discusses poor storytelling, he remarks that good storytellers "shew ye maners, ye fashions, ye gestures + behauiours of them we speke" so that the hearer "should think that he heareth them not rehearsed, but seeth them with his eyes." The danger of this kind of narrative playacting, however, is that storytellers sometimes "do affect and counterfeit, more th[an] is slightly for a gentleman or gentelwoman to doe, like to these 'Comedie Players.'[84] *The Old Wives Tale*, I argue, tells a bad story badly, but in doing so pointedly decouples the festive possibilities playing from the fixity of storytelling. One tactic of its assault on storytelling's preeminence over playing is turning Madge's imperfect recollection of her story—and so the ostensible script of the play itself—into interruptions to lines of dialogue.

The reiterating and introductory quality of interruptions lends *The Old Wives Tale* its own kind of destabilized internal logic, one seemingly indifferent to the matter of the "tale" and more invested in the formal logic of Madge's storytelling. There are things you can do in theater that are much more difficult to accomplish in other media; the stage can not only figure forth a story, but also re-create the lively and disorienting effects of being told the story in a half-remembered, cobbled-together manner. Like theatrical clowns or musical interludes, the harvestmen "interrupt" and are interrupted

[83] Giovanni Della Casa, *Galateo…Or rather, A Treatise of the manners and behaviours*, trans. Robert Peterson (London: By Henry Middleton, 1576), Early English Books Online, http://eebo.chadwyck.com, Henry E. Huntington Library, 72. I have put quotations around the elements of Peterson's text that are shift from Gothic to Roman typeface, and have modernized typographical shortcuts.

[84] Della Casa, 71-72.

by the narrative proceedings, but Peele's play makes it a point to reveal these interruptions as shared aspects of the theatrical event and not opposed. Once we start to acknowledge that the technologies productive of the theatrical event inhere in each aspect of a "play," so that like an Albertian building all "parts" have "their proper Places, determinate Number, just Proportion and beautiful Order," the dramatic line reemerges as the foundational component of theatrical form—the line itself joins together the spectacle with the story, as the harvestmen themselves become a cue for Madge to speak.

A play like George Peele's seems wildly ahead of its time for privileging moments of absolute disorientation over the ones that embed plays within other discourses like narrative or music. Peele, we might say, exercises what 20th century architect Bernard Tschumi calls a "strategy of disjunction." Tschumi explains that "if one were to define disjunction, moving beyond its dictionary meaning, one would insist on the idea of limit, of interruption."[85] Interruption coincides with disjunction for Tschumi, and both connote a rejection of principles of "synthesis or self-sufficient totality" as well as of the "traditional opposition between use and form." As a threat to continuity and joining, disjunctions and interruptions "trigger dynamic forces that expand into the whole architectural system, exploding its limits while suggesting a new definition"— accordingly, Tschumi's works tend to be assemblages of disintegrated materials. One of Tschumi's famous works, the Parc de la Villete in Paris, kindled the imagination of Jacques Derrida in the 1986 essay, "Point de folie —

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[85] Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1994), 210-211.

Maintenant l'architecture."[86] In this essay, Derrida channels his conceptions of writing and "spacing" through the experience of navigating through Tschumi's work, which he describes as "an architecture of heterogeneity, interruption, non-coincidence." Acknowledging that despite these features, Derrida finds that Tschumi's work cannot result "from a simple displacement or dislocation" and that "a path must be traced for another writing." This sense of writing, connecting *architecture* with *arche-writing*, reveals that "what holds together does not necessarily take the form of a system; it does not always depend on architectonics and can disobey the logic of synthesis or the order of syntax."[87] When we are stifled by the intransigent writtenness of a play, then, one way to "explode" our view of early modern theatricality might be to revitalize the vibrant contingency and potential for disobedience, illogic, and disjointedness possessed by the lines of dialogue charged with holding it together.

A mode of theatricality moving from interruption to interruption, and which marks these interruptions as radical alterations in the discursive style of staged speech, joins a play like Peele's together along technical cruxes (such as cues, prompts, and mnemonic technologies) which introduce shocks to its overarching narrative program.[88] Emphasis in Peele's play lands on method and process rather than on totality; but though the work appears "incompatible with a static, autonomous, structural view," it is "not anti-autonomy or anti-structure." Instead, like Tschumi's

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[86] Jacques Derrida, "Point de folie — Maintenant L'architecture," trans. Kate Linker, *AA Files*, 12 (Summer 1986), pp. 65-75.

[87] Derrida, 73.

[88] Tschumi draws on Benjamin's notion of "shocks" in his theorization of disjunction; see Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books 2007), 155-194, esp. 162.

own installations, *The Old Wives Tale* "implies constant, mechanical operations that systematically produce dissociation in space and time, where an architectural element only functions by colliding with a programmatic element, with the movement of bodies, or whatever."[89] These elements threaten disjunction even as they scaffold a play's totality. In the same way, staged interruptions "shock" the audience's complacency with the programming of represented spaces and, by remaining technically functional, also expand the stage's representational possibilities. Peele's embrace of interruptions as a dramatic technique consolidates for the stage a mode of representation wherein technical transparency can supplement rather than rupture representation; in doing so, Peele alarms us to the possibility that lines of dialogue encompass effects and modes of signification that extend well beyond printed lines.

Through the example of Peele's disjointed, discombobulated storytelling technique, a richer sense of early modern theatrical space emerges. This space is not one in which audiences simply receive a play as a prepackaged commodity, but rather one in which they are made complicit with the scripted action, one in which they are unexpectedly enrolled into an experience. Like Lyly's play, wherein the integrity of the onstage illusion is always self-consciously suspect, and disguises are equal parts convincing and transparent, Peele's play does not presuppose that its illusions are working. Instead, Peele uses the conjunctive logic of lines of dialogue, like Lyly uses the palpable artificiality of euphuistic circumlocution, to festively play up the scriptedness of the theatrical storytelling. Without stealing into the explicit tropes of metatheater, wherein onstage activities are explicitly equated with theatrical practice,

[89] Tschumi, 213-214.

Peele and Lyly nevertheless build a theatrical environment that folds audience expectations into the plotting of dramaturgical effects. This chapter has endeavored to demonstrate that such effects, which are the central effects that distinguish theater from narrative, and the play as performed from the play as read, are products of the capacities of the dramatic line. The dramatic line establishes the façade of the theatrical spectacle, it promises a guiding hand and a plot with a purpose – something measured in scenes as a speech might be in syllables. By making this promise, however, the line establishes a mode of knowing that immediately becomes vulnerable, because in a live environment the rules of conduct are always vulnerable to disruptions, even ones as simple as an actor forgetting what to say, or saying something with such wooden stiffness that the words ring too false. The novelty of the early modern theatrical technique at its most dizzying moments, then, is folding the threat of this disorientation and the vulnerability of theatrical space into its representational practice.

The use of dramatic lines not simply to extend a narrative plan but to upend design or force it to confront the material realities of lived practice is not limited to Peele's play. Looking forward to the final chapter, I want to consider how the technical functions of dramatic lines can impact interpretations of Shakespearean practice. Shakespeare's *The Tempest* features a pivotal stage direction which, like Madge's own failing recitation, folds a forgetful character into the machinery of the events being represented:

> *Enter certain Reapers, properly habited: they join with the Nymphs in a graceful dance, towards the end whereof Prospero starts suddenly, and*

> *speaks; after which, to a strange, hollow, and confused noise, they heavily vanish*. (*Temp.* 4.1.137 sd.)

Prospero's fit, he explains in an aside, happens because he "forgot that foul conspiracy / Of the beast Caliban and his confederates."[90] If, as critics often argue, Prospero figures a director or Shakespeare himself, his moment of vulnerability locates Prospero within rather than without his own play and reduces him, finally, to a fallible player just as reliant upon his cue-fellows as everyone else. A. Lynne Magnussen's discussions of interruptions in *The Tempest* also calls forward issues of dramaturgical presentation, noting how the "interruptive tendency of Shakespeare's later style finds an answerable context in the specific concerns of *The Tempest*, a context in which the style is the meaning."[91] For Magnussen, the interruptions in the play—both ones enacted by characters over each others' lines of dialogue and ones characters (namely, Prospero) introduce into their own speech via *anacoluthon* ("breakings off and gaps in the action")—"upset this most fundamental expectation of the theatre audience: the feeling that a form is being fulfilled."[92] While *The Tempest* wraps up more tidily than most of Shakespeare's plays, it nevertheless exposes its theatrical joints and leaves its façade porous enough for its protagonist to beg the audience's indulgence at its close. The "confused noise" made by the masquers, finally, signals how plays, according to Will West, could "generate a real experience of confusion in their audiences" during a period when plays were undergoing a "change in the processes through which

[90] Shakespeare, "The Tempest" (4.1.138-140).
[91] A. Lynne Magnussen, "Interruptions in *The Tempest*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 37.1 (Spring, 1986): 52-65, esp. 55.
[92] Magnussen, 60.

dramatic mimesis was understood to function."[93] As Prospero's own revels fall apart and come to ruin, the difference between Prospero and playwright become starker—the brief shock reminds audiences of the precariousness of theatrical performance, and of how close confusion and ruin are to coherence and congruity. Forgetting one's lines onstage drops the veneer of character and exposes the professional actor underneath; if this forgetting is scripted, however, the fallibility of the professional actor can threaten and shade the narrative, altering it without dismantling it.

To segue into the final chapter, we might consider one of the most disruptive interruptions in Shakespeare's oeuvre: "*Enter the Ghost of Banquo and sits in Macbeth's place*." Stalking into banquet hall while Macbeth "play[s] the humble host," Banquo's ghost provides Macbeth cues that none of the other characters hear or see. Like the invisible Jack in *The Old Wives Tale*, the device is essentially theatrical, but in this case the affordances of theater converge to complicate the way Macbeth's sovereignty can be interpreted in relation to his guilt. Audience and protagonist alike can see the ghost, after all, and so the disjunctions occurring on stage generate confusion in a more pressing manner than a text alone could provide. The "tale" here is Macbeth's own, and the interruption to it a way for the play to externalize the character's interiority and demonstrate the capacity for this interiority to conflict with the ceremonies and rituals constitutive of power and authority. Throughout the scene Macbeth is out of joint with his guests, offering responses that do not match their prompts. Lady Macbeth assures the guests that "the fit is momentary" and that the best

[93] William N. West, "But this will be a mere confusion: Real and Represented Confusions on the Elizabethan Stage," *Theatre Journal* 60 (2008): 217-233, esp. 220.

thing they can do to pull him out of his own represented space is to figuratively cram wool in their ears and “regard him not,” to sap away his power to conjure his inner demons. Attempting to return her husband to the script they had written together, she finally perceives that he has lapsed into a mode of performance inappropriate for the setting of a royal banquet, a mode perhaps one more suited to a theater marked by folky misrule: “O, these flaws and starts / (Impostors to true fear) would well become / A woman’s story at a winter’s fire, / Authoriz’d by her grandam.”[94] As Banquo’s ghost haunts the new king, the specter of theatrical disjointedness (emblematized by someone quite similar to Madge) haunts the play. Macbeth’s banquet at Inverness enacts theatrical confusion through lines of dialogue that do not join with others in order to render the chaos of a kingship that interrupts lineage.

[94] Shakespeare, “Macbeth” (3.4.36ff).

CHAPTER 4

Bleeding Borderlines: *Macbeth*, King James, and Disjointed Sovereignty

The previous chapter offered a view of the line as an integral element in the design and execution of a theatrical event. The dramatic line functions both as the superficial "façade" of the theatrical spectacle (words characters say distinguish the illusory realm of onstage behavior from everyday speech) and as the technical "joints" of professional playing (words actors say join together in order to confirm and perpetuate illusions). When the presentational façade is corroborated by the joints, the space of stage activity appears "proportional," regulated, and distinct from everyday life. When the joints seem opposed to the façade, such as in moments of staged interruptions, the playing environment appears comprised of gaps, disjunctions, and imbrications. In this scenario, however, as long as the joints are operational even if they do not appear to be so, a theatrical space persists. In this chapter, I attempt a reading of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1605/6) that keeps its focus on the disruptive potential of the cue-bounded dramatic line. I find that the play's treatment of theatrical space evokes an equivocal dramaturgical environment characterized by flux and instability—an environment I relate to the political and legal conditions at the Anglo-Scottish borderline after the ascension of King James I in 1603.

There are two central goals in this chapter. The first is an argument stemming from a reading of *Macbeth* and the second is an extension of the previous chapter's attempts to reinvigorate theatrical criticism by applying scholarship on the technical

practices of early modern playing companies to analyses of dramatic texts. My argument is that the representation of Macbeth's failures as sovereign illuminates the logic of King James I's failures to erase the Anglo-Scottish borderline. I propose that at issue for both kings is a conception of sovereign will as fundamentally unconstrained by law or reason; in other words, I suggest that both Macbeth and James imagine realities that are beyond the practical scope of their sovereign authority. I certainly do not see Macbeth and James as mirroring one another, but rather read *Macbeth* and the travails of King James as concurrent stories that demonstrate, in drastically different degrees, the technical limitations of sovereign power.[345] In pursuing this claim, I also pursue my second goal by demonstrating how Shakespeare's play interrogates, through experiential aspects of theatrical performance that are mediated by the dramatic line, the efficacy of a sovereignty (or failures thereof) disjoined from the legal system(s) from which it emanates. A sovereignty that insists upon and believes its own indivisible and mythic authority as detached from rationalized processes like law, I propose, is shown to crumple in upon itself like an actor playing the wrong part.

Another way to put my second goal for this chapter is to say that one of the ways the early modern theatrical event promotes analytical thinking about popular politics is by drawing attention to the formalized habits and techniques of the players

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[345] For discussion of political resonances of *Macbeth,* see Arthur F. Kinney, "Scottish History, the Union of the Crowns and the Issue of Right Rule: The Case of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*," *Renaissance Culture in Context: Theory and Practice*, eds. Jean R. Brink and William F. Gentrup (Brookfield, VT: Scolar Press, 1993): 18-53.

as a professional corporation.[346] I understand the atmosphere of the early modern playhouse as one wherein the audience felt it knew the rules of theatrical spectacle – rather than a play being an object presented to them as a fresh commodity, it was something in which they, knowing the rules, could engage and appraise.[347] The presumptuous and anticipatory knowledge of the seasoned theatergoer rests, however, on his or her assumption that plays are the coordinated efforts of professionals—specifically, efforts coordinated through the lines scripted into actors' parts. A mode of "participation" wherein audiences feel compelled to anticipate and call out is more adversarial than cooperative; in such a scenario lines define the space of play as distinct from the space of spectators. Shakespeare, an actor turned playwright, would be especially aware of the kinds attention audiences grant performances, and *Macbeth*, I propose, builds up a familiar framework of theatrical convention only in order to collapse it unexpectedly. Halfway through *Macbeth*, the fundamental laws of the play—what, following Will West, may be called its prevailing "protocols of mimesis"—are dismantled, and what remains is an exploration of political life within the ambit of reckless sovereignty.[348] By fixing my analysis on the rhythms of

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[346] As Jeff Doty argues, Shakespeare's theater "was a space of popular politics because it gave public expression to issues of common interest and habituated playgoers into thinking analytically and about the origins of political authority, the techniques used to produce that authority, and the position of the 'people' in the commonwealth." See Jeff Doty, "Shakespeare and Popular Politics," *Literature Compass* 10.2 (2013): 162-174, 163.

[347] As Jeremy Lopez notes, "the transparent self-reflexivity of the language and the dramaturgy, like the relative bareness of the stage and brightness of the theater" would have made the audience's sense of participation– of responding, "visibly, audibly, and physically"—essential to the theatrical experience. Jeremy Lopez, *Theatrical Convention and Audience Response in Early Modern Drama* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 34. John Russell Brown describes the attention audiences granted plays in the playhouse as rooted in "expectation and anticipation," because of "the spectator's instinct to move ahead of the play" and "identify with one player at a time" or "mix emotional and moral judgments."John Russell Brown, *Shakespeare and the Theatrical Event* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 26.

[348] West explains that at "certain cultural or historical junctures … performances themselves give

theatrical dialogue as a matter of professional practice—on the way dramatic lines appear to anticipate one another, intersect, or fail to sync up—I propose that *Macbeth* transforms the theatrical environment into a microcosm of the technical practices of Jacobean kingship.

The dramatic line, because the façade of theatrical illusion is built of them, continually renews the barrier between performers and auditors, and also between different represented spaces on the playing surface. In this chapter, I relate its operations to those of the Anglo-Scottish borderline. A play's integrity as a fiction rests upon the difference created by dramatic lines; if a line is forgotten, after all, the whole façade crumbles down. The self-reflexive and multi-layered representational habits of the early modern stage, however, create opportunities for players to create the *effect* of disjunction and collapse while allowing the performance to proceed. While *Macbeth* in no way resembles *The Old Wives Tale* narratively or generically, its dramaturgy similarly tests the borders installed by its lines—not through interruptions, but by decoupling the illusory content, or façade, made by the line from its technical function as an instrument of professional playing. In other words, at certain important moments, Macbeth appears unable to communicate with other characters in the play in any rational way. Macbeth's illogical dialogue, which might be psychologized as madness, is instead, I argue, an indication that he has slipped into what I describe as a different play. Consequently, I present *Macbeth,* a play which itself sets scenes in two

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voice to these problems of interpretation, and stage (among other things) their own codes of intelligibility. They demonstrate what they expect their audiences to expect. We can think of this aggregate of expectations— and practices for realizing or disappointing or reforming them—as a culture's protocols of mimesis." See William N. West, "'But this will be a mere confusion': Real and Represented Confusions on the Elizabethan Stage," *Theater Journal* 60 (2008): 217-233, esp. 219.

different countries, as a conflicted conflation of two different kinds of play, each designed with its own distinct representational logic. Understanding these different plays as separate political realms—as two nations, or as the public and the private—coexisting on the same surface, I argue that Macbeth's muddling of theatrical boundaries implicitly explores the qualities of an English national identity under a foreign sovereign threatening the existence of the Anglo-Scottish borderline.

In the first section below, I continue my exploration of how early modern performances inscribe invisible spatial thresholds onto the stage and into the audience's imagination. Through *Macbeth*, I consider how a play could use disruptions and interruptions to its imagined dramaturgical thresholds as representational tools for illustrating conflicting psychological and legal states. Comparing Macbeth's traversals of theatrical space to the maneuvers of historical "border reivers" that wreaked havoc upon the Anglo-Scottish borderline, I claim that *Macbeth* fractures the borderlines imagined to define space on stage. Following this section, I offer an interlude describing the struggles of the new King James I with respect to erasing the Anglo-Scottish Borderline. In this section, I consider how James's sovereignty, which imagines itself as outside the law, must at nevertheless speak through the law in order to be heard. Returning, in conclusion, to *Macbeth*, I examine how the persistence of Macbeth's guilt manifests as a theatricalized disjunction between Macbeth and the rest of the characters on stage—it sounds, at times, like Macbeth is speaking to no one even as the show goes on. In this way, *Macbeth* reveals the tensions inherent to an imaginary that is necessarily collaboratively produced, even if that imaginary is merely a play and not a nation.

Dramatic lines, as collaborative instruments of space-building, are also avenues for individual transgression; by having Macbeth's lines both sustain and rupture the theatrical space, the play creates a space wherein individuals must reckon their own roles in the drama of statehood.

Border Reiving

Benedict Anderson suggests that in early modernity, the "porous and indistinct" boundaries of medieval realms began coalescing into the "finite, if elastic" limits of the modern nation-state. Though Anderson's account is easy enough to accept as an historical narrative, concrete cases like the Anglo-Scottish border region, an area known as the "Marches," sit ambivalently within it. In 1603, the actual border*line* in the public imagination at least partly retains some characteristics of a porous frontier, a space where sovereignties "fade[d] imperceptibly into one another," and these characteristics are only enhanced when the conceptual limit the borderline inscribes is muddled by James's personal sovereignty over the both nations.[349] The March region, David J. Baker argues, shares "traits with both 'premodern empires and kingdoms' and 'modern' states" at once; consequently, James's attempts to dismantle

[349] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 2006), 7; 19. Deiner and Hagen indicate that the organization of land propagated by the hierarchical structure of hereditary feudal realms produced a "complicated web of decentralized decision making, discontiguous territorial holdings, and overlapping (and, at times, divided) loyalties" that eventually gave way to a centralization of power that saw "broad, ill-defined frontiers" as less than satisfactory for demarcating the limits of sovereignty. With the development of a newer concept of state authority, "the new state system posited the world as a mosaic of centralized governments, each possessing absolute political sovereignty over some clearly defined territory." See Alexander C. Deiner and Joshua Hagen, "Introduction: Borders, Identity, and Geopolitics," *Borderlines and Borderlands: Political Oddities at the Edge of the Nation-State* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2010): 1-14; esp. 5-6

the borderline after his coronation, while superficially successful, do not actually overcome the insistence of a localized March history resistant to center-driven narratives.[350] In this way, Anderson's narrative of the borderline recalls Menzer's account of the transformation of theatrical lines from the "physical" to "metaphysical" registers over the early modern period; both may be correct, but neither fully engages with the middle-ground where the physical line and the metaphysical concept the line describes remain essentially entangled with one another.[351]

Words uttered on stage within a cue-bounded line, such as "Both sides are euen: heere, Ile sit i'th'mid'st" (1267), offer more than a diegetic indication of what the character speaking it, Macbeth, resolves to do during his own banquet. Taking a perhaps "metaphysical" perspective with respect to theatrical form, we might read this "line" according to its First Folio appearance in the borrowed robes of verse. "Both sides are even: heere, Ile sit i'th'mid'st" prosodically and typographically reconfirms the movement toward centrality being physically performed onstage: note the stressed "heere" on the line's middle syllable, which follows a colon planting for the speaker the caesura of an empty seat.[352] We may also apprehend this speech as a transparent bit of theatrical choreography: it directs the spatial coordination of actors on a playing surface and performatively situates the speaker, and the traditions of sovereign hospitality he invokes, within the presentational dynamics of the platform stage. The

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[350] David J. Baker, "'Stands Scotland where it did?': Shakespeare on the March," *Shakespeare and Scotland*, ed. Willy Maley and Andrew Murphy (New York: Manchester University Press, 2004): 20-36, esp. 24.

[351] See discussion of Menzer in Chapter 3.

[352] William Shakespeare, "Macbeth," *The First Folio of Shakespeare: The Norton Facsimile,* 2nd edition, ed. Charlton Hinman (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996): 739-759. All citations of this text will be in-text, and to the Through Line Numbers indicated in this edition.

formality of the verse reflects the formality of the occasion. Reading these words as a cue-bounded line, however, we remember that they are really part of a longer line that extends from the beginning of this speech to the cue for the subsequent speaker which caps it:

> *Macb.* See they encounter thee with their harts thanks
> Both sides are euen, heere Ile sit i'th'mid'st,
> Be large in mirth, anon wee'l drinke a Measure
> The Table round. There's blood upon thy face. (1266-1269)

Within the larger context of the whole speech, this segment fits into a line beginning with "See," directed at his wife, and ends, ominously, with a cue for a murderer at the back door: "There's blood upon thy face." This entire line is an embedded and functional aspect of cooperative dramaturgy, and reading it as such makes clear the dynamism of the speech as an event: Macbeth moves between the very center of his banquet to the utmost periphery, to the part of the stage where the host inflects into *hostis* and the sovereign becomes outlaw. The final ten syllables, when read as a line of nearly perfect iambic pentameter, appears to conflate Macbeth's speech to his guests with his greeting to his hired brute: "The Table round. There's blood upon thy face." Delivering this line live, an actor would necessarily have to redirect his speech, or relocate his whole body. This alteration is likely cued by the entrance of the murderer, or by Macbeth's perception of him in the wings; the only record we have as readers, however, is the stage direction preceding the speech: "*Enter first Murtherer*" (1265). Our sense of this onstage traffic would not necessarily be lost without thinking about cue-bounded lines, but in my reading of *Macbeth*, I argue that paying continued

attention to the direction of Macbeth's addresses (who his lines seem to be *for* and with whose lines they join) and the spaces they reveal him to be inhabiting and traversing reveals the cue-bounded line to be a locus for the failures of Macbeth's sovereign administration.

In many ways, *Macbeth* is concerned with motion over, across, and between spaces. Before it even arrives at the climactic tearing up of actual geography, the play obsesses over doorways, passages, and thresholds. In opposition to the external, open spaces occupied by the witches, "Posters of the Sea and Land" (132), the play positions the claustrophobic enclosures of Macbeth's castle, enclosures both literal and metaphorical. When King Duncan and Banquo arrive upon the "pleasant seat" of Inverness castle, they remark upon the "delicate" air which invites the "Temple-haunting Barlet," or martlet. Banquo specifically notes the architectural elements wherein the birds build nests: "no Iutty frieze / Buttrice, nor Coigne of Vantage, but this Bird / Hath made his pendant Bed, and procreant Cradle" (434-444). Foreshadowing through opposition not only the sleeplessness that will haunt the castle in the scenes to come, but also the cloistered, secret corners from which voyeuristic advantage will be claimed, these remarks upon the castle's façade invite even as they point out the potential functions performed by dark architectural alcoves. Once the characters cross the threshold and into the castle, closed doors and conspiratorial rooms occupy and dominate the space of the stage. These spaces then extend to the physiological and psychological states of characters via images of impediments, barricades, and bottlenecks. Most famously, Lady Macbeth implores her local Spirits, "unsex me here, / And fill me from the Crowne to the Toe, top-full / Of direst Crueltie:

make thick my blood / Stop up th'accesse, and passage to Remorse" (391-395). Once she hardens herself, thanks to Spirits or to wine, she arranges passage for her husband into the sleeping king's chamber: "the Doores are open" (652). Macbeth finds his own transformation more worrying. After screwing his courage "to the sticking place" (541) (which might imply both a limit—a highest point—and the junction in an animal's neck at which a butcher introduces the knife), he overhears Duncan's guards saying "God blesse us" but finds that he "could not say Amen" (682-4) before murdering them. "I had most need of Blessing, and Amen stuck in my throat" (688), he explains to an apathetic Lady Macbeth, moments before the scene becomes maddeningly punctuated by a persistent knocking upon offstage doors—"Wake *Duncan* with thy knocking: / I would thou could'st" (739-740).

In opposition to these barred doors and obstructed passages are images of overrun, unrestrained flow, and license—images which are consistently also images of blood. We should remember that Macbeth, later pinned to the center of his castle and of the claustrophobic stage, is first identified by his ability to tear holes: "For brave Macbeth… / Disdaining Fortune, with his brandished steel, / Which smoked with bloody execution / Like valor's minion carved out his passage" (35-38). We are told that Macbeth, covered in blood like a new Pyrrhus, tracked down the traitorous Macdonwald in the midst of battle and "unseam'd him from the nave to th'chops" (41). Blood emerges as an important material and metaphorical property throughout the tragedy, such as when Macbeth washes his hands, seeing "the multitudinous Seas incarnardine" (723), or feeling himself in "blood / Stept in so farre" (1418-1419). In addition to signaling entrances— "What bloody man is that?" (18)—and, indeed,

predicting exits, blood streams through the play: it dribbles in “gouts” down Macbeth’s invisible dagger; it continues the royal lineage from Duncan, the fountainhead, to Malcolm, the heir (861-862); it soaks into and falsely identifies Duncan’s “spungie” (552) officers as murderers; and it spills out in unexpected quantity from the corpse of the old king. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is an exceptionally bloody tragedy, but even as the blood flows, it also adheres, notably as a “filthie Witnesse” upon Macbeth and his wife’s hands (704). Despite running and streaming throughout the play, it also remains insistently present, adhering to hands, faces, and the very floorboards of the “bloody Stage” (931).

Motion and stasis, flowing and sticking—blood in *Macbeth* wavers topologically and psychologically between these states as Macbeth himself transitions between subject, traitor, sovereign, and tyrant. Michael Schoenfeldt’s important work on sixteenth and seventeenth century theorizations of the body notes that the “Galenic regime of the humoral self,” of which blood was the principle agent, supplied early modern writers with a “vocabulary of inwardness” that “demanded the invasion of social and psychological realms by biological and environmental processes.”[353] Galenic theory, which explained health problems as a function of humoral balance, mapped onto the humors an association with environmental forces, most notably the four elements. However, whereas the Galenic model finds blood allegorically linked to an external, universal order and is therefore useful in articulating the experience of an intact, live body, in *Macbeth*, blood typically gets from the inside to the outside

[353]Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 8.

through forced material openings such as cuts, tears, rips, wounds, and so on— the same physical processes employed by the empiricist practices of anatomy and dissection. As the circulatory characteristics of blood were uncovered, the vital fluid became linked to individual, personal experience rather than to a totalizing social conception of order. Roland Greene suggests that two conceptions of blood, the Galenic and the anatomical-empirical, existed for a time in a "liminal moment" that "briefly stands apart from one set of received allegories before being subsumed into another."[354] Greene's temporal "liminal moment" connects to an epistemological uncertainty about the nature of inside and outside and the mechanics of distinction that underlies the way *Macbeth* interrogates theatrical space. In turn, blood in *Macbeth* may be read as itself wavering on the threshold between "inside" and "outside" as it becomes emblematic for the Macbeths' guilt, which the husband and wife endeavor to keep hidden but which pours out and adheres so insistently to the stage and to their skin.

The "unseaming" (or "unseeming") Macbeth does to Macdonwald literally exposes the traitor for his true self and allows blood to function as proof of the betrayer's baseness. Inversely, when Macbeth sees Banquo's blood upon his murderer's face, the two of them joke, "'Tis better thee without than he within," objectifying Banquo's insides as a badge of honor. When Lady Macbeth asks spirits to "stop up her blood," it is specifically because she does *not* want social forces

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[354] Roland Greene, "Shakespeare, Cervantes, and the Project of Early Modern Blood," *Entre Cervantes y Shakespeare: Sendas del Renacimiento/Between Shakespeare and Cervantes: Trails along the Renaissance*, eds. Zenon Luis-Martinez y Luis Gomez Canseco, Juan de la Cuesta Press: Newark, Delaware, 2004: 141-160, esp. 146.

compelling "remorse" to function within her, nor does she want to maintain a human identity. She later obsesses over the material presence and persistence of blood — "yet who would have thought the olde man to have had so much blood in him" (2130-2131)—and experiences the madness and guilt of bearing a spot of it on her hand. Upon carving Duncan apart and letting spill the dual standards by which all other blood is understood—the sacred blood of the sovereign and the material blood of a man— Macbeth renders blood itself illegible. Murdering the sovereign lets forth a river without or with excess meaning, one that initiates an overrun of the body politic and a Derridean *débordement* of signification.[355] Macbeth's depiction of himself as being "In blood / Stept in so farre" that should he "wade no more, / Returning were as tedious as go ore," draws a vivid image not only of just how much blood the old man had in him, but of the way an excess of meaning renders all meaning-making, and in turn all action, as "tedious" (1419-1421). Friend and enemy, subject and traitor, host and *hostis* all begin to bleed into one another as Duncan's blood engulfs the stage. As the new king, Macbeth exists outside of the law, but the guilt of regicide, materialized as blood, sticks to him as he moves about his new kingdom.

Macbeth's violence upon bodies and private spaces extends to his perplexing disposition toward temporal constraints. Time repeatedly becomes spatialized in *Macbeth*, most obviously in the "Line stretch[ed] out to'th'cracke of Doome" (1664) shown to Macbeth by the witches, but also in local moments. For Macbeth, bearing witness to this line makes its implications all too real—it is a rule, fate, made manifest;

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[355] Jacques Derrida, "From 'Living On: Border Lines'," trans. James Hulbert, *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds,* ed. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991): 254-268.

seeing it, however, makes him feel capable of contending with it. James will have a similar encounter with the borderline. In many ways, Macbeth contends with time throughout his play—once time's rule is made real, he feels entitled to overthrow it. Macbeth, pondering first that "But heere, upon this Banke and Schoole of time, / Wee'ld jumpe the life to come," finds his own complicated sense of time travel self-defeating by acknowledging how this "Vaulting Ambition… o'erleapes it selfe, / And falles on th'other" (480-81, 501-502). Jonathan Gil Harris's phenomenological reading of the material conditions of performances of *Macbeth*—specifically of the foul smells generated onstage by firecrackers and other special effects—locates in smells what he terms a "polychronicity: that is, a palimpsesting of diverse moments in time, as a result of which past and present coincide with each other."[356] This layering of different and disparate temporalities within and upon the present moment, I argue, also destabilizes the formally and technically inscribed spatial orders of the play. The agent of temporal destabilization is the same as the catalyst of the play's spatial confusion: Macbeth's guilt. It forces Macbeth to occupy one sovereign territory while remaining bound by another; even in a fantasy that imagines a future when he has completed the act of regicide, he envisions the past catching up to and tripping up his ambition. Kevin Curran describes Macbeth's criminal status as "less a state of being" than a "process involving both ideas and things in a way that forces us to abandon the mutually exclusive categories of subject and object." Focusing on the dagger soliloquy, Curran finds that criminality in Macbeth manifests as "a fluid,

[356] Jonathan Gil Harris, "The Smell of *Macbeth*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 58.4 (Winter, 2007): 465-486, esp. 467.

phenomenological exchange between mind and matter to the extent that criminal thoughts and criminal acts are often difficult to distinguish." Dwelling on the continuities between material staged properties and the play's representations of crime and guilt, I propose that *Macbeth* not only integrates "physical sensation" with "mental conception," but also the space created by theatrical techniques with the represented space on stage.[357]

I relate Macbeth to a fascinating group of historical figures who undertook a similar relationship with boundaries: the Anglo-Scottish border reivers. The historical border reiver resided at the Anglo-Scottish border from roughly the 13th century to the start of the 17th, and consisted largely of groups organized around kinship ties. Godfrey Watson points out that "both the English and Scottish Borderers... sprang from much the same mixture of races, spoke much the same language (if with an increasingly different intonation) and shared much [sic] the same peculiarities." Wars waged by Edward I and perpetuated by his successors imposed an "artificial division" upon the Borderers that reduced the region to a "charred wilderness."[358] As such, the borders had for centuries been a troubled region, loosely governed, decentralized, and at the mercy of all manner of crimes at the hands of outlaws. Reivers plagued the borderlands because they could quickly escape from one border territory into another, since each March rested under the jurisdiction of a different warden. As they were not exactly residents of any one territory, they planned their raids on the principle of movement across the imaginary boundaries. Law enforcement in the region was thus

[357] Kevin Curran, "Feeling Criminal in *Macbeth*," *Criticism* 54.3 (Summer 2012): 391-401.
[358] Godfrey Watson, *The Border Reivers*. (London: Robert Hale & Company, 1974): 18.

ineffective, and made even more difficult because it "was a point of honour among the Borderers to express their disdain for authority, by whichever government it was exercised, by offering sanctuary to anyone on the run."[359]

The OED defines reiver, also spelled reaver, as "a robber, a plunderer, a marauder, a raider," citing our Anglo-Scottish one as its prime example. Etymologically, the term traces to the Middle Low Germanic "rover," connoting not just "a pirate" but also "a person who travels from place to place without fixed route or destination... a wanderer, a roamer, a nomad. Also, an animal which ranges over a wide area." "Reiving," the verb, by way of the Old Icelandic *raufa*, also means "to break up, to break open, to pierce, make holes in." In addition, "reiver" was an alternate spelling for "river" until roughly the 17th century—a strange coincidence considering that at important junctures, the Anglo-Scottish border problematically offers no consistent geographical features such as rivers that would serve as natural borders.[360] The conceptual definition I want to put forward for "border reiver" charts a course through these suggestive resonances, and arrives at a figure entirely related to the dynamics of spatial production. The animalistic reiver is in constant motion, violently "ripping" apart customary communal spaces like rivers tear into land. For me, the "border reiver" is not just the historical pirate of the Anglo-Scottish border, but a *pillager of the very word* or concept, "border." They "reive" not only across a border, but the borderline itself. Border reivers *re-write* or re-produce borders through

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[359] Watson, 32.

[360] *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, June 2014), s. v. “reiver, n.” http://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/159128 (accessed August 13, 2014).

an outlaw authority that takes what it wants from and by way of the institutionalized abstractions presented to it—as exploitative outlaws, their relationship to the law is external, like Macbeth's, except their experience is not of guilt but of active protest. Through their selective interpretation of the borderline, which de Certeau might characterize as "poaching" (to run up our list of criminal charges), border reivers form an outlaw community.[361] Border reiver behavior actively misreads the borderline by treating it not as a legal limit but an instrument for evading the law; borders define jurisdiction, but, after all, they also define jurisdictional limits. This approach to the line acknowledges its presence as a figure but wilfully disrespects the apparatus of authorization that allows that line to function at all.

Border reivers relied on the borders in order to successfully escape from their raids, but they themselves essentially viewed the entire space of the borderland as under their criminal purview because they could use these lines as instruments— Luke Wilson might call it "tool-abuse"— *against* the forces that attempted to stop them.[362] The checkered history and geography of the Marches meant that a border dweller "was subject to three or four different collections of laws and regulations, which might well have been confusing if, in fact, he had paid attention to any of them." The natural tendency of all of those at the border, and especially the reivers was thus "to make a common cause against authority."[363] In effect, because of the multiplicity of legal

[361] See Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life,* trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 165-176.

[362] See Luke Wilson, "Renaissance Tool Abuse and the Legal History of the Sudden," *Literature, Politics, and Law in Renaissance England,* eds. Erica Sheen and Lorna Hutson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005): 121-145. Wilson describes tools—by which he means specifically objects like hammers—as "artefacts, human praxis congealed in material form" that "contain in themselves as a structural imprint the instrumental logic of the use for which they were fabricated" (122).

[363] Watson, 41-42.

strictures, produced by centuries of competing claims and unresolved disputes, loosely operating in the border territory, the borderers can be said to occupy what Derrida calls a "voyoucracy," an "outlaw regime." The reiver is like Derrida's *voyou*, operating in "an illegal and outlaw power that brings together... all those who represent a principle of disorder— a principle not of anarchic chaos but of structured disorder, so to speak, of plotting and conspiracy, of premeditated offensiveness or offenses against public order."[364] The "structured disorder" of the voyoucracy coexists with the state structure, yet suspends the entire existing order into Carl Schmitt's state of exception, a situation in which "the state remains, whereas law recedes."[365] The border reivers— and all borderers— organized themselves not by the state's legislative codes but by "their traditional duty to their clan," a community united by "bonds of kinship, as well as the requirement to provide military service in return for any lands they might hold." Obtaining security and welfare in exchange for loyalty, the reivers had generated their own, non-geographic borders. Concepts of the "other" were mapped onto targets abiding by political boundaries and juridical codes, not necessarily simply Englishmen or Scotsmen. A reiver "would think nothing of enlisting the help of friends or relations of the opposite nationality in robbing his compatriots."[366]

Macbeth itself prepares a patchwork of overlapping claims to authority by emphasizing a growing confusion between the desires of the subject and those of the state. It even forecasts its patchwork spatiality when it opens with paradox,

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[364] Jaques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*. Trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005): 66.

[365] Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*. Trans. George Schwab. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005): 12.

[366] Watson, 29.

equivocation, and whirlwind: “When the Hurley-burly’s done/ When the Battaile’s lost, and wonne” (5-6). This is a play taking place in wartime, though a battle has just finished and the soldiers are returning home. The war now exists within the protagonist, within the walking representation of the play itself; the matter of *Macbeth* is Macbeth, and the representational dynamics of the play are informed by the isolation of the character from the world around him. Macbeth exposes the limits of the theater-state by ultimately disregarding them, like reivers do state boundaries. In doing so, the character also allows the audience to perceive the technical components of theatrical production as outlaws perceived March borders—as instruments. In a reading of *Cymbeline*, Braden Cormack argues that “if constitutional crisis emerges from a mischaracterization of the spatio-temporal threshold [which takes the shape of the territorial demarcation of two kingdoms or between a kingdom and an empire], resolution itself can emerge only when the threshold is acknowledged as itself a constitutive unreality, a productive fiction.”[367] The processes of jurisdiction at such a threshold translate crisis into accommodation, conflict into a consensus that “allows both orders to function separately, within spheres or jurisdictions that need not collapse into one another.” The jurisdictional threshold thus indicates a “productive metalegality that follows from a place or person or category becoming unstably subject, in theory or in fact, to more than one norm.”[368] *Macbeth* manufactures a crisis on stage by pushing the dramatic line to its artificial limits. As I will demonstrate, Macbeth’s lines become explicitly charged with double duty, as the words Macbeth

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[367] Bradin Cormack, *A Power to Do Justice: Jurisdiction, English Literature, and the Rise of Common Law, 1509-1625* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 230-231

[368] Cormack, *A Power*, 291

says, while still cues for the other actors, are not necessarily meaningful for them. Whereas *Macbeth*, the theatrical event, had been operating as a coordinated network of productive fictions, in its third act it begins to introduce rival orders of signification and representational practice. The stage remains but the laws of representation recede, and the fictional basis of theatrical production rises to the surface.

On stage, crises of identity (both personal and national) may arise thematically, such as in Cormack's illustrations of Cymbeline's dealings with the Roman Empire, but I propose that they also arise technically in negotiations between represented fields by players with different degrees of "theatrical privilege" or presentational authority.[369] These negotiations may take the character of interactions between *locus* and *platea*, or as the interruptions witnessed in the previous chapter, but in *Macbeth,* they arise in the subtle disagreements and discordances that might creep into actors' behavior on stage. These disagreements, such as one character repeating a question as if another actor playing their interlocutor had missed a line, are generally innocuous, but when they pile upon one another they begin to generate sustained mimetic dissonance. In such moments, it is as if the laws by which theatrical artificiality had been functioning are swiftly abrogated, even if the production itself scripts such moments.[370] The banquet scene in *Macbeth* is such a moment. Through the scene's

[369] Erika Lin explains: "regardless of *who* is socially privileged within the world of the play and regardless of *what* is privileged, thematically or otherwise, in a text-based analysis, moments in …plays that foregrounded the process by which elements presented onstage came to signify within the represented fiction were *theatrically privileged*" (Lin, 37).

[370] William N. West's reading of the end of Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* seems to me a rumination on just this kind of crisis: "Violence, *The Spanish Tragedy* suggests, is both confusing and unequivocal; it is impossible to make sense of, but it works without the need of any mediating interpretation…Setting himself against earlier plays that resolved their confusions at their conclusions, Kyd proposes a theater in which the conclusion is not the end of confusion, but its acme" (West, 229). Another example that comes to mind is the end of Jonson's *Epicene*.

cue-bounded dramatic lines, which found a new theatrical logic upon a crisis of temporal and spatial disjunction, the audience perceives the formalization of two distinct zones: one wherein Macbeth is sovereign, and another wherein he has lapsed into a guilt-ridden state of exception, residing both inside and outside of the law.

The banquet scene begins with the newly crowned king and his wife greeting nobles and allies, a move Paul Kottman describes in terms of an early modern connection between "juridical sovereignty" and the sovereign's "corresponding position as a 'host'."[371] In a phenomenological reading of the play, Julia Reinhard Lupton explains that hospitality is “at once a *theater of persons and a theater of things*” and that “the ritual scripts, spatial routines, object inventories, and physical settings of hospitality integrate the sensible and ethical platforms, as well as the historical and transcendental aspects of the phenomenological project, within a single environment of entertainment.”[372] The stage is set, in other words, for a particular kind of performative enterprise: the consolidation of sovereign power through the phenomenological rhetoric of hospitality. Returning to the example with which this reading of *Macbeth* began, "Both sides are euen: heere Ile sit i’th’mid’st," again finds us following Macbeth as he attempts to take his seat at the center of the table, allowing himself to "mingle with Society / And play the humble Host" (1259-1260). The nod to Macbeth's performance at the center of his newly formed court— what Kottman describes as "the fulcrum, the middle, the center of the gathering"—recalls Jenny

[371] Paul Kottman, "*Macbeth* and the Ghosts of Sovereignty," *Sederi 12*, eds. Luisa-Fernanda Rodríguez Palomero et. al. (2002): pp. 281-300; 291.

[372] Julia Reinhard Lupton, “*Macbeth’*s Martlets: Shakespearean Phenomenologies of Hospitality,” *Criticism* 54.3 (Summer, 2012): 365-376, esp. 367.

Wormald's account of the maneuvers undertaken by the new King James, who brought with him into England a retinue of Scottish nobles and was pressured to balance his court with people from both sides. Scots entering the king's administration and household incited tensions almost immediately in London's political sphere, especially because James's bedchamber —featuring the positions with greatest access to the king's ear — was "almost exclusively Scottish." Wormald notes how according to a French ambassador, the king "naïvely thought that if he had seven of each nation in the bedchamber, both sides would come to like and esteem one another"; instead, this solution ultimately resulted not in détente but in "even greater animosity" and scandal.[373] The proper position of the king is in "i'th'midst," but Macbeth places himself upon a precarious borderline between center and margin; in the next section, we will see how in less blatant ways, James also finds himself a foreigner in his own kingdom.

As the banquet proceeds, the play conflates and confuses the outlaw reiver and the central sovereign, as Macbeth is shown to inhabit a space of individuation within a collaboratively produced environment. The disorientation sets in at the stage direction, "*Enter the Ghost of Banquo, and sits in Macbeths place*" (1299). While ghosts are no strangers to the Jacobean stage, this stage direction confirms the actual onstage appearance of a figment only witnessed and reacted to by one character. Douglas Bruster's take on the creation of public playhouses stresses the extent to which these physical structures were "regularizing influences" that helped to consolidate "cultural

[373] Jenny Wormald, "The union of 1603," *Scots and Britons: Scottish Political Thought and the Union of 1603*, ed. by Roger A. Mason (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

activities in new forms, practices, and structures."[374] The ghost's appearance, however, contradicts the regularized status of phantasms already established within the play—like the dagger, they are only in Macbeth's head—by igniting a situation in which actors and audience must simultaneously feign and embrace ignorance of a material phenomenon. Banquo's ghost provides Macbeth with cues that no other character acknowledges. Unlike the dagger Macbeth sees before murdering Duncan, the physical presence of Banquo's ghost cannot be questioned; if the actors had attempted to "clutch" at Banquo's ghost as Macbeth does the dagger (614), they would have grasped a human body and the folds of cloth comprising the actor's costume.[375] This constitutes, in Henry Turner's terms, a "mimetic rupture" that "accentuates signification to the point of representational confusion."[376] As the scene proceeds and Rosse invites Macbeth to join them at the table, a strange disturbance plays out on stage and in the texture of Macbeth's cues:

> *Macb.* The Table's full.
> *Lenox*. Heere is a place reseru'd Sir.
> *Macb.* Where?
> *Lenox*. Heere my good Lord.
> What is't that moues your Highnesse?
> *Macb.* Which if you haue done this?
> *Lords*. What, my good Lord?
> *Macb.* Thou canst not say I did it: neuer shake Thy goary lockes at me.

[374] Douglas Bruster, "The Birth of an Industry," *The Cambridge History of British Theater, Vol 1: Origins to 1660.* eds. Jane Milling and Peter Thomson. New York: Cambridge University Press (2004): 224-241; 226.

[375] Simon Forman's account of a 1611 production of Macbeth also accounts for the presence of the ghost onstage: "The next night, being at supper with his noble men whom he had bid to a feaste to whiche also Banco should haue com, he began to speake of Noble Banco, and to wish that he wer there. And as he thus did, standing vp to drincke a Carouse to him, the ghoste of Banco came and sate down in his cheier behind him." In Kenneth Muir. "Introduction." *Macbeth*. ed. Kenneth Muir. (The Arden Shakespeare, Methuen Drama: London 1984): xv-xvi.

[376] Turner, *The English Renaissance Stage,* 158-159

(1311-1319)

The friction begins at Macbeth's "The Table's full," which confirms for the audience, which had seen Banquo's ghost enter, that Macbeth sees it too, or at least sees a body occupying every seat at the table. Macbeth's response to Rosse, then is predicated by this perception. The situation gradually worsens when Lenox gives him a stage direction: "Heere is a place reseru'd Sir," and Macbeth, still not seeing, makes his way to the spot, only to double-check this direction—"Where?" This nearly slapstick action repeats (at the same "heere" Macbeth earlier decided upon as his chair "it'th'mid'st") before Macbeth explodes into a theatrical tirade. Lenox's "cue" for his question is Macbeth's performed distemper, but Macbeth's subsequent line ignores Lenox and issues a new, general question: "Which of you haue done this?" The Lords at the table now must perform their perplexity, and they metaphorically recede into the background of the scene as Macbeth and the Ghost take hold of the center. Macbeth, who in this scene had addressed his guests and hired murderers in the space of one cue-bounded line, now directs lines to a figure who is not at all present for the other characters onstage: "Thou canst not say I did it: neuer shake / Thy goary lockes at me." Tribble suggests that in this moment, "Macbeth's plea to the ghost of Banquo... is cued through the line itself" because "if the actor playing Banquo does not perform the required gesture before the line, the effect is unintentionally comic."[377] As a cue-bounded line, however, the utterance also cues the actor playing Rosse to say "Gentlemen rise, his Highnesse is not well" (1320). Suddenly, there seems to be a

[377] Tribble, *Cognition in the Globe*, 66

play-within-a-play, but without any inset stage, makeshift arch, or even spatial distance. Macbeth has left the frame narrative of his banquet, and entered the imaginative space of his guilt. The problem with this progression is that the audience accompanies Macbeth into this space even as it remains firmly planted not only in Inverness's dining room but in a public theater, as well.

The scene asks audiences to simultaneously witness both Macbeth and Banquo's claim to the seat, though the audience, taking cues from Lady Macbeth, knows to equate the ghost with the earlier "Ayre-drawne Dagger" as another "painting of [Macbeth's] feare" (1330-1331). In this moment, jurisdiction and protocols of mimesis functionally converge, as the audience witnesses a stage space in which both Duncan and Macbeth are sovereign. Macbeth's guilt enables the theatrical space to put forward something that challenges the representational apparatus that had been previously operating. The play compels the audience to perceive the king as both *host* and *hostis*, crumbling even the borders of words by disrupting structures of reference. When Lady Macbeth exclaims, "You look but on a stoole" (1337), the pretense of the actors' performances stretches thin and envelops the audience in dissonance. Macbeth himself remarks on the "strangeness" of the event by focusing on something the other actors on stage must pretend not to experience, the overt physicality of Banquo's arrival: "But now they rise againe/ With twenty mortall murthers on their crownes, / And push us from our stooles" (1352-1354). As he rants and maunders about blood and brains, the banquet guests reassert themselves—"My worthy Lord / Your Noble Friends do lacke you" (1356-1357). Remembering himself, he returns to the table and issues a communal toast to Banquo, admirably disguising himself with a well-acted

“Would he were heere” (1366). The banquet, rather than his interactions with the ghost, now seems like an inset play, but before long Macbeth’s transparent facetiousness is again torn apart by a line directed out of one frame and into another: “Auant, & quit my sight” (1369). This would be funny if the character caught up in this delusion were not the king; the absurdity might be called the farcical side of tyranny. Viewing Macbeth's castle through Macbeth’s eyes, the audience is asked to see the same space in two different ways: once through the eyes of a mad king, and once through eyes it knows to be sane. In the process, the representational codes operating in *Macbeth* are defamiliarized and laid bare—we cannot comfortably watch two plays at once.

Kottman's reading of this scene argues that if Macbeth possessed theatrical sovereignty, which consists of a "sharing which serves to gather the community, like a banquet, around its host," he "could have simply commanded the others to affirm that they too see Banquo's Ghost." Consequently, Kottman concludes that this scene is "entirely *un*theatrical" because, unlike the opening scenes of *Hamlet* in which everyone participates in the "*event* of sharing a spectacle," *Macbeth* represents "the potential for isolation inherent in spectatorship."[378] I contend that the scene is instead *hyper*theatrical, as it relies solely on the structuring forces of cue-bounded lines serving a theatrical, but not mimetic, function in order to make the scene legible to audiences. While Kottman claims that *Macbeth* presents "an unmistakable sign of the increasing untenability, or perhaps impossibility, of ... 'theatrical' sovereignty" because of the protagonist’s inability to "share" his vision with a community, I emphasize the

[378] Kottman, 283.

perspective of the community forming just offstage: those onlookers who see precisely what Macbeth sees, though they know that they should not.[379] What the audience comes to apprehend is not necessarily Macbeth's failure, but his complete psychological isolation from his subjects. He is king now, but as sovereign he cannot be beholden to laws (or internal doubts) which declare him a traitor. The crisis of Macbeth's ambivalence, which the audience experiences with him, makes palpable the fact of the king's two bodies. The temporal bodies of kings, like the physical bodies of actors on stage, are revealed to be reliant upon the technical language that binds them to others. Though actors, like kings, have the freedom to operate outside of their lines, or outside of the law, they cannot make their will apparent if they do not know how to translate that will into technical practice.

I conclude this section by reaffirming that the banquet scene, by exposes the technical joints of company performance, reflects upon the formalized modes by which a king may command and organize subjects. Macbeth unconsciously becomes a kind of border reiver, but whereas the historical border reivers derive advantage from their willingness to abuse the borderline, Macbeth suffers from his inability to stop respecting it even after he has punctured it. In the moments before the banquet scene, *Macbeth* worries aloud about the consequences of his past actions:

> We haue scorch'd the Snake, not kill'd it:
> Shee'le close, and be her selfe, whilest our poore Mallice
> Remaines in danger of her former Tooth.
> But let the frame of things dis-ioynt,
> Both the Worlds suffer,
> Ere we will eate our Meale in feare, and sleepe

[379] Kottman, 296.

> In the affliction of these terrible Dreames,
> That shake us Nightly. (1167-1174)

The same Macbeth who was hesitant at the start of the play has become violently determined here. His enemy does not appear to be Banquo or Macduff, but rather the "Dreames" that keep him up at night. Macbeth would suppress his guilt if he could, because he worries that it will lead him to eat his meals in a state of perpetual worry. His decision to murder Banquo, then, prophetically risks a universal state of disjunction wherein he is forced from his seat and away from his meal—"let the frame of things dis-ioynt." The banquet scene formalizes this disjunction by making Macbeth an intruder upon his own feast, and within his own play. Like a border reiver, he straddles the borderline and does not allow it to close, weakening the worlds on either side.

In the next section, I continue my examination of how sovereignty must speak through the rules, even if it wants to break them, by examining King James's attempts to erase the Anglo-Scottish Borderline. Unlike the border reivers, who reappropriate the line by respecting its status as a rule made into a definition of space, James attempts to erase it from without. The lonely inefficacy of King James's plans to re-author the Anglo-Scottish borderline, I argue, locates the anxiety of sovereignty in the radical instability of the iconic line.

"Borders will be borders"

As dramatic lines help establish the presence of a ghost (as they would any new character), they are also the material by which a play can represent that ghost as

the delusion of a madman—lines undergird both *locus* and *platea* effects, and are the conditions upon which coordinated representational practice operates. Similarly, political borderlines are not just articulations of legal limits, but are dreamed up as and through law. Jurisdiction, introduced briefly in the previous section, is a key concept in understanding the relationships between regulated spaces, and in this chapter I view jurisdiction as operating analogously to the protocols of mimesis that constrain onstage representational practices in *Macbeth*. In simple terms, jurisdiction describes the field over which a given legal apparatus or institution has the authority to make a judgment. Bradin Cormack's magisterial study on the topic goes further, however, and explains that jurisdiction is "the principle, integral to the structure of law, through which the law, as an expression of its order and limits, projects an authority that, whatever its origin, needs functionally no other ground."[380] Articulated most neatly by the geopolitical borderline, jurisdiction in some sense exists both within and outside of the law; it comprises the contours of legal dominion but is also seemingly codified through that dominion. Like the practices of professional playing, which generally disappear behind the veil of representation, jurisdiction is "the kind of category or principle whose operations can become invisible by coming to seem merely technical" during normal operations.[381] Nevertheless, jurisdiction exposes its complex and radically unsettled inner workings at "thresholds"—at junctures of juridical conflict and overlap, where the position of authority is itself left undefined or unclear. Before James's ascension, the borderline had been formally inscribed as what Lisa Hopkins

[380] Cormack, *A Power,* 9.
[381] Cormack, *A Power*, 27.

calls a "symbolic presence" and psychological barrier in the English national imaginary.[382] One of King James's first initiatives after becoming crowned king of England in 1603, however, is the erasure of the borderline, which ignites a crisis at the jurisdictional threshold. James's agenda pits the will of the king directly against the legal apparatus of a nation he has just entered.

Both Macbeth and James confront, in their dealings with boundary concepts, the tension between the conceptual bases and technical conditions of sovereignty, a tension captured in shorthand as "the king's two bodies." In his foundational treatises on sovereignty, Jean Bodin describes sovereignty as the "most high, absolute, and perpetuall power" which resides outside of and anterior to the law and which is therefore capable of making and enforcing laws without being subject to them.[383] Ernst Kantorowicz's crucial intervention on the theorization of sovereignty, however, recognizes a division in the status of sovereignty between the "body natural" and the "body politic."[384] In his own treatises on kingship, *Basilicon Doron* and *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*, James seems to uphold the theological grounds for sovereign authority forwarded by Bodin when he declares that "kings were the authors and makers of the Lawes, and not the Lawes of kings." James also echoes Bodin when he

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[382] Lisa Hopkins suggests that the "symbolic presence" of physical indications of boundary such as Hadrian's Wall enabled the English to maintain a spiritual identity and natural history distinct from that of the Scots, who were often othered as descendants of the cannibalistic Picts. In the absence of these physical touchstones, or more precisely in the erasure of their significance, Hopkins sees nationalistic Englishmen — Shakespeare included — expressing apprehension at forced and contrived union; *Macbeth*, she finds, "does not so much engage with the idea of a border as lament the lack of one." See Lisa Hopkins, *Shakespeare On The Edge: Border-crossing In The Tragedies And The Henriad* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 59–86.

[383] Jean Bodin, *The six bookes of a common-weale...*, trans. Richard Knolles (London: Printed by Adam Islip, 1606), 84, Early English Books Online, eebo.chadwyck.com, Bodleian Library.

[384] Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

warns against civil rebellion by making clear that the king is appointed by god and thus beyond human reproach; "he that hath the only power to make him, hath the onely power to vnmake him."[385] His political philosophy becomes somewhat murky, however, when James acknowledges that while the king is above the law, "as both the author and giuer of strength thereto," a good king will nevertheless "not onely delight to rule his subiects by the lawe, but euen will conforme himself in his owne actions thervnto, always keeping that ground, that the health of the common-wealth be his chiefe law."[386] Rather than affirming the existence of a "contract" made between king and subjects, James proposes that "a king at his coronation, or at the entry to his kingdome, willingly promiseth to his people, to discharge honorably and trewly the office giuen by God ouer them." Even if this promise is interpreted as a contract, James contends that "God is doubtles the only Iudge."[387] Jonathan Goldberg maps the contradictory nature of James's political philosophy by observing the "double bind" of James's hierarchical organization of God-king-subjects/judges. As James suggests he has the responsibility to observe God's laws, the subjects have the responsibility to observe his. At the same time, he grants himself license to decide upon God's laws, but wants his subjects to be incapable of deciding upon his own.[388]

According to Bodin, in order to maintain "first and chiefe marke of a soveraigne prince," which is "the power giue lawes to all his subiects in generall, and

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[385] King James VI and I, "The Trew Law of Free Monarchies." *Political Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 62-84, esp. 68.
[386] King James VI and I, "Trew Law," 75
[387] King James VI and I, "Trew Law," 81.
[388] Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press,1983), 118.

to euerie one of them in particular," it parenthetically follows that "(yet it is not enough, but that we must ioyne thereunto) without consent of any other greater, equall, or lesser than himself."[389] Elaborating on Bodin's conception of the sovereign's singularity, Carl Schmitt famously declares that the sovereign is "he who decides on the exception," with the exception being "a case of extreme peril, a danger to the existence of the state, or the like" that "cannot be circumscribed factually and made to conform to a preformed law." Putting it another way, Schmitt posits the sovereign as he "who is competent to act when the legal system fails to answer the question of competence."[390] When understood according to these principles, the case of King James I becomes a clear problem for the doctrinal notion of the undivided sovereign. As James himself acknowledges in *Basilicon Doron,* kings "may be readier with wisedome and Iustice" when governing subjects" by knowing what vices they are naturallie most inclined to." Pointedly, he reveals that "as for *England*, I will not speake be-gesse of them, neuer hauing been among them."[391] When he becomes king of both nations, it stands to reason that he would be singularly competent to adjudicate over the variety of issues that arose upon his ascension, including questions of marriage, allegiance, and inheritance, but in truth this turns out not to be the case.[392] These concerns became bureaucratic legal matters, because James established a "personal" or "regnal" union between the two nations but famously failed to install a

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[389] Bodin, 159

[390] Schmitt, 5-6; 11.

[391] King James VI and I, "Basilicon Doron," *Political Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1-61, esp. 25.

[392] Kevin Curran explains James's attempts to integrate his two kingdoms by encouraging intermarriage between English and Scottish nobility, see Kevin Curran, "Erotic Policy: King James, Thomas Campion, and the Rhetoric of Anglo-Scottish Marriage," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 7.1 (Spring-Summer 2007): 55-77.

political and *legal* union—within his very body thus raged the abstract conflict between the king's two bodies.

Whereas James's rationalizing of the king's duties in his political treatises results in both an unbounded and a duty-bound absolutism, which might be characterized ambiguously as "moderate absolutism," the essential contradiction of this position could not be practically sustained for long.[393] The king meets the limits of his own ambiguous conception of sovereignty when he attempts erase the borderline. The line, like the king's two bodies, is a nexus between material form and abstract concept, and moreover a borderline is the point of inflection between the inside and outside of law. James's attempts to arbitrate over it stem from his belief in a super-legal sovereign authority that is not grounded within the physical body of the king and its technical entanglement within the everyday apparatus of law. Just as a cue-bounded dramatic line positions an actor/character both within and outside of the representational frame of a theatrical event, the borderline's unflinching doubleness—as a technical practice and as way to define real space—exposes how jurisdiction is the language through which sovereignty speaks.[394] Without it underpinning his authority, James's actions and orders as sovereign carry little weight and effectively become meaningless. Cormack thinks through this same issue in a reading of *The Winter's Tale*, where he argues that the play "is about the threat of difference to indivisible sovereignty and, in reverse, the absurdity of indivisibility as a starting point

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[393] J. Pauline Croft, *King James* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 132.

[394] Cormack, discussing the folding of Agamben's "zone of indifferentiation" into a juridical order *as* sovereignty, claims that "there is no sovereignty that is not enacted in the register of jurisdiction" (Cormack, *A Power*, 9).

for thinking about power in a world in which power simply is differentiated, and in which meaning simply is distributed." Rather than seeing the principle of indivisibility as "consolidating royal power," Cormack finds that this principle "erodes sovereignty from within, by intensifying its vulnerability to the difference it is unable to properly acknowledge."[395] James, who advises his son that "a King is as one set on a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures, all the people gazingly do behold," quickly ascertains in his attempts to re-author the Anglo-Scottish borderline that like all actors, the king's abilities are cue-bounded and embedded within the cooperative production of juridical nation-building.[396]

Shortly after being crowned "King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland" in 1603, James I devised a plan. As the new personal sovereign over more than one kingdom, James sought, first of all, to simplify things and unite all of his territories under one legal structure. Near the top of his agenda was the removal of the Anglo-Scottish borderline, especially because those irksome border reivers still persisted in violently raiding and pillaging the region. While reivers and other outlaws continued to challenge border authorities on all fronts, the new king of both nations became preoccupied with the idea that the bilious intestine of the island was becoming a threat to his whole body politic. In fact, it appears as if he saw the settling the borderland's troubles as a potential tool for public relations. As with his proposal in his 1604

[395] Bradin Cormack, "Shakespeare's Other Sovereignty: On Particularity and Violence in *The Winter's Tale* and the Sonnets," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62.4 (Winter 2011): 485-513, esp. 490-491. Cormack similarly identifies the king's difference in "linguistic obscurity": "Even though [Leontes] talks to and at others in speech full of consequence for them, he turns out to be talking with himself, in a place that in Hermione's sense is beyond language, in the world but not of it" (491).

[396] King James VI and I, "Basilicon Doron," 49.

program before parliament to change the royal style from "King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland" to "King of Great Britain," James's decision with regards to the troubled borderland was first an official renaming of the region occupied by the border marches to "The Middle Shires" in the hopes of transforming, as he put it, “the extremities" to "the middle." [397] S. J. Watts and Susan Watts suggest that from James’s perspective, if he could pacify the Middle Shires, the region "could be regarded by all men of good will as a symbol of the new harmony and as a microcosm of the yet unborn united kingdom of Great Britain."[398] In a speech issued on May of 1603, just a few months after his coronation, James lays his vision out and “commands” its acceptance:

> [H]is Maiestie doth hereby repute, hold, and esteeme, and commands all his Hignes Subiects to repute, hold, and esteeme both the two Realmes as presently united, and as one Realme and Kingdome, and the Subiects of both the Realmes as one people, brethren, and members of one body.[399]

James's appeals look like Macbeth's banquet, with the king playing the role of host, ushering his Scottish subjects into his new home in England and asking them to join

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[397] See Bruce R. Galloway and Brian P. Levack, “Introduction,” *The Jacobean Union: Six tracts of 1604*. eds. Bruce R. Galloway and Brian P. Levack. (Edinburgh: Clark Constable, 1985), xix, and George Macdonald Fraser, *The Steel Bonnets: The Story of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers*. (London: Collins Harvill, 1986): 362.

[398] S. J. Watts with Susan Watts, *From Border to Middle Shire: Northumberland 1586-1625*. (Leicester University Press, 1975): 133-134. Neil Rhodes suggests that James’s problems with the borders proposed the Union “specifically as an answer to Scottish problems” because the “Union project will heal not only a divided Britain, but also a divided Scotland.” Also see Neil Rhodes, “Wrapped in the strong arms if the Union: Shakespeare and King James,” *Shakespeare and Scotland*, eds. Andrew Murphy and Willy Maley (New York: Manchester University Press, 2004): 37-52, esp. 42.

[399] King James VI and I, "(19 May 1603) By the King forasmuch as the Kings Maiestie, in his princely disposition to iustice hauing euer a speciall care and regard to haue repressed the slaughters, spoyles, robberies and other enormities which were so frequent and common vpon the borders of these realmes" (London : By Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Maiestie, 1603).

the community. Paralleling the actions he wishes his subjects to take with his own, James essentially orders a harmonious alignment in which the English and the Scots "repute, hold, and esteeme" both realms as incorporated. He attempts theatrical sovereignty by trying to share his vision, commanding the people of both countries to see the unification of the nations through the spectacular event of his ascension. Almost immediately, however, James's attempts "utterlie to extinguishe as well the name, as substance of the bordouris" run into a problem: his prerogative powers as king are "not in themselves sufficient to consummate the marriage between his two kingdoms." Consequently, in his speech proclaiming the borders "the middle shires," James calls for a change in public perspective for the "meane time" while he plans to work with the "aduice of the Estates and Parliament of both kingdomes" to legally perfect the union.[400]

The king's efforts contend with what Bruce Galloway describes as a "residual hostility and prejudice" between the two nations that relied on stereotypes and England's assertion of a "moral supremacy" over the northern kingdom.[401] While the English promoted suzerainty, effectively an ingestion and assimilation of Scotland by England, the Scottish advocated for a union of equality maintained through the preservation of particular institutions in each realm.[402] If king's new title over both regions were sufficient, he could simply command his subjects to peacefully affirm that they were now "brethren, and members of one body"; if Macbeth wielded true

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[400] King James VI and I., 19 May 1603

[401] Galloway, *Union* 11

[402] Sharon Alker and Holly Faith Nelson, "*Macbeth*, the Jacobean Scot, and the Politics of the Union," *SEL* 47.2 (2007): 379-401; 380.

sovereignty he and his guests would all see (or not see) Banquo's Ghost. Watts and Watts explain that “English constitutional theory demanded that [James] obtain parliamentary approval for the union,” and they recount how in the half decade after his coronation, James appointed officials to the borders with the express purpose of quashing all resistance and restoring order. More than just an administration of justice, these efforts were a bit of political theater: James held on to the belief that the pacified Middle Shires would become analogized with the concept of a united Great Britain in the minds of opponents to the union.[403]

The Scottish lawyer John Russell helpfully articulates both facets of James's plan for addressing the borders. Bemoaning the "intestine uearis quairof great inconuenientis hes enseuit to baith the countreyis,"[404] Russell looks to James admiringly:

> Is it not to the great felicitie of this ile that haill Britanie is alreddy unitit in ane sceptor and jurisdictioun? The bordorer theiff and traitour, the seditious and uickit persoun [are] reducit to peace and obedience, having na bak dure for his refuge— the lait execution of michtie and strong malefactoris heir can ber uitnes.[405]

In Russell's acknowledgment of the effacement of all "bak dure[s]," James's proposed re-conceptualization of the border space itself becomes apparent; the opening of the borders paradoxically shut the doors on the criminals. Russell reiterates the theological alignment of Scotland and England through the "laufull successioun of his Majestie to

[403] Watts and Watts, 133-148.

[404] John Russell, "A Treatise of the Happie and Blissed Union." *The Jacobean Union: Six tracts of 1604*. eds. Bruce R. Galloway and Brian P. Levack. (Edinburgh: Clark Constable, 1985):75-142; 101.

[405] Russell, 116-17.

baith the kingdomes," essentially positing the king's own person as capable of stopping "all seditiones baith intestine and outuard."[406] The personal merger between the nations effectively applies, in Russell's view, a canvassing legal jurisdiction over the Marches. With the borders no longer considered escape-hatches, James could end "intestine uearis" by purging those "malefactoris" choosing not to assimilate into the newly constituted body politic. This purging, however, was not conceptual, figural, or "psychological"[407]— the fact that doors had been ideologically and politically closed did not stop the reivers, whose behavior was governed by an active resistance to authority, not by the exploitation of legal loopholes. The non-figurative, more drastic, and more effective facet of James's campaign as such entailed the efficient and ruthless executions or displacement of all border reivers and their allies. Once James recognized that he was not winning the "hearts and minds" of his subjects in the borders, he started going after their necks.

In 1603 James appointed juridical authorities on either side of the border—George Home for the Scottish Marches, and George Clifford on the English side.[408] With regards to the border reivers, his idea was to initiate a kind of state discipline relying on self-policing, on May 17th charging all "Actours, Partners, or [persons] of consent" of the Reivers' incursions to come plead for mercy by June 20th. Those that did not were threatened to be "for euer excluded from [James's] mercy without hope at any time to obtaine grace or fauour, but to abide the rigour of such punishment, as [James's] power can lay upon him," a threat reiterated two days later in his May 19th

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406 Russell, 101.
407 Watson, 193.
408 Watts and Watts, 136-138.

proclamation.[409] In the following year, after James instituted a border commission to administer over the region, a "dreadful crop of executions of principal offenders" occurred, perhaps what is being referenced by Russell's mention of the "lait execution of michtie and strong malefactoris."[410] This commission consisted of officials from each side of the border appointed by James working together to expunge the reivers, and was remarkably effective. The reivers "had lost the great, the vital advantage by which they had existed: they could no longer play off one side against the other." By 1605, the borderland became a police state that was "most barbarously administered," with James's eventual and most powerful policeman and executioner, William Cranston, responsible for swift and efficient hangings of all malefactors.[411] By 1609, the Middle Shires were "as quiet as any part in any civil kingdom in Christeanity."[412]

In the end, James's proposal on May 19th 1603 to "with all convenient diligence with the aduice of the Estates and Parliament of both the Kingdomes make [the union] to be perfited" was largely empty, or overly optimistic. While James's efforts early on were to essentially transform the ways in which his citizens all over the island perceived one another, he could not extend real political continuity over the Marches. The border James broke down by force was merely the figurative line at the heart of his kingdom; he had done relatively little to manipulate the residual friend-enemy distinction between Scots and Englishmen. In a 1607 speech to parliament,

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[409] James VI and I, "(17 May 1603) By the King the foule and insolent outrages lately committed vpon the the borders of our realmes of England and Scotland by persons accustomed in former times to liue by rapine and spoyle" (Imprinted at London : By Robert Barker, May 17, 1603).

[410] Galloway, *Union* 84-85.

[411] Fraser, 363-4.

[412] Fraser, 374.

James nevertheless attempts again to rewrite the terms through which the borders could be represented in the national imagination:

> Those confining places which were the Borders of the two Kingdomes, where heretofore much blood was shed, and many of your ancestours lost their liues; yea, that lay waste and desolate, and were habitations but for runnagates, are now become the Nauell or Vmbilick of both Kingdomes, planted and peopled with Ciuilitie and riches: their Churches begin to bee planted, their doores stand now open, they feare neither robbing nor spoiling.[413]

James's "psychological approach," consisting of relabeling and rearticulating what the borders and indeed the nation itself signified, failed to convince his subjects to start calling the familiar by different names, to re-conceive of their own countries. His idealistic plans to conceptually unite his two kingdoms never really left the ground, as both the English and the Scots expressed disinterest in full-fledged unity (which would arrive in 1707, a full century later). P. W. J. Riley summarizes that "[n]obody seemed able to conceive of any benefit to the island as a whole save that of removing the debilitating effects of internal strife. James's subjects were manifestly out of sympathy with his ambitions and he had to resign himself to the mere possession of both crowns."[414] Even James's attempts to rename the country to "Great Britain" fell through, as English sentiments adhered to a sense of the precedence of "England" and refused any change in name before union in government.[415] James had by no means united his kingdoms, and the tangible success James did achieve in the border

[413] King James VI and I, " Speech to parliament of 31 March 1607," *Political Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 159-179, esp. 169.

[414] P.W. J. Riley, *The Union of England and Scotland*. (Rowman: Manchester University Press, 1978): 4.

[415] Galloway, *Union* 20.

regions—the "Ciuilitie and riches"— were the product not of changes of heart in the populace but of enforced state discipline. In 1606, the idea of erasing the borders had effectively become a dead issue after another negative parliamentary vote. In the wake of this latest outcome, one of the petitioners for keeping the marches as they were smugly declared, in defiance of the king, "Scotland will be Scotland, borders will be borders."[416] The existence and influence of the line extended beyond the temporality of its material body, fulfilling the dream of an unbounded sovereignty for the line, but not for the king.

Theatrical lines, like borderlines, are not metaphysical concepts free from the contingencies of practice and correspondence; they are made effective by those proficient and competent enough to keep them operational. In the final section, I elaborate upon how Macbeth becomes fundamentally unfit to be king as his dramatic lines do not fit in the theatrical space he occupies. In the place of Macbeth, who fails in exercising the theatricality—a blend of theory and practice—necessary for sovereignty, I propose that the play advances Malcolm, who offers consolation as a king equipped with the improvisational professionalism necessary of both actors and leaders.

The Sovereign Line

Macbeth makes its own cue-bounded dramatic lines the foundation for creating the experience of inhabiting a contentious political threshold. A dramatic line, after all,

[416] Watts and Watts, 151.

functions as a tacit but technically firm contract between an actor and his colleagues, a contract that extends, as well, to the paying audience. If a character's lines – and especially a king's—fail to satisfy this contract, the play as a whole suffers. In a scenario where the an actor does indeed deliver the correct lines and cues, but these lines do not seem at all like they fit within the natural course of dialogue, it can nevertheless be jarring to an audience expecting harmony and continuity. Everyone knows that theatrical speech is less vulnerable to the miscommunications and incidental distractions that plague everyday speech, so when onstage language, despite being scripted, *seems* unscripted, when dramatic lines become hollow signifiers, allowing their technical functions to eclipse their content, a play can appear disorganized and unruly. I argue that the potential threat posed by the figure of the line to representational practice on stage resembles the borderline's threat to sovereignty. The conceptual integrity of a geopolitical borderline underpins the invisible contract between sovereignty and the law, because a borderline is meant to organize a plurality of legal codes, unspoken rules, and local norms under the dominance of clear and canvassing juridical authorities. If the borderline is treated as a hollow figure, however, it brings this plurality of legal structures into intimate conflict.[417] In this final section, I argue that *Macbeth* reveals the ways in which sovereignty must articulate itself with respect to the rules established by lines before it can subvert and rewrite those rules. A sovereign may exist "outside" of the law, but he must speak through its

[417] Michelle R. Warren points out that "the figure of paradox inhabits all boundary concepts because the line of the limit seeks to institute an absolute difference at the place of most intimate contact between two spaces." Michelle R. Warren, *History on the Edge: Excalibur and the Borders of Britain, 1100-1300* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 2.

rules in order to be heard.

When we last left Macbeth, he was ruining his own banquet. Lady Macbeth, finally giving up the pretense of hospitable performance, pushes the dinner guests out of doors and offstage: “Question enrages him: at once, goodnight. / Stand not upon the order of your going, / But go at once” (1397-1399). Macbeth’s visions have brought the frame of things is so thoroughly out of joint that the dramaturgical cue she provides her guests relinquishes its own claim to being an “order of [their] going.” It is a cue that unmakes the structure of the hospitality-event onstage even as it engenders a theatrical event built upon the shaky foundation of crossed signals and misaligned perspectives. Once the stage has emptied, Macbeth foreshadows the play’s final phase in a soliloquy that transitions into a dialogue:

> It will have blood, they say: blood will have blood:
> Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak;
> Augures, and understood relations, have
> By magot-pies, and choughs, and rooks, brought forth
> The secret’st man of blood.—What is the night? (1404-1408)

Hearkening traditions of prophecy, augury, and druidic witchcraft, Macbeth’s perspective has become radically unstuck in time, and he is armed with his own unique canons of interpretation.[418] These premonitions recall not only classical and folkloric accounts of talking trees and moving stones, but also King James’s *Daemonology* (1597), in which the king explains that in a “secret murther, if the dead carkasse bee at any time handled by the murtherer, it will gush out of bloud.” Macbeth

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[418] These references are catalogued in Kenneth Muir’s Arden Edition of the play (London: Methuen Drama, 1984), pg. 97, footnote 125.

now cannot help but view his predicament in light of myth rather than the material reality wherein his stool remains empty: stones might move and trees may go on to speak—and Birnam Wood will come to Dunsinane—but their manner of doing so happens in a play different from the one in which Macbeth imagines himself participating. Despite these strange glimpses into the future, Macbeth's speech here still finds him straddling two kingdoms, and in the space of another blank verse, he snaps out of his historical scope and back to the pressing immediacy of his current predicament, asking, "What is the night?" The political reality and prescribed behaviors of sovereign hospitality return to him, ominously: "How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person/ At our great bidding." (1410-1411). Just a few moments later, Macbeth consciously dislocates his actions from the community of players and subjects which legitimize theatrical sovereignty: "Strange things I have in head, that will to hand, / Which must be acted, ere they may be scand" (1421-1422). Guests are forced to leave before being properly asked, and the king resolves to act upon his will without the government of "scanning"—Macbeth is becoming a tyrant, and onstage tyranny out-Herods Herod by taking the characteristics of a player laying claim to a play for himself.

The psychological detachment Macbeth suffers from his guests and its representation as theatrical and perspectival misalignment lingers through to the end of the play. The currency of theatrical exchange is the dramatic line, but in the final acts of *Macbeth* the king's lines exemplify Macbeths' failures as sovereign. Macbeth's guilt positions him both inside and outside of his own kingdom not as the sovereign but as a rogue, and the play then allows Malcolm, a king presented as in control of his

theatricality, to restore capable government. Central to my reading is simple question about the last act of the play: why does it seem like the new king has so much trouble communicating with everyone else? This problem is most prominent in Macbeth's crucial misinterpretation the prophecies that will lead to his death, but it also manifests in a series of minor, almost tetchy exchanges between the king and those around him. In a theatrical environment so reliant upon actors supporting one another in the artful execution of a dramatic product, the futility of Macbeth's words to be both communicative as well as theatrical cues signals the play's inquiry into the technical aspects of a king's authority.

To begin to answer this question, we might begin with the ceaseless knocking that overtakes the middle section of *Macbeth*. "Here's a knocking, indeede" (744) says the Porter, whose cue-bounded line begins with the knocks and continues awhile until, memorably, "remember the Porter" (762). Knocks on the door are a call for hospitality, and as such a quintessential component of social life: one satisfies the barest terms of the contract of civility by answering the door when someone knocks. By being for the most part ineffectual, the knocks suggest the breakdown of this contract, and characterize the lord of the castle as antisocial or negligent. Once finally inside, Macduff suggests that his knocks have actually been Macbeth's cues—"Our knocking ha's awak'd him; here he comes (786)—because of course the host is alert to the needs of his guests, and of course a knock-knock anticipates a "who's there?" from those within. If we think of knocks as functionally homologous to cue-bounded lines, as technical actions that require acknowledgment in order to keep the drama of civility operational, the play's incessant knocking underscores the extent to which Inverness

and its owners have become isolated and insular. Paying attention to Macbeth's own cue-bounded lines over the remainder of the play, then, reveals the king to be trapped in a space closed off from everyone else, and where his lines in turn function like knocks that no one else hears.

Macbeth, having decided to collapse his thoughts with his deeds, theatrically and intellectually, if not physically, occupies a world wherein reality mirrors his imagination. The play's witches compel him in this solipsistic world-building by feeding his suspicions that the sovereign's thoughts need no scanning. After he resolves to consult the Weird Sisters, he finds them confirming for him the incipient suspicion that the only reality that matters is the one inside his own head. Theatrically, the entire scene functions by way of commands, with Macbeth issuing the first: "I coniure you, by that which you Professe, / (How ere you come to know it) answer me" (1580-1581). In response to the hyperbolic speech that follows, the witches reply, "Speake. / Demand/ Wee'l answer" (1592-1594) before asking if Macbeth would rather hear the responses from their mouths or from their masters. Given the order to "Call 'em" (1497), the witches then begin a brief ritual which ends in a cue for thunder and the first apparition. Until this juncture, there is nothing theatrically special about this scene, aside from perhaps the perfunctory manner by which lines of commanding dialogue perform their most basic theatrical function and collapse into cues. Once the apparitions enter the stage, however, this logic is threatened.

As Macbeth readies his command for the apparition of "*an Armed Head*" (1604), he finds himself interrupted by the first witch:

Macb: Tell me, thou unknowne power.
I: He knowes thy thought:
Heare his speech, but say thou nought. (1605-1607)

The apparition's warning—"Beware *Macduffe*" (1609)—confirms suspicions Macbeth had been harboring since his feast, but more importantly, it confirms Macbeth's own resolution to conflate his thoughts with his actions, since his thoughts now apparently extend out into a plane where such knowledgeable apparitions may confirm them. When Macbeth seeks "But one word more" (1613), he is again reprimanded, and told to let the drama play out on its own: "He will not be commanded: heere's anohter / More potent than the first" (1614-1615). Once prophetically told that "none of woman borne/ Shall harme *Macbeth*" (1621-1622), Macbeth resolves to "make assurance: double sure" (1624), and vows to kill Macduff—implying that at least a part of him still doubts the truth of such auguries. In this moment of plotting, however, his thoughts are interrupted by the final apparition: "What is this, that rises like the issue of a King...?" (1628). The arrival of the final apparition, a "*Child Crowned, with a Tree in his hand*" (1627) accompanies the repeated order from the witches: "Listen, but speak not too't" (1632). Foreclosing the possibility of interacting with this final prophecy, "*Macbeth* shall neuer vanquish'd be, untill / Great Byrnam Wood, to high Dunsinane Hill / Shall come against him" (1635-1636), causes it to remain univocal and unambiguous to a king now used to words and signs collapsing into what they appear to signify. Macbeth, of course, does not even register the proleptic "Tree" in the child's hand, as he asks "Who can impresse the Forrest, bid the Tree / Unfixe his earth-bound Root?" (1639-1640). Repeatedly told to keep his mouth shut, Macbeth

finds his commands functioning only as technical cues for the witches' remonstrations.

The next time Macbeth takes the stage, after a span of roughly five hundred lines, he haughtily invests in his interpretations of these prophecies—"Bring me no more Reports, let them flye all: / Till Byrnane wood remoue to Dunsinane, / I cannot taint with Feare" (2215-2217). His refusal of any "reports" translates quickly, then, into his inability to actually receive them. When a servant enters to give him some bad news, Macbeth treats him to a series of taunts which seem to miss the point entirely:

> *Macb*. The diuell damne thee blacke, thou cream-fac'd Loone:
> Where got'st thou that Goose-look.
> *Ser.* There is ten thousand.
> *Macb.* Geese Villaine?
> *Ser.* Souldiers Sir.
> *Macb*. Go pricke thy face, and ouer-red thy feare
> Thou Lilly-liuer'd Boy. What Soldiers, Patch?
> Death of thy Soule, those Linnen cheekes of thine
> Are Counsailers to feare. What Souldiers Whay-face?
> (2226-2234)

Macbeth here generates what Kenneth Gross might call a great deal of Shakespearean "noise."[419] This disruptive back and forth finds the king behaving like an impetuous bully and having a laugh, presumably at one of his servants' appearance. Brown depicts this scene as an example of the "amazingly varied verbal images that express lively sensations and rapidly changing thoughts" in Shakespeare's plays, but we might press further and ask what it is even doing in the play.[420] Again, it shows absurdity

[419] Kenneth Gross, *Shakespeare's Noise* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
[420] Brown, 37-38.

coupling with tyranny through the pathways of theatrical dialogue; *Macbeth* does not feature a clown, but this figure playing for laughs certainly seems, like a clown, as if he wants to claim the audience's attention. A clown, however, is precisely the sort of figure that might derail a play—along with over-actors, it is the clown that Hamlet fears most while instructing the players. Moreover, it is the clown, Richard Preiss argues, that "personified the heterogeneous, improvisatory dimension of theatre that playgoers craved." Clownish behavior "was the epicenter of theatre's 'liveness'," and was thus in some ways threatened by structure and textual stabilization.[421] Macbeth's dramatic lines here, as incidental dialogue missing the literal forest approaching him for the trees of his delusional perspective, resist the inexorable progression of the prophesied conclusion. Soon after he is jarred out of his enchantment, Macbeth's lines, he decides, signify nothing (2349).

The problem Macbeth seems to encounter in the last stages of the play is that he cannot understand what is going on around him. Having utterly missed the material clue of the "Tree" held by the childlike apparition telling him about the motion of "Byrnane Wood," how could he anticipate that the child-king Malcolm might come up with the order, "Let euery Soldier hew him downe a Bough, / And bear't before him" (2296-2297) as a strategy for concealing the number of his troops? The boughs borne by these soldiers are likely even the same material property held as a "Tree" in apparition's hand. During his climactic encounter with Macduff at the end of the play, Macbeth again seems strangely out of sorts. First of all, he begins the scene on the stage alone, but must be commanded to acknowledge the entrance of Macduff:

[421] Preiss, 9.

“Turne, Hell-hound, turne” (2440). Macduff then proclaims that he “has no words” and that his “voice is in [his] Sword” (2444-2445), emphasizing the groundless power of language not backed by authority. The conversation then finally lands on Macbeth’s misinterpretation: “I beare a charmed Life, which must not yeeld / To one of woman borne.” As soon as Macduff responds that he was “from his Mothers womb / Untimely ript,” Macbeth himself seems to locate his problems squarely on language: “Accursed be that tongue that tels me so” (2451-2457).

Richard C. McCoy notes how Macbeth’s errors in the play reveal him to be “surprisingly naïve and literal minded.” Noting how the play appears dominated by concerns about equivocation, McCoy positions Malcolm, who relies “on a cunning stratagem of equivocation and careful scrutiny to test potential friends and adversaries alike,” as the play’s hero. Malcolm’s recognition of the theatrical and political value of equivocation—kings must “lie like truth” just as actors do—makes him a more intellectually agile leader in comparison to Macbeth.[422] The centerpieces of Malcolm’s performance are the remarkably off-key confessions he makes to Macduff in Act 4, wherein he announces that should he reclaim the Scottish throne, it will “haue more vices than it had before” (1867). After leading Macduff down a winding path to exasperation and disappointment—to crying out, “O Scotland, Scotland” (1927)—Malcolm prompts him for a response: “If such a one be fit to gouerne, speake: / I am as I haue spoken” (1928-1929). After Macduff proclaims that he will abandon Malcolm, the prince gives up the façade: “My first false speaking / Was this upon

[422] Richard C. McCoy, “‘The Grace of Grace’ and Double-Talk in *Macbeth*,” *Shakespeare Survey* 57 (2004): 27-37, esp. 34.

myself" (1959-1960). As strange as this scene is, and as unexpected and perhaps unconvincing as Malcolm's reversal might appear, we might compare Malcolm's handling of his leadership to Macbeth's on the grounds of his dramatic lines. Macbeth seems to blatantly leave the rational plane of command and authority at important moments, speaking past, over, or across his interlocutors. Malcolm, on the other hand, similarly has ulterior motives and goals in mind, but he is able to keep them concealed without damaging the representational logic of the play. More importantly, he is able to gull others into participating in, and then accepting, his ruse. Malcolm's prompts to Macduff, who apparently sits silent for much of their interaction, indicate the forging of cue-bounded connections. After Malcolm lays out his confession, he remarks, "Why are you silent?" (1965) as if prodding Macduff to deliver the line, "Such welcome, and unwelcome things at once/ 'Tis hard to reconcile" (1966-1967). As difficult as it might be, Malcolm's form of theatrical performance specifically elicits a performance of reconciliation. Whereas Macbeth's performances introduce rupture, fracture, and dislocation, Malcolm smoothly assumes and discards new roles as easily as he decides to improvise with his local geography. Malcolm, unlike Macbeth, never leaves the play he is in, but rather alters it to suit his needs.

This chapter, like each of the earlier ones, focuses on how lines are both rules and challenges to those rules. While it continues an emphasis on dramatic lines through its understanding of *Macbeth*'s theatrical spaces, its central figure is nevertheless the Anglo-Scottish Borderline, another line that is both a rule and an assailable figure. The border reivers, in some respects, are the heroes if this chapter; they are the ones who recognize, like poets, that a line is both a rule and a way to

contest that same rule. While sovereignty imagines itself outside of the law, and *Macbeth* imagines himself outside of his own play, reivers, and skilled actors like Malcolm, see these rules as opportunities for play, transgression, and manipulation. The poets from the first half of this dissertation and the playwrights from the previous chapter all appear to recognize that it is *because* the line conditions habits of knowing, that it can be manipulated to reconfigure those habits and provide invigorated, new ways of looking at the world. Reivers do this every time they make the borderline work against the authorities – they make the line enforcing a rule into an unruly line, simply by claiming tactical advantage. They understand, as Robert Herrick does, that our lives differ much from the lines to which they are made to conform.

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