



The English Baroque: The Logic of Excess in Early Modern Literature

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The English Baroque: The Logic of Excess in Early Modern Literature

A dissertation presented

by

Robert Hudson Vincent

to

The Department of Comparative Literature

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

This dissertation argues that early modern English literature was an essential part of the first global aesthetic movement—the baroque. While the baroque remains a foundational concept for other European traditions, scholars have largely elided the word from English literary history. By emphasizing multilingual and cross-confessional relations, I show why the baroque is a better concept for understanding early modern English literature than more isolated terms like *metaphysical*. “The English Baroque” begins by presenting a new theory of the baroque based on its etymology in a thirteenth-century poem by the English logician William of Sherwood. A mnemonic device for remembering logical syllogisms, William’s poem gives the name *Baroco* to a syllogism notorious for its excessive complexity. Based on this philology, I argue that the baroque is best understood as a logic of excess—a process of thought that pushes systems toward complexity, confusion, and the sublime. I trace the development of this logic of excess in early modern English poetry, prose, and performance, including works by Margaret Cavendish, Abraham Cowley, Richard Crashaw, John Donne, Andrew Marvell, John Milton, and William Shakespeare. “The English Baroque” not only demonstrates the relevance of early modern English literature to the global baroque, but also supports the emergence of a new baroque style that affirms excess as an aesthetic form of freedom.

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I once dreamed a word entirely
Baroque: a serpentine line of letters leaning
with the flourish of each touching the shoulder
of another so that one breath at the word's
beginning made them all collapse.

- Angie Estes, "Ars Poetica"

Introduction

The Baroque in English

It is nonetheless strange to deny the existence of the Baroque in the way we speak of unicorns or herds of pink elephants.

- Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*¹

¹ Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 33.

The word *baroque* is seldom heard in the halls of English departments. While the concept remains foundational for other European traditions, scholars have largely elided the baroque from English literary history. This resistance to the English baroque among critics has taken various forms. Some oppose the concept altogether—asking, *What does the Baroque even mean?* or *Is that the word John Donne used?*—while others prefer to stick with Samuel Johnson’s isolated term *metaphysical*—a concept that smacks of Northern European elitism (*Baroque was southern European; we were metaphysical*). As Peter Davidson and Alison Shell argue, “The B-word, with all its sophisticated and cosmopolitan implications, is dubiously British and belongs too much to an international movement to be acceptable.... Anglophone culture thinks that it can write itself out of the international culture of the late Renaissance and the early modern world, indeed write itself out of international culture altogether.”² As relations between England and the European Union worsen and academic calls for interdisciplinarity grow, concepts like the baroque might support a return to a global aesthetic commons. “The English Baroque: The Logic of Excess in Early Modern Literature” resituates early modern English literature within the global baroque by demonstrating the importance of continental relations and literary translation to its development.

This is not the first work on the English baroque. René Wellek catalogs the extraordinary number of scholarly texts on the subject during the first half of the twentieth century in “The Concept of Baroque in Literary Scholarship” (1946).³ He explains that the first significant publications on the English baroque were by the Italian literary critic Mario Praz and the German

² Peter Davidson and Alison Shell, “Brexit and Baroque,” *Oxford Review of Books* (blog), Oxford University Press, accessed in June 2020, <https://www.the-orb.org/post/brexit-and-the-baroque>.

³ See René Wellek, “The Concept of Baroque in Literary Scholarship,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 5, no. 2 (1946): 77-109, 79-84. This paragraph summarizes this seminal study by Wellek.

Friedrich Brie.⁴ Praz's *Secentismo e Marinismo in Inghilterra: John Donne - Richard Crashaw* (1925) focuses mostly on the poetry of Richard Crashaw, demonstrating how he imitated and expanded the baroque style of Giambattista Marino.⁵ For Praz, English baroque poems were far more excessive than Italian ones, and he argues that poets like Crashaw not only admired the continental baroque style but also amplified it into one of the most extravagant literary styles of early modern Europe. Compared to Praz, Brie's *Englische Rokoko-Epik (1710-1730)* (1927) offers only a minor contribution to English baroque studies.⁶ He argues that poets and dramatists as varied as William Shakespeare and Samuel Garth should be classified as baroque, but most of his book is dedicated to eighteenth-century texts he calls rococo.⁷ Nevertheless, these two books inspired an entire generation of literary scholars to investigate the baroque qualities of early modern English literature.⁸ Over the following decades, virtually every early modern English author was described as baroque by German and Italian literary critics.⁹ But only a handful of British and American scholars were using the concept. As Wellek explains,

⁴ See Wellek, 81.

⁵ See Mario Praz, *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra: John Donne - Richard Crashaw* (Florence: La Voce, 1925).

⁶ See Friedrich Brie, *Englische rokoko epic (1710-1730)* (Munich: M. Hueber, 1927).

⁷ See Wellek, "The Concept of Baroque," 81. Wellek writes, "English literature, even outside of the attempts to claim Shakespeare as baroque, was also soon brought in line. As far as I know, Friedrich Brie's *Englische Rokokoepik* (1927) is the first attempt [in German literary criticism] of the sort. There Pope's *Rape of the Lock* is analyzed as rococo, but in passing a contrast to the baroque Garth and Boileau is drawn" (Wellek, 81).

⁸ See Wellek, 81. Wellek explains, "Fritz Pützer in *Prediger des englischen Barocks stilistisch untersucht* (1929) then claimed almost all English pulpit oratory from Latimer to Jeremy Taylor as baroque. F.W. Schirmer in several articles and in his *Geschichte der englischen Literatur* uses the term for the metaphysical, Browne, Dryden, Otway and Lee, excluding Milton from the baroque expressly. This was also the conclusion of Friedrich Wild who called even Ben Jonson, Massinger, Ford and Phineas Fletcher baroque" (Wellek, 81).

⁹ See Wellek, 79-84. As Wellek concludes at the end of his catalog of German baroque criticism, "Thus all literatures of Europe in the seventeenth century (and in part of the sixteenth century) are conceived of by German scholars as a unified movement. E.g., in Schürer's bulky volume, *Katholische Kirche und Kultur der Barockzeit* (1937), Spain, Portugal with Camoëns [*sic*], Italy, France, Germany, Austria, but also Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia are treated as baroque. It is a coherent view which needs discussion, acceptance, regulation or modification" (Wellek, 81).

To England and America the term, as applied to literature, came late, much later than the revival of interest in Donne and the Metaphysicals.... In an epilogue to a new edition of Geoffrey Scott's *Architecture of Humanism* (1924) the parallel between Donne and Thomas Browne on the one hand and baroque architecture on the other is drawn expressly, though the literature itself is not called baroque. A rather flimsy essay by Peter Burra, published in *Farrago* in 1930, is called "Baroque and Gothic Sentimentalism" but uses the term quite vaguely for periods of luxuriance as an alternative for Gothic. The more concrete literary use seems to come from Germany.... [I]n 1933, the philosopher E.I. Watkin, a close student of German Catholic literature, discussed Crashaw as baroque.... Crashaw is again, in 1934, the center of a study of the baroque by T.O. Beachcroft. In 1934, F.W. Bateson published his little book *English Poetry and the English Language*, where he applied the term baroque to Thomson, Gray, and Collins.... Recently F.P. Wilson used it to characterize Jacobean in contrast to Elizabethan literature, and Tillyard applied it in passing to Milton's epistolary prose.¹⁰

In "The Baroque Style in Prose" (1929), Morris Croll describes the baroque as a revival of the classical Attic style and opposed to Cicero's Asiatic style—an odd claim given the latter was considered florid and ornate and the former austere and constrained.¹¹ Austin Warren, a student of T.S. Eliot and Mario Praz, published *Richard Crashaw: A Study in Baroque Sensibility* in 1939,¹² and although it focuses on a single author, the book discusses other English baroque poets like Joseph Beaumont and Abraham Cowley as well. His chapter on emblems and epigrams is especially noteworthy for its discussion of baroque wit and conceits, as well as its development of Praz's earlier studies on Crashaw's Jesuit influences.¹³ These early studies of the English baroque vary widely in their conclusions, and their differing interpretations led to

¹⁰ Wellek, 83-84.

¹¹ See Wellek, 84 and Morris Croll, "The Baroque Style in Prose," in *Studies in English Philology: A Miscellany in Honor of Frederick Klaeber*, 431-460 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1929).

¹² See Austin Warren, *Richard Crashaw: A Study in Baroque Sensibility* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1939). Referenced in Wellek, "The Concept of Baroque," 84.

¹³ Warren considers the possibility of a classical influence on his baroque style, but ultimately dismisses the topic, explaining that while Crashaw "invokes Catullus, and, especially, Martial as his ancestors.... Crashaw's style found its real models in the Jesuits" (Warren, 80).

skepticism about the consistency of the baroque as a concept and its relevance to English literature.

As a result, fewer scholars wrote about the English baroque after 1950. Wylie Sypher's *Four Stages of Renaissance Style* (1955)¹⁴ dedicates one chapter to English baroque literature, but it focuses almost entirely on Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667). Reviving an earlier tradition of comparing English authors with Italian artists, Roy Daniells's *Milton, Mannerism and Baroque* (1963) connects Milton's early poetry to the architecture of Michelangelo and his later poetry to the work of Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Francesco Borromini.¹⁵ Marc Bertonasco's *Crashaw and the Baroque* (1971) examines the influence of François de Sales and Jesuit emblem books on the poetry of Crashaw.¹⁶ And Murray Roston's *Milton and the Baroque* (1980) demonstrates the importance of Nicolaus Copernicus, Giordano Bruno, and Galileo Galilei on the baroque poetics of Milton's *Paradise Lost*.¹⁷ For the most part, these studies of the English baroque from 1950 to 1980 gravitate around the same subjects—Milton, Crashaw, and Italy.¹⁸

While scholarship on English baroque literature dissolved almost entirely by 1980, a few critics have revived the subject in recent years. In the first chapter of *The Universal Baroque*

¹⁴ See Wylie Sypher, *Four Stages of Renaissance Style: Transformations in Art and Literature, 1400-1700* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955).

¹⁵ See Roy Daniells, *Milton, Mannerism and Baroque* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963).

¹⁶ See Marc Bertonasco, *Crashaw and the Baroque* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1971).

¹⁷ See Murray Roston, *Milton and the Baroque* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1980).

¹⁸ In *The English Poems of Richard Crashaw* (2013), Richard Rambuss notes that few, if any, scholars have explored the connections between baroque poets like Crashaw, Donne, Milton, et al. He regrets that few critics have traced the “contact points between Crashaw’s poetry and either Milton’s (which has its own baroque touches) or Herbert’s... nor have critics instead been concerned with mapping other networks of affiliation—literary, religious, political, intellectual, collegiate—that would enable readers better to regard Crashaw’s work...” (Richard Rambuss, “A Reintroduction,” introduction to *The English Poems of Richard Crashaw*, ed. Richard Rambuss [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013], xxxvi). While scholars draw connections between Crashaw and Milton in many of the works listed above, Rambuss is nonetheless right to suggest that the network of English baroque authors and their relations to the continent have yet to be fully studied—a gap in scholarship this dissertation aims to fill.

(2007), Peter Davidson offers a sprawling account of the baroque in England, Ireland, and Scotland in English and Latin literatures, as well as in painting, drawing, architecture, and performance.¹⁹ Most importantly, Davidson emphasizes the deleterious effects of Herbert Grierson's anthology *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century: Donne to Butler* (1921) on scholars' understanding of the English baroque,²⁰ complaining that "Grierson treats the poetry of seventeenth-century England as if it existed in a kind of intellectual void, barely connected with the poetry of Scotland or Ireland and (significantly) immune to all living foreign influence."²¹ Davidson presents a forceful rejection of Grierson's insular approach to early modern England and resituates British culture of the period within the international baroque—"a cultural system which is supra-national, supra-confessional."²² Other recent books on the English baroque include Christopher Johnson's *Hyperboles: The Rhetoric of Excess in Baroque Literature and Thought* (2010),²³ which dedicates three chapters to the baroque drama of Shakespeare, and Hugh Grady's *John Donne and Baroque Allegory* (2017),²⁴ which offers a Benjaminian analysis of Donne's baroque style of melancholic fragmentation.²⁵ Most recently, Gary Waller's *The Female Baroque in Early Modern English Literary Culture: From Mary*

¹⁹ See Peter Davidson, *The Universal Baroque* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2007).

²⁰ See Herbert John Clifford Grierson, *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1921).

²¹ Davidson, *Universal Baroque*, 54.

²² Davidson, 13.

²³ See Christopher Johnson, *Hyperboles: The Rhetoric of Excess in Baroque Literature and Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

²⁴ See Hugh Grady, *John Donne and Baroque Allegory: The Aesthetics of Fragmentation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

²⁵ Grady finds this style most forcefully expressed in *An Anatomie of the World, The First Anniversary* (1611)—"Tis all in pieces, all cohaerence gone" (John Donne, *An Anatomie of the World, The First Anniversary*, in Vol. 1 of *The Poems of John Donne*, ed. Herbert J.C. Grierson [Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1912], 237, line 213).

Sidney to Aphra Behn (2020) reveals a rich tradition of female baroque authors in early modern England, including Gertrude More, Mary Ward, Mary Sidney, and Aemelia Lanyer.²⁶ Inspired by Julia Kristeva's claim that "the secrets of Baroque civilization are female,"²⁷ Waller demonstrates the emergence of a uniquely female sphere of baroque discourse in early modern England. In general, these recent books promote a critical reassessment of early modern English literature and its relation to the global baroque.

Even though the baroque rests on the margins of English literary studies today, it remains an essential concept for scholarship in other disciplines. Scholars of Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, German, French, and art history continue to produce new histories and theories of the baroque.²⁸ Some of this scholarship has proven influential on the development of English literary criticism. Gilles Deleuze published *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque* in 1988,²⁹ which helped spawn a series of theoretical engagements with the baroque by English literary scholars, including Gregg

²⁶ See Gary Waller, *The Female Baroque in Early Modern English Literary Culture: From Mary Sidney to Aphra Behn* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020).

²⁷ Julia Kristeva, *Teresa, My Love: An Imagined Life of the Saint of Avila*, trans. Lorna Scott Fox (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 20, quoted in Waller, *Female Baroque*, 9.

²⁸ See Peter J. Burgard, *Baroque: Figures of Excess in Seventeenth-Century European Art and German Literature* (Leiden: Wilhelm Fink, 2019); Andrew Leach, John Macarthur, and Maarten Delbeke, *The Baroque in Architectural Culture, 1880-1980* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2015); Evonne Levy, *Baroque and the Political Language of Formalism (1845-1945): Burckhardt, Wölfflin, Gurlitt, Brinckmann, Sedlmayr* (Basel: Schwabe, 2015); Jean-Claude Vuillemin, *Épistémè baroque: le mot et la chose* (Paris: Hermann, 2013); Tomaso Montanari, *L'età barocca: le fonti per la storia dell'arte, 1600-1750* (Rome: Carocci editore, 2013); Ofer Gal and Raz Chen-Morris, *Baroque Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Peter Gillgren and Mårten Snickare, *Performativity and Performance in Baroque Rome* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2012); Gauvin Bailey, *Baroque and Rococo* (London: Phaidon Press, 2012); Fernando de la Flor, *Mundo simbólico: poética, política y teúrgia en el Barroco hispano* (Madrid: Ediciones Akal, 2012) and *Imago: la cultura visual y figurativa del Barroco* (Madrid: Abada Editores, 2009); Michael Snodin and Nigel Llewellyn, *Baroque, 1620-1800: Style in the Age of Magnificence* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2009); and Frédérique Lemercier and Yves Pauwels, *Baroque Architecture 1600-1750* (New York: Random House, 2008); among many others.

²⁹ See Gilles Deleuze, *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1988). The book was first translated into English by Tom Conley in Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

Lambert's *The Return of the Baroque in Modern Culture* (2004).³⁰ Two collections of theoretical essays on the baroque have also garnered the attention of English critics—Helen Hills' *Rethinking the Baroque* (2011) and Lois Parkinson Zamora and Monika Kaup's *Baroque New Worlds: Representation, Transculturation, Counterconquest* (2010).³¹ While the first focuses almost entirely on visual art,³² the second contains a series of foundational texts on the baroque by Heinrich Wölfflin, Walter Benjamin, and others. It also contains several excellent essays by Caribbean and Latin American theorists of the baroque, including José Lezama Lima, Alejo Carpentier, Severo Sarduy, and Édouard Glissant. These authors have revived the baroque not only as a style applicable to twentieth-century, neo-baroque literature but also as a political concept relevant to postmodern and postcolonial societies. Together, these new scholarly and theoretical trends reevaluate the baroque as an early modern style of globalization and colonization, but also as a postmodern style of pluralism and emancipation.

Building on this scholarship, “The English Baroque” presents a new understanding of the baroque and its relevance to English literature. In short, I argue that the baroque is a logic of excess. The word itself—*baroque*—comes from a thirteenth-century poem by the English logician William of Sherwood. This poem was a mnemonic device to help students remember the syllogistic system, and William gave the most complicated and irregular syllogism the name Baroco. Unlike other syllogisms, Baroco was notorious for leading to confusions in logic for

³⁰ See Gregg Lambert, *The Return of the Baroque in Modern Culture* (New York: Continuum Books, 2004). The book was reprinted in 2009 as Gregg Lambert, *On the (New) Baroque* (Aurora, CO: The Davies Group, 2009).

³¹ See Helen Hills, ed., *Rethinking the Baroque* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2011) and Lois Parkinson and Monika Kaup, eds., *Baroque New Worlds: Representation, Transculturation, Counterconquest* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

³² The exceptions are Andrew Benjamin, “Benjamin and the Baroque: Posing the Question of Historical Time” and Tom Conley, “The Baroque Fold as Map and as Diagram,” in *Rethinking the Baroque*, ed. Helen Hills, 161-82, 203-18 (Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2011).

which the only solution was a method called *reductio ad absurdum*. Baroco is a logic of excess insofar as it departs (Lt. *excessus*) from the formal rules of the syllogistic system, and the baroque is the extension of this logic of excess to the field of aesthetics. Peter J. Burgard agrees that the baroque is defined by its excess: “[E]xcess is *constitutive* of the Baroque, even if paradoxically constitutive, since excess is inimical to the very notion of coherent construction, debilitating even as it constitutes.”³³ A system in excess approaches its own death (Lt. *excessus*). But excess can also support the development and expansion of systems. Georges Bataille has demonstrated how excess is fundamental to the general economy of the world. On the one hand, “excess energy (wealth) can be used for the growth of a system.”³⁴ On the other hand, “if the system can no longer grow, or if the excess cannot be completely absorbed in its growth, it must necessarily be lost without profit; it must be spent, willingly or not, gloriously or catastrophically.”³⁵ Excess can lead to exuberant displays of complex life or to its catastrophic ruin. The baroque, understood as a logic of excess, can lead to glory or catastrophe.

³³ Peter J. Burgard, *Baroque: Figures of Excess in Seventeenth-Century European Art and German Literature* (Leiden: Wilhelm Fink, 2019), 12.

³⁴ Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share*, trans. Robert Hurley, Vol. 1 (New York: Zone Books, 1989), 21.

³⁵ Bataille, 21.

Chapter One

Logic

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος

- John 1:1³⁶

³⁶ Κατὰ Ἰωάννην, *Novum Testamentum graece*, ed. Constantin von Tischendorf (Lipsiae: J.C. Hinrichs Bibliopola, 1877), 353, 1:1.

Theories of the baroque continue unabated, yet few critics agree on the origins of the style.³⁷ Many scholars, including the editors of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, are still citing false etymologies and histories of the baroque, often following René Wellek's 1962 "Postscript to 'The Concept of Baroque in Literary Scholarship.'" ³⁸ This text effectively marked the end of critical debate over the origins of the word, even though Wellek himself insisted that the controversy was "by no means concluded."³⁹ While his 1946 article "The Concept of Baroque in Literary Scholarship" had followed Karl Borinski and Benedetto Croce in deriving the word from a medieval Scholastic syllogism called Baroco, Wellek emended the position in a postscript, confessing that while the syllogism remained the most likely etymon for the Italian

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³⁷ See, among others, Gary Waller, *The Female Baroque in Early Modern English Literary Culture: From Mary Sidney to Aphra Behn* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020); Elise Takehama, *The Baroque Technotext: Literature in a Digital Media Landscape* (Bristol, UK: Intellect Books, 2020); Peter J. Burgard, *Baroque: Figures of Excess in Seventeenth-Century European Art and German Literature* (Leiden: Wilhelm Fink, 2019); Hugh Grady, *John Donne and Baroque Allegory: The Aesthetics of Fragmentation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Erik S. Roraback, *The Philosophical Baroque: On Autopoietic Modernities* (Leiden: Brill, 2017); Andrew Leach, John Macarthur, and Maarten Delbeke, *The Baroque in Architectural Culture, 1880-1980* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2015); Evonne Levy, *Baroque and the Political Language of Formalism (1845-1945): Burckhardt, Wölfflin, Gurlitt, Brinckmann, Sedlmayr* (Basel: Schwabe, 2015); Jean-Claude Vuillemin, *Épistémè baroque: le mot et la chose* (Paris: Hermann, 2013); Tomaso Montanari, *L'età barocca: le fonti per la storia dell'arte, 1600-1750* (Rome: Carocci editore, 2013); Ofer Gal and Raz Chen-Morris, *Baroque Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Peter Gillgren and Mårten Snickare, *Performativity and Performance in Baroque Rome* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2012); Gauvin Bailey, *Baroque and Rococo* (London: Phaidon Press, 2012); Fernando de la Flor, *Mundo simbólico: poética, política y teúrgia en el Barroco hispano* (Madrid: Ediciones Akal, 2012) and *Imago: la cultura visual y figurativa del Barroco* (Madrid: Abada Editores, 2009); Helen Hills, ed., *Rethinking the Baroque* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2011); Christopher Johnson, *Hyperboles: The Rhetoric of Excess in Baroque Literature and Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); Lois Parkinson and Monika Kaup, eds., *Baroque New Worlds: Representation, Transculturation, Counterconquest* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); Gregg Lambert, *On the (New) Baroque* (Aurora, CO: The Davies Group, 2009); Michael Snodin and Nigel Llewellyn, *Baroque, 1620-1800: Style in the Age of Magnificence* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2009); Frédérique Lemerle and Yves Pauwels, *Baroque Architecture 1600-1750* (New York: Random House, 2008); Timothy Murray, *Digital Baroque: New Media Art and Cinematic Folds* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

³⁸ The entry for *baroque* in the *Oxford English Dictionary* states that the "suggestion that the word is identical with the logical term baroko seems to rest on no historical evidence" (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. [Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1989], 965).

³⁹ René Wellek, "Postscript to 'The Concept of Baroque in Literary Scholarship,'" in *Concepts of Criticism*, 115-127 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1963), 115.

noun *barocco*, “it seems now proven that the older derivation from the Portuguese (rather than Spanish) word *barroco* as a jewelers’ term for the irregular, odd-shaped pearl is correct” for the French adjective *baroque*.⁴⁰ For Wellek, this meant admitting “a confluence of these two words of different etymologies” in the development of the modern concept of the baroque.⁴¹ But Wellek’s change of mind was based on unsubstantiated arguments from Giovanni Getto, Otto Kurz, and others, like this one: “In the early years of the eighteenth century, baroque acquired a broader meaning not limited to a certain kind of pearl, but indicating everything that was, like the pearls, irregular or strange. In 1718 in Paris, the Italian actors of *commedia dell’arte* spoke French with an ‘accent un peu baroque.’”⁴² In this chapter I show how these connotations of irregularity and strangeness, as well as other connotations of complexity, dissonance, and excess, were already present in the Scholastic word *Baroco* by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in France and England, proving that the Scholastic syllogism remains the primary source of our word *baroque*.

This etymological history is important not only for philological reasons but also for our conceptual understanding of the baroque. Indeed, the logic of *Baroco* proves altogether consistent with a style that pushes aesthetic forms to excess. By resituating the baroque back within the history and reception of *Baroco*, this chapter demonstrates the logical consistency of the baroque as a concept and the relevance of Scholastic logic to the history of aesthetics. To do so, I turn to Neo-Latin rhetoric and English poetics to trace the emergence of a logic as absurd and intricate as the syllogism *Baroco* in the poetry we now call baroque. This excessive logic

⁴⁰ Wellek, 115.

⁴¹ Wellek, 116.

⁴² Otto Kurz, “Barocco: Storia di una parola,” in Vol. 12, Issue 4 of *Lettere italiane*, 414-444 (Florence: Olschki, 1960), 422.

promoted increasingly outlandish practices of Erasmian *copia* during the sixteenth century that led to similarly far-fetched poetic practices in the following century. I read John Stockwood's *Progymnasma scholasticum* (1597) alongside Richard Crashaw's *Epigrammatum sacrorum liber* (1634) and *Steps to the Temple* (1646) to reveal the effects of Erasmian rhetorical exercises on English educational practices and the production of English baroque poetry. In the end, I emphasize the conceptual unity of the baroque by showing the consistency between critiques of Baroco, critiques of English metaphysical poetry, and critiques of baroque art during the Enlightenment.

The Logic of Baroco

To many people in Renaissance England, words like *Baroco* had the sound of magic. Robert Persons expresses concern in *A Review of Ten Publicke Disputations* that such syllogisms often appear “strange to the ignorant people, that may imagine great secrets to ly hidden in those words of Disamis, Darij, Baroco, Festino, [or] Bocardo.”⁴³ He explains that many mistake the words for spells, thinking that Schoolmen like “John Fox doth go about to conjure us his readers, by settinge them downe” in the margins.⁴⁴ And while proclamations by Baroco or Baralipton were beginning to sound strange to some humanists, these words still held an almost sacred meaning at Oxford and Cambridge. Each word represented a particular mode of syllogism that fit into a mnemonic poem developed in the thirteenth century. William of Sherwood, perhaps the first to print the poem, offers one of the earliest versions of the verses in his *Introductiones in logicam* (ca. 1260):

Barbara celarent darii ferio baralipton
Celantes dabit is fapesmo frisesomorum

⁴³ Robert Persons, *A Review of Ten Publicke Disputations* (Saint-Omer: 1604), 209.

⁴⁴ Persons, 209.

Cesare camestres festino baroco
Darapti felapton disamis datisi bocardo ferison.⁴⁵

This poem and its later variations assign a name to every syllogism within the logical system. Each name is placed in one of four lines according to its particular figure, which is based on the position of the middle term in its major and minor premises. For example, first-figure syllogisms set the middle term at the beginning of the major premise ($M-P$) and at the end of the minor premise ($S-M$), while second-figure syllogisms place the middle term at the end of both the major premise ($P-M$) and the minor premise ($S-M$). In Sherwood's version of the poem, the first two lines designate first-figure syllogisms, while the third and fourth lines contain the second and third figures, respectively.⁴⁶ Within each of these lines, the names are then organized according to mood, i.e., the quality (affirmative or negative) and quantity (universal or particular) of a syllogism's three propositions. Finally, the consonants and vowels of each name signify the logical structure and the method of reduction for the syllogism. Since every letter of the poem expresses a component of the system, a logician could unlock the entire structure of

⁴⁵ William of Sherwood, *Introduction to Logic*, trans. Norman Kretzmann (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966), 66.

The third and fourth lines are irregular because, in Sherwood's system, there are four second-figure syllogisms (Cesare, Camestres, Festino, and Baroco) and six third-figure syllogisms (Darapti, Felapton, Disamis, Datisi, Bocardo, and Ferison), which are distinguished by their relative positions in the third and fourth lines. Later logicians began distinguishing four figures of syllogisms and often amended the poem to achieve metrical harmony. For example, Henry Aldrich offers this elaborate expansion of the poem in his *Artis logicae compendium*:

Barbara, Celarent, Darii, Ferioque, prioris:
Cesare, Camestres, Festino, Baroko, secundae:
Tertia Darapti, Disamis, Datisi, Felapton,
Bokardo, Ferison, habet: Quarta insuper addit
Bramantip, Camenes, Dimaris, Fesapo, Fresison.
Quinque Subalterni totidem Generalibus orti
Nomen habent nullum, nec si bene colligis usum (Henry Aldrich, *Artis logicae compendium* [Oxford, UK: 1691], 19).

⁴⁶ Sherwood follows Aristotle in organizing the syllogistic system into three figures instead of four as later logicians would do. Although other versions of the poem distinguish four figures, Baroco remains a second-figure syllogism.

sylogistic logic by memorizing this series of seemingly nonsensical words. To be sure, such a feat might appear magical even to some modern readers.

Baroco is perhaps the most puzzling syllogism. Situated in the third line, it is designated as a second-figure syllogism, and its vowels, A, O, and O, signify the three propositions that form its logical structure: one universal and affirmative proposition (A) followed by two negative and particular ones (O).⁴⁷ The consonants, B, R, and C (sometimes K), indicate how to transform the syllogism back into the first and standard figure—an important practice for demonstrating the validity of the syllogism. But Baroco is one of two problem cases for the syllogistic system, because it is often difficult or impossible to reduce back into the first figure.⁴⁸ To fix this problem, logicians used a method called *reductio ad absurdum*.⁴⁹ The C in Baroco signals to use this method by negating the conclusion and switching it with the second proposition. This procedure inevitably leads to a conclusion whose logic is so absurd and outlandish that it must be false, thereby proving the original syllogism in Baroco by negating its opposite.

Practitioners and defenders of Baroco abound in Renaissance England and France. According to the dean of St. Paul's, Alexander Nowell, the Puritan William Fulke used Baroco during a 1581 debate with the Jesuit Edmund Campion:

Fulke. The cup is the newe testament:
But the naturall blood of Christ is not the newe testament:
Ergo the naturall blood of Christ is not the cup.

⁴⁷ Given its designation as a second-figure syllogism and its sequence of vowels, the logical structure of Baroco is all A is B, some C is not B, therefore some C is not A. See Terence Parsons, *Articulating Medieval Logic* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), 51-52.

⁴⁸ Bocardo is the other problematic figure.

⁴⁹ *Reductio ad absurdum* is also called *reductio ad impossibile* (a more direct translation of ἡ εἰς τὸ ἀδύνατον ἀπαγωγή). See Aristotle, *Prior Analytics*, trans. H. P. Cooke and Hugh Tredennick (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1938), 234, 1.29a.

Campion. M. Doctor this is your argument. The cup is the new testament, &c. I deny your argument.

Fulke. It is a syllogisme.

Campion. It is neither in mode nor figure.

Fulke. It is in Baroco.

Campion. You take the cup otherwise in ye Maior then in ye conclusion. For when it is said, the cuppe is the new Testament, the meaning is, that in the cuppe, which is the blood of Christ, is the couenant of the newe Testament. In the conclusion you take the cuppe for the chalice, wherein the blood of Christ is.

Fulke. I take the cup for the same in both: I speake & meane as the Apostle doeth. I take the cuppe for that which is in the cuppe. Therefore marke my argument againe.

The cup, or that which is in the cuppe, is the new Testament:

The natural blood of Christ is not the newe Testament:

Ergo the naturall blood of Christ is not the cup, or that which is in the cuppe. Answer to this Syllogisme.

Campion. It is no Syllogisme, there be *quatuor termini*.

Fulke. Well I perceiue then, you can answere no otherwise.⁵⁰

The absurd intricacy of this debate over the veracity of a syllogism is typical of Scholastic disputations during the period.⁵¹ But Fulke was especially fond of Baroco, using it often as a weapon against opponents: “For as much as you have given me example of a syllogism in Baroco in the last chapter, I will frame you the like now.... Deny the conclusion if you dare.”⁵² Almost a century later early modern logicians were still using the syllogistic system and defending Baroco in particular against its critics. In *La logique, ou l’art de penser* (1662), more commonly known as the *Logique de Port-Royal*, translated into English in 1685, Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole insist on the importance of “those thornie subjects” like Baroco and

⁵⁰ Alexander Nowell, *A True Report of the Disputation or Rather Private Conference Had in the Tower of London, with Ed. Campion Jesuite, the Last August 1581* (London: 1583), 55r.

⁵¹ For another early example, see Thomas Bell, *The Jesuits Antepast Containing, a Reply against a Pretensed Aunswere to the Downe-Fall of Poperie* (London: 1608), 130-31.

⁵² William Fulke, *Two Treatises Written against the Papistes* (London: 1577), 410.

attack critics who express “disgust” for syllogistic words “as if they were some Charms in Magic.”⁵³ The two Jansenists dismiss those who

spend their insipid jests upon Baroco and Baralipton, as being too Pedantical; for we look’d upon their Puns to be more Pedantical then the words; for there is nothing ridiculous in the Terms, provided they be not ador’d for too great Misteries, for it would be very absurd indeed for a Man that was going to dispute, to admonish his opponent before-hand that he intended to dispute in Baroco or Felapton.⁵⁴

The critics to whom Arnauld and Nicole refer here are the growing number of Renaissance humanists and early modern scientists who found the logic of Baroco strained, intricate, and difficult to understand.

Already by the sixteenth century humanists like Erasmus and Michel de Montaigne were criticizing the entire syllogistic system, and Baroco was their favorite punching bag.⁵⁵ Montaigne ridicules Scholastic Schoolmen in “De l’institution des enfants” (1580): “C’est ‘Barroco’ et ‘Baralipton’ qui rendent leurs supposts ainsi crotez et enfumés” (It is Baroco and Baralipton that render their acolytes so bemired and full of smoke).⁵⁶ By the end of the seventeenth century many logicians were criticizing Baroco. In *The Method to Science* John Sergeant calls Baroco and bocardo “mishapen Figures,” claiming that “nothing can be more Unnatural and more Inartificial than to invent two *other* Figures and then to study how to lay many Elaborate Rules how to *reduce* them again to the *First*.”⁵⁷ To use Baroco, moreover, “is no better than to use our Wits to contrive how to *Erre* and *goe out of the way*, and, when that’s done, to take twice as

⁵³ Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole, *Logic; or, The Art of Thinking* (London: 1685), 15.

⁵⁴ Arnauld and Nicole, *Logic*, 15-16.

⁵⁵ Karl Borinski and Benedetto Croce examined these Renaissance critiques of Baroco in the early twentieth century. See Karl Borinski, *Die Antike in Poetik und Kunsttheorie* (Leipzig: Dieterich, 1914) and Benedetto Croce, *Storia della età barocca in Italia* (Bari: Laterza, 1929).

⁵⁶ Michel de Montaigne, “De l’institution des enfants,” in *Les Essais*, eds. Pierre Villey and Marcel Conche, 145-77 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004), 161; my translation.

⁵⁷ John Sergeant, *The Method to Science* (London: 1696), 234.

much pains in shewing how we may *get into it again*; whenas we might easily have *stay'd* in the *right* way when we were *in it*, and have sav'd all that Mis-spent Labour.”⁵⁸ Sergeant concludes that the user of Baroco should be “convicted of seeking to *blunder* and *obscure* Truth, and not to *clear* it; since he leaves a plain and easie path of Reasoning for an Intricate and Perplext one.”⁵⁹

This is the logic of Baroco. It is a misshapen figure of syllogistic reason that errs from the simple and easy logic of the first figure to create an intricate and perplexed one. It is outlandish, and when translated to simpler logic, it is often reduced to the absurd. This understanding of Baroco is consistent with the earliest uses of the adjective *baroque* in eighteenth-century aesthetic contexts. Contrary to critics who consider the Portuguese word for an irregular pearl, *barroco*, the sole etymon of the aesthetic term *baroque*, the early associations of the baroque with complexity, dissonance, and confusion were more likely derived from the syllogism Baroco.⁶⁰ Already in 1660 an anonymous Englishman compared the syllogism to an inquisitional punishment in Spain—although the latter “syllogism of hemp or fire” was “far more harsh then one in *Barbara*, or *Baroco*.”⁶¹ And when an audience member at the premiere of Jean-Philippe Rameau’s *Hippolyte et Aricie* (1733) disdainfully called the music “du barocque” for its overly

⁵⁸ Sergeant, 234.

⁵⁹ Sergeant, 234.

⁶⁰ Critics often cite Johann Joachim Winckelmann’s early etymology of the baroque: “This style in decorations got the epithet of *Barroque* taste [*Barrockgeschmack*], derived from the word signifying pearls and teeth of unequal size” (Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, trans. Henry Fuseli [London: 1765], 122-23). But shortly thereafter Jean-Jacques Rousseau offered his own: “It appears likely that this term comes from the *Baroco* of logicians” (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, ed., *Dictionnaire de musique*, Vol. 9 [Paris: 1768], 40; my translation). This early etymological confusion suggests a growing confluence of the syllogism and the pearl in the meaning of *baroque* during the eighteenth century. The semantic and phonetic similarities of the terms surely promoted the confluence and encouraged analogies like this one, attributed by Noël-Antoine Pluche to Jean-Baptiste Anet: “Monsieur Baptiste... does not approve of this ambition to devour all sorts of difficulties.... It is, according to him, like straining to grab some baroque pearls from the bottom of the sea, while one could find diamonds on the surface of the earth” (Noël-Antoine Pluche, *Le spectacle de la nature*, Vol. 7 [Paris: 1746], 103; my translation).

⁶¹ Anon. *The Character of Spain* (London: 1660), 21.

intricate and confusing harmonies, the use of that term was consistent with earlier sentiments toward the syllogism.⁶² Listening to the music felt like hearing an argument in Baroco—harsh to the ears and mind, full of perplexing dissonance and absurd complexity.

Just as Baroco became emblematic of the excesses of the syllogistic system, baroque came to designate similar expressions of excess in aesthetics. To demonstrate how such an intricate and confusing logic emerged in aesthetic forms, this chapter now turns to the fields of Neo-Latin rhetoric and English poetics. Focusing on what Terence Cave calls the “productive and open-ended” activities of Erasmian *copia*, I show how *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum* (1512) marked a rupture from the classical tradition of aesthetics by promoting excessive expressions of variation and ornamentation in rhetoric.⁶³ Even while Erasmus expressed doubt over the excessive uses of syllogistic logic,⁶⁴ his open-ended theory of *copia*, in which “prescription is reduced, even undermined, in favour of *exercitatio* or *experiential*,”⁶⁵ allowed a rhetorical logic as absurd and excessive as Baroco to develop—a logic that proved fundamental to the emergence of English baroque poetics.

The Logic of Copia

Syllogisms like Baroco were central to the Aristotelian traditions of logic and rhetoric. The syllogism was both the basic unit of deductive reasoning in Aristotle’s *Prior Analytics* and

⁶² Claude V. Palisca, “Baroque,” *Grove Music Online*, Oxford University Press, last modified in 2001, doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.02097.

Palisca claims that a 1734 letter in response to the opera’s premiere contained the first printed use of the word *baroque* in an aesthetic sense.

⁶³ Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1985), xi.

⁶⁴ See Desiderius Erasmus, *Ratio seu compendium verae theologiae* (Basel: 1519), 15.

⁶⁵ Cave, *Cornucopian Text*, xi.

the source of the enthymeme—one of two central means of persuasion, according to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*.⁶⁶ Orators were encouraged to use truncated forms of Baroco and its method of *reductio ad absurdum* in their speeches. The connection between logic and rhetoric was further emphasized in the Renaissance by their shared place in the trivium and by semantic overlapping between the fields. Most important, syllogistic logic used the rhetorical term *figura* to organize syllogisms according to their divergence from the first and basic mode of logic, which was itself often called the first figure. Logical figures like Baroco were to be used alongside rhetorical figures like hyperbole, and the proper use of both kinds of figures was considered essential to effective oratory and writing.

Nonetheless, classical treatises made important distinctions between the two fields. While the perplexing intricacy of Baroco was acceptable in logic, similar complexities were almost uniformly proscribed in rhetoric. Aristotle condemns the style of Gorgias and others for their outlandish use of compound words, epithets, and metaphors, which, according to him, only lead to confusion when they are too far-fetched: “ἀσαφεῖς δέ, ἂν πόρρωθεν” (“if they are farfetched, they are obscure”).⁶⁷ But while these misshapen figures were restricted in the classical field of rhetoric, their excessive logic invaded the study and practice of rhetoric during the sixteenth century, growing primarily out of the Renaissance reception of classical concepts like *poikilia*, *ubertas*, and *varietas*.

⁶⁶ The other means is the *paradeigma* (example).

Aristotle, *Prior Analytics*, trans. H. P. Cooke and Hugh Tredennick (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1938), 202, 1.24b.

Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric*, trans. J. H. Freese (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1926), 18, 1356b.

⁶⁷ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 366-67, 1406b; translation by J.H. Freese.

The classical value of *varietas* emphasizes the moderation of and distinction between ornamental figures.⁶⁸ In book 1 of *De oratore* Cicero explains that an orator's "ability to speak ought not to starve and go naked, but to be besprinkled and adorned [*aspersa atque distincta*] with a kind of charming variety [*varietate*] in many details."⁶⁹ Cicero repeatedly stresses that figures should be both *aspersa* (which also means "spread out") and *distincta* (distinct), writing in book 3 that ornamentation should not "be spread evenly over the entire speech [*fusum aequabiliter per omnem orationem*], but it must be so distributed [*ita distinctum*] that there may be brilliant jewels placed at various points as a sort of decoration."⁷⁰ The aesthetic anxiety for Cicero and other classical writers on oratory is that a profusion of ornamental figures would overwhelm audiences with pleasure, ultimately leading to the negative feelings of *satietas* (satiety, fullness) and *fastidium* (disgust). Cicero explains, "It is hard to say why exactly it is that the things which most strongly gratify our senses and excite them most vigorously at their first appearance, are the ones from which we are most speedily estranged by a feeling of disgust [*fastidio*] and satiety [*satiestate*]."⁷¹ He claims that "in all things the greatest pleasures are only narrowly separated from disgust [*fastidium*],"⁷² and he offers several examples of the phenomenon, including this one from music: "In singing, how much more delightful and charming are trills and flourishes than notes firmly held! and yet the former meet with protest not

⁶⁸ See William Fitzgerald, *Variety: The Life of a Roman Concept* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 21-25.

⁶⁹ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *On the Orator: Books 1-2*, trans. E. W. Sutton (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1942a), 154-55, 1.218.

⁷⁰ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *On the Orator: Book 3*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1942b), 76-77, 3.96.

⁷¹ Cicero, 78-79, 3.98.

⁷² Cicero, 80-81, 3.100.

only from persons of severe taste but, if used too often, even from the general public.”⁷³ Thus Cicero concludes that “a style which is symmetrical, decorated, ornate and attractive, but that lacks relief or check or variety [*sine intermissione, sine reprehensione, sine varietate*], cannot continue to give pleasure for long, however brilliantly coloured the poem or speech may be.”⁷⁴ Practicing classical *varietas* entails consciously limiting ornamental figures to prevent *satietas* and *fastidium*.

Renaissance authors built on this classical tradition of *varietas* by reconstructing their own rhetorical value of *copia*.⁷⁵ The conceptual distinctions between classical *varietas* and Renaissance *copia* help illuminate the emerging conditions in sixteenth-century rhetoric that allowed a literary logic as absurd and excessive as Baroco to flourish. William Fitzgerald explains that the concepts were already connected in two important ways in the classical context: “Firstly, *varietas* is a way of producing *copia*, even a form of *copia*, and secondly, *varietas* mitigates the satiety (*satietas*) that might be brought on by *copia*.”⁷⁶ So while *varietas* may contribute to the creation of *copia*, the two concepts differ in their relation to *satietas* and *fastidium*. *Copia* increases these feelings, while *varietas* limits them. By prioritizing the creation of *copia*, Renaissance humanists like Erasmus opened the floodgates to a new rhetorical style that did not fear the classical enemies of overabundance and disgust.

⁷³ Cicero, 78-79, 3.98-99.

⁷⁴ Cicero, 80-81, 3.100.

Quintilian echoes these sentiments in his discussion of ornament in *Institutio oratoria*. See Quintilian, *The Orator's Education, Volume III: Books 6-8*, trans. Donald A. Russell (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 2002), 340-47, 8.3.1-15.

⁷⁵ See Cave, *Cornucopian Text*, 10-17.

⁷⁶ Fitzgerald, *Variety*, 48.

In *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum* Erasmus rarely expresses concern for moderation of and distinction between figures of speech.⁷⁷ In fact, in chapter 4 of book 1 Erasmus effectively dismisses classical criticisms of excess; even Cicero, he writes, has been blamed for a style that is “overflowing and indulging in excessive verbosity [*copia*]. But this does not trouble me.”⁷⁸ He explains that such criticisms are ultimately irrelevant to his purpose: “This does not bother me, since I am not prescribing how one ought to write or speak, but merely indicating what is useful for practice, and everybody knows that in practicing everything must be exaggerated.”⁷⁹ He cites Quintilian twice to excuse himself and his students for the luxuries and excesses of speech. He first notes that “Quintilian censures Stesichorus for over-abundant and extravagant expression [*nimis effusam et redundantem copiam*], while at the same time admitting that it is a fault that cannot be absolutely avoided.”⁸⁰ He later follows Quintilian in dismissing potential critics of *copia*, because it “can easily be cut back by criticism and the passing years will wear down other excrescences, while it is quite impossible to improve a thin and poverty-stricken style.”⁸¹

⁷⁷ He mentions *varietas* and *satietas* only in the middle of a section titled “Loci communes” in book 2, and his use of the concepts expresses little appreciation for the classical concern of satiety (Erasmus, *De duplici copia*, 232). Cave argues for the importance of Rudolphus Agricola’s *De formando studio* (1484) in the development of Erasmian *copia*: “The logic of Agricola’s argument points towards an increasing proliferation of concrete and decorative detail,” which Erasmus extends (Cave, *Cornucopian Text*, 12-17).

⁷⁸ Desiderius Erasmus, *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style*, trans. Betty I. Knott, in Vol. 24 of *Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. Craig R. Thompson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 299; translation modified. Latin references are from Desiderius Erasmus, *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum commentarii duo*, ed. Betty I. Knott, in Vol. 1, Book 6 of *Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami*, eds. J.H. Waszink, Léon-E. Halkin, C. Reedijk, and C.M. Bruehl (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1988).

⁷⁹ Erasmus, 299.

⁸⁰ Erasmus, 299.

For an elaboration of Erasmian *copia*, its reliance on Quintilian, and Quintilian’s importance for the rhetorical theories of other Renaissance humanists, like Lorenzo Valla, see Christopher Johnson, *Hyperboles: The Rhetoric of Excess in Baroque Literature and Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 79.

⁸¹ Erasmus, *Copia*, 300.

For a note on how Erasmus draws on Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria* 2.4.3-4 here, see Erasmus, *De duplici copia*, 30.

Erasmus does not express the same anxiety for overabundance that Cicero does in *De oratore*. Instead, Erasmus encourages readers to adorn their speeches and writings with the most decorous and pleasing figures possible. His ideal audience has a seemingly insatiable capacity for figurative pleasure. He compares *copia* to nature, admiring the latter's ability to leave no space unpainted with figures:

Nature above all delights in variety [*varietate*]; in all this huge concourse of things, she has left nothing anywhere unpainted by her wonderful technique of variety. Just as the eyes fasten themselves on some new spectacle, so the mind is always looking round for some fresh object of interest. If it is offered a monotonous succession of similarities, it very soon wearies and turns its attention elsewhere, and so everything gained by the speech is lost all at once.⁸²

The idea that an orator might produce too many elegant figures and thereby too much pleasure seems almost unthinkable to Erasmus, who diminishes, if not rejects, the values of moderation and distinctness so important to classical *varietas*. This conceptual break with Cicero is emphasized by Erasmus' use of *varietas* in the passage. Here the value does not denote the *aspersa* and the *distincta* that are so important to Ciceronian rhetoric. Instead, it promotes a style full of ornamentation “*fusum aequabiliter per omnem*” (spread equally through everything)—the very style Cicero uses *varietas* to prevent.⁸³

Free from the Ciceronian concern of overabundance and the classical priority of *varietas*, Erasmian *copia* offers both the conceptual and the practical preconditions for a baroque rhetoric. These conditions can already be discerned in the early editions of Erasmus' *Adagia* (1500 and 1508). Indeed, the second edition contains thousands of proverbs that, as Erasmus explains, showcase “metaphors of any degree of boldness... and unlimited innovation in the use of words

⁸² Erasmus, 302.

⁸³ Cicero, *On the Orator: Book 3*, 76-77, 3.96; translation modified.

and unashamed hyperbole and allegory pushed to enigmatic lengths.”⁸⁴ When it comes to excessively hyperbolic proverbs, Erasmus advises writers not to limit them but simply to admit their excessiveness to their audiences. He explains that writers should follow the Greek precept “προεπιπλήττειν τῇ ὑπερβολῇ, to make an advance correction of what seems excessive. Similarly we should ‘make an advance correction’ of our proverb and, as it were, go halfway to meet it, if it is likely to prove obscure, or to jar in some other way.”⁸⁵ Erasmus continues by offering the following practical examples: “Greek makes this ‘advance correction’ in ways like these: As the proverb runs, As they say in jest, It has been well said. And almost exactly the same methods are in use in Latin: As they say, As the old proverb runs, As is commonly said, To use an old phrase, As the adage has it, As they truly say.”⁸⁶ These are the final words of Erasmus’ introduction to his *Adagia*. He ends by encouraging his readers never to diminish the extravagance of the proverbs to follow but simply to alert readers before using them.

While the *Adagia* offers a rhetorical handbook for using and varying classical proverbs, *De copia* presents a more systematic approach to hyperbolic variation. In chapter 33 of book 1 of *De copia* Erasmus offers two *experientiae* (experiments) in which, by using a wide variety of rhetorical figures, he varies the phrase “Tuae literae me magnopere delectarunt” (Your letters delighted me greatly) over 140 times.⁸⁷ Here are some examples: “Delectatus sum maiorem in modum tuis literis” (I have been delighted in a major way by your words), “Amantissimae tuae

⁸⁴ Desiderius Erasmus, *Adages, Ii1 to Iv100*, trans. Margaret Mann Phillips, in Vol. 31 of *Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. Craig R. Thompson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 28.

⁸⁵ Erasmus, 28.

Erasmus is following a passage in Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria* 8.3.37.

⁸⁶ Erasmus, 28.

⁸⁷ Desiderius Erasmus, *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum commentarii duo*, ed. Betty I. Knott, in Vol. 1 Book 6 of *Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami*, eds. J.H. Waszink, Léon-E. Halkin, C. Reedijk, and C.M. Bruhl (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1988), 78-79; translations of the *experientiae* are my own.

literae incredibilem mihi voluptatem attulerunt” (Your most loving words brought incredible pleasure to me), “Incredibili gaudio mihi tua fuit epistola” (Your letter was an incredible joy for me), and “Summae iucunditati nobis tua fuit epistola” (Your letter was the highest pleasurable-ness for us).⁸⁸ He then follows this extraordinary feat of *variatio* with two hundred versions of the phrase “Semper dum viuam, tui meminero” (Always while I live, I will remember you).⁸⁹ Based on training exercises for classical declamation and more directly on Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini’s *Artis rhetoricae praecepta* (1456), these excessive *experientiae* of *copia* proved fundamental to humanist educational practices and to the development of baroque poetics.⁹⁰

The Poetics of Copia

Stockwood’s *Progymnasma scholasticum* offers an example of how the inheritors of Erasmian *copia* expanded the practices of rhetorical variation by applying their excessive logic to poetics. A book intended for grammar school students in England, the *Progymnasma* gathers over 250 epigrams from the *Greek Anthology*, providing extensive annotations to aid comprehension as well as Latin variations of each poem.⁹¹ These poetic variations were often by Thomas More, Julius Scaliger, and Stockwood himself, and they presented a by then common poetic expression of the older Erasmian practices of *copia*. Nonetheless, Stockwood’s poetic

⁸⁸ Erasmus, 78-79.

⁸⁹ Erasmus, 83.

⁹⁰ For the difference between Roman declamation and Erasmian *copia*, see Johnson, *Hyperboles*, 80-81. For a discussion of Piccolomini and other possible sources of these variation exercises, including Julius Pollux’s *Onomasticon*, Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae*, Pseudo-Cicero’s *Synonyma*, Stephanus Fliscus’ *Sententiarum variationes sive synonyma*, and Rudolphus Agricola’s *De formando studio*, see Cave, *Cornucopian Text*, 10-13.

⁹¹ Given its several editions and John Brinsley’s 1612 recommendation of the book, many grammar school students and future poets would have come across Stockwood’s book.

variations are uniquely excessive. He explains their purpose in an introduction to the book's third-to-last entry: "Here, inspired by the example of Stephanus, I want to exhibit 450 poetic variations in order to encourage the spirit of good and eager young students of the trivium, so they might also attempt to make more epigrams in their leisure and free time, and for their great usefulness and pleasure."⁹² This astonishing number of variations of a single epigram complement variations of it earlier in the collection.⁹³

Besides Erasmus, Stockwood's inspiration for this excessive display of *copia* appears twofold. One source was the *Greek Anthology* itself, following the way Henricus Stephanus (and Meleager before him) collected epigrams on similar themes and published them together in a celebration of variation. A second source was the prospect of future variations. He aimed to inspire the next generation of students and poets to contribute new variations with evermore fantastic displays of *copia*. As he makes clear in a short poem prefatory to his list of 450 variations, Stockwood hopes that students will understand this practice as a pleasurable activity and not a labor:

Ad bonarum literarum studiosum.
 Pluribus hoc efferre modis problema licebit:
 Hoc variis carmen reddito (quaeso) modis.
 Non labor est, nec opus, sed erit vertisse voluptas:
 Hoc variis carmen carmine redde modis.⁹⁴

[For the Student of Good Learning.
 Here is a problem that may be carried out in many ways:

⁹² John Stockwood, *Progymnasma scholasticum* (London: 1597), 413; all translations of Stockwood are mine.

⁹³ Stockwood's first variation earlier in the text is "Linque Cupido jecur, cordi quoque parcito: si vis / Figere, fige alio tela cruenta loco" (Cupid, take the liver, and spare the heart: if you want / To transfix, transfix the bloody spear another place) (Stockwood, *Progymnasma*, 364; my translation). The first of the 450 variations at the end of his book is "Parce meo jecori, intactum mihi linquito pectus: / Omnia de reliquo corpore membra pete" (Spare my liver, and leave me the breast untouched: / Every member of the remaining body attack) (Stockwood, *Progymnasma*, 413; my translation).

⁹⁴ Stockwood, 413.

You can render this song (and I encourage you to do so) in various ways.
It is not work, nor is it a burden, but it will be a pleasure to vary it.
Render this song with a song in various ways.]

The extraordinary skill that Stockwood shows in these variations was widely respected by his contemporaries. John Brinsley, one of the most influential educators of the early seventeenth century, singled out the *Progymnasma* as the best textbook for teaching students the “turning of Verses divers waies.”⁹⁵ Stockwood’s book offered English students of the time a model for translating classical poems into new forms by using a copious variety of rhetorical figures.

Books like the *Progymnasma* contributed to a growing obsession with the epigram in England during the seventeenth century. It became a veritable fad during the 1630s and 1640s, when some of the most-sold books in England were collections of epigrams, including Francis Quarles’s *Divine Fancies Digested into Epigrammes, Meditations, and Observations* (1632) and John Mennes’s *Wits Recreations* (1640). Following Ben Jonson’s *Epigrams* (1612), a number of poets began publishing their own collections of epigrams, including Edward May and Thomas Urquhart. All these books offer lavish displays of *copia*, comprising English variations of epigrams from Catullus, Martial, Ausonius, and the *Greek Anthology*. The production and organization of these epigram books were firmly based in humanist practices of *copia* insofar as the poems were both written and collected according to a logic of variation and abundance.

Some poets began their careers with books of epigrams indebted to their training in grammar schools. Crashaw, John Suckling, and James Duport all published epigrams based on

⁹⁵ John Brinsley, *Ludus literarius; or, The Grammar Schoole* (London: 1612), 197.

For more context on these exercises and for Stockwood’s importance to their development, see Foster Watson, *The English Grammar Schools to 1660: Their Curriculum and Practice* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1908), 96-97, 484-85.

grammar school exercises like those of the *Progymnasma*.⁹⁶ As James Doelman explains, “Duport, a significant churchman and classicist, published religious epigrams in 1662 that stemmed from schoolboy exercises at Westminster School in the 1610s, and those of... Suckling on the days of the Christmas season likely arose from this same tradition.”⁹⁷ Crashaw’s *Epigrammatum sacrorum liber* is the product of his studies and practices both at Charterhouse School and at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. In his dedicatory preface to the master of Pembroke Hall, Benjamin Lany, Crashaw writes, “Patere igitur (reverende custos) hanc tibi ex istiusmodi floribus corollam necti” (Accept therefore [reverend master] this garland bound with flowers of such a kind for you)—making a clear reference to the poetic tradition of the *Greek Anthology* (Meleager’s Στέφανος) and Stephanus’ *Florilegium diversorum epigrammatum veterum* (1566).⁹⁸ Crashaw also includes two dedicatory poems in his preface: one to his tutor at Pembroke Hall, John Tournay, and another to Robert Brook, the master of Charterhouse.⁹⁹ His poem to the latter ends with the following verses:

Scilicet haec mea sunt; haec quae mala scilicet: ô si
 (Quae tua nempe forent) hîc meliora forent!
 Qualiacunque, suum nôrunt haec flumina fontem.
 (Nilus ab ignoto fonte superbus eat)
 Nec certè nihil est quâ quis sit origine. Fontes
 Esse solent fluvii nomen honôrque sui.
 Hic quoque tam parvus (de me mea secula dicant)
 Non parvi soboles hic quoque fontis erat.

⁹⁶ For more information on the broader context of epigram books in grammar schools and universities, see James Doelman, *The Epigram in England, 1590-1640* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2016), 75.

⁹⁷ Doelman, *The Epigram in England*, 75.

⁹⁸ Richard Crashaw, *The Poems English Latin and Greek of Richard Crashaw*, ed. L. C. Martin (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1957), 6; my translation.

⁹⁹ For more information on these men and for a note on the possibility that the poem thought to have been addressed to Robert Brook was actually meant for Samuel Brooke, see Alexander Balloch Grosart, *The Complete Works of Richard Crashaw* (London: 1873), liv-lvi.

Hoc modò & ipse velis de me dixisse, Meorum
Ille fuit minimus. Sed fuit ille meus.¹⁰⁰

[These which are bad, forsooth, these things are mine;
Would they were better, that they might be thine!
Whate'er they are, these streams their fountain know,
Nile from an unknown fount may proudly go.
Not lightly what one's source may be we deem;
Fountains give name and honour to their stream.
So small—my times perhaps may say of me—
An offspring of no fountain small was he.
Only to say of me may it be thine:
“He was my least indeed—but he was mine!”]¹⁰¹

Crashaw makes it clear from the beginning that the source of his epigrams are the schools in which he lived and learned. His tutors were the ones who taught him to vary sacred themes in epigrammatic form and to carry the practice into his leisure hours. Crashaw thanks his muse: “Salve, alme custos Pierii gregis: / Per quem erudito exhalat in otio” (Hail, nourishing master of the muse's flock, / Through him she breathes in learned leisure).¹⁰² Just as Stockwood had intended, grammar school exercises of epigrammatic variation inspired students like Crashaw to hone their craft outside the classroom.

Epigrammatum sacrorum liber is a collection of 178 epigrammatic variations of individual verses and scenes from the Bible. Indeed, Crashaw often provides two or three variations of individual passages.¹⁰³ For example, in these two variations of Matthew 2:16-18 Crashaw invokes the children massacred by Herod:¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Crashaw, *The Poems English Latin and Greek*, 10, lines 17-26.

¹⁰¹ Richard Crashaw, *The Complete Works of Richard Crashaw*, ed. Alexander Balloch Grosart, Vol. 2 (London: 1873), 376, lines 17-26; translated by Richard Wilton.

¹⁰² Crashaw, *The Poems English Latin and Greek*, 7; my translation.

¹⁰³ These multiple variations include Luke 19:41, Matthew 11:25, and John 16:33.

¹⁰⁴ “Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the

Matth. 2: Ad Infantes Martyres.

Fundite ridentes animas; effundite cœlo:
Discet ibi vestra (ô quàm bene!) lingua loqui.
Nec vos lac vestrum & maternos quærite fontes:
Quæ vos expectat *lactea* tota *via* est.¹⁰⁵

[Pour out your laughing souls; pour them out to heaven:
There your tongue will learn to speak—o how well!
Do not seek your milk and (your) mothers' fountains:
What awaits you is the whole *milky way*.]¹⁰⁶

Matth. 2: In lactentes Martyres.

Vulnera natorum qui vidit, & ubera matrum,
Per pueros fluviis (ah!) simul ire suis;
Sic pueros quisquis vidit, dubitavit, an illos
Lilia cœlorum diceret, an *rosas*.¹⁰⁷

[Whoever saw the wounds of the children and the breasts of the mothers
Flow together in their streams, ah, through the boys:
Whoever saw the boys so, doubted whether he should call them
The *lilies* of heaven or the *roses*.]¹⁰⁸

These epigrammatic variations of verses from Matthew employ a wide array of rhetorical figures to express the tragic redemption of the Massacre of the Innocents. The first employs apostrophe, exclamatio, alliteration, assonance, metonymy, hyperbole, and other figures, while the second largely relies on chiasmic syntax and paradox for its emotional effects. Crashaw's book overflows with similar poetic practices of *copia*. He continually demonstrates how sacred verses from the Gospels, Acts, and Revelation can be turned into poetic exercises of variation, which then

time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy [Jeremiah] the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not" (Hammond, Gerald, and Austin Busch, eds. *The English Bible, King James Version: The New Testament and the Apocrypha* [New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2012], 21).

¹⁰⁵ Richard Crashaw, *The Complete Poetry of Richard Crashaw*, ed. and trans. George Walton Williams (New York: New York University Press, 1972), 289.

¹⁰⁶ Crashaw, 288; translated by Williams.

¹⁰⁷ Crashaw, 291.

¹⁰⁸ Crashaw, 290; translated by Williams.

Crashaw's schoolboy practice of epigrammatic variation carried on into his next book of poetry, published in English. *Steps to the Temple* includes, among many other translations, English versions of the two Latin poems quoted above, and these translations prove even more hyperbolic and excessive than the originals.

Goe smiling soules, your new built Cages breake,
In Heav'n you'l learn to sing ere here to speake,
Nor let the milky fonts that bathe your thirst,
Bee your delay;
The place that calls you hence, is at the worst
Milke all the way.¹¹⁰

To see both blended in one flood
The Mothers Milke, the Childrens blood,
Makes me doubt if Heaven will gather,
Roses hence, or *Lillies* rather.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Doelman, *The Epigram in England*, 74.

¹¹⁰ Crashaw, *The Complete Poetry*, 10.

¹¹¹ Crashaw, 10.

¹¹² Crashaw, *The Complete Poetry*, 288-89; translated by Williams.

astonishing paradox in the English verse—the children will *learn to sing* in heaven before they ever speak on earth. In the third line Crashaw not only figuratively transforms “Nec vos lac vestrum & maternos quærite fontes” (“Do not seek your milk and [your] mothers’ fountains”) into an image of both bathing in and thirsting for milk, but he also extends the end-stopped Latin line into an extra enjambed dimeter verse.¹¹³ This irregular metrical pattern is repeated in the translation of the last line, both embellishing the appearance of the lines and enhancing the surprise of readers as their eyes descend for the witty conclusion. In the second poem Crashaw heightens the astonishment and paradox of the Latin poem through increased hyperbole and clarity. In the first two lines the ambiguous images of “vulnera natorum” (“wounds of children”) and “ubera matrum” (“breasts of mothers”) are turned into the more direct and astonishing blend of “Mothers Milke” and “Childrens blood.”¹¹⁴ Crashaw’s translations of his earlier Latin variations of Matthew 2:16-18 are indicative of a broader practice in seventeenth-century English poetics that encouraged the exaggeration, elaboration, and embellishment of individual poems.

The Logic of English Baroque Poetics

English poetics became baroque when the practices of variation, so essential to Renaissance *copia*, became the fundamental method of versification itself. That is, a baroque poetics emerged when authors became more focused on figural variation within individual poems than on variation of themes from one poem to another. Baroque poetry puts the practice of *copia* to work inside the poem itself, endlessly embellishing the subject of the poem with intricate and confusing figural variations.

¹¹³ Crashaw, 288-89; brackets are parentheses in the translation by Williams.

¹¹⁴ Crashaw, 290-91; translated by Williams.

Once described as “a rosary of epigrams,” Crashaw’s “Weeper” offers an example of how the formal methods of *copia* were turned into a poetic practice with excessive logic.¹¹⁵ Each of the poem’s epigrammatic stanzas offers a poetic variation of a single theme—the weeping Mary Magdalene. The 1646 edition contains twenty-six and the 1648 edition thirty-one epigrammatic variations of this image. Within each stanza Crashaw produces an endless and intricate display of figural variation that amplifies the sense of *copia* not only between stanzas but also within single verses. Consider these three stanzas from the beginning of the poem:

Haile *Sister Springs*,
Parents of Silver-forded rills!
Ever bubling things!
Thawing Christall! Snowy Hills!
Still spending, never spent; I meane
Thy faire Eyes sweet *Magdalene*.

Heavens thy faire Eyes bee,
Heavens of ever-falling stars,
Tis seed-time still with thee
And stars thou sow’st whose harvest dares
Promise the earth; to countershine
What ever makes Heavens fore-head fine.

.....
Upwards thou dost weepe,
Heavens bosome drinks the gentle streame.
Where th’ milky rivers meet,
Thine Crawles above and is the Creame.
Heaven, of such faire floods as this,
Heaven the Christall Ocean is.¹¹⁶

Crashaw varies the image of the weeping Magdalene thirteen times in these three stanzas. And he floods the verses with rhetorical figures, including anaphora, apostrophe, asyndeton, catachresis, hyperbaton, hyperbole, metonymy, paradox, prolepsis, synecdoche, and many more.

¹¹⁵ Mario Praz, *The Flaming Heart: Essays on Crashaw, Machiavelli, and Other Studies of the Relations between Italian and English Literature from Chaucer to T. S. Eliot* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1973), 221.

¹¹⁶ Crashaw, *The Complete Poetry*, 123-24, lines 1-12, 19-24.

The Magdalene's tears become twin springs, bubbling rills, thawing crystals, snowy hills, shining heavens, falling stars, seeds thrown for harvest, milky rivers, upward-crawling cream, fair floods, and even a crystal ocean. And the figural abundance of these verses stretches on for twenty-seven more stanzas. Among the most baroque of those is this stanza from the 1648 edition, in which the Magdalene's tears follow Jesus through the mountains:

And now where're he strays,
Among the Galilean mountaines,
Or more unwellcome wayes,
He's follow'd by two faithfull fountaines;
Two walking baths; two weeping motions;
Portable, and compendious oceans.¹¹⁷

How can readers conceive these fantastic images? The two faithful fountains, two walking baths, and two weeping motions combine into an altogether outlandish vision of compendious oceans portable enough to follow the feet of Jesus across the mountains. The realization of these hyperbolic figures in the mind—the attempt to render them actual—is a prospect as fantastic as it is far-fetched. “The Weeper” is full of poetic variations like these, so perplexing and intricate that most readers cannot help but reduce them to the absurd—that is, they cannot help but call them baroque.

Critics of the Baroque

In a 1710 letter to Henry Cromwell, Alexander Pope concedes that Crashaw's “works may just deserve reading.”¹¹⁸ Nonetheless, he quickly clarifies that Crashaw stands among those

¹¹⁷ Crashaw, 133, lines 109-14.

This expanded version of “The Weeper” is identical to “Saint Mary Magdalene; or, The Weeper,” published in the posthumous *Carmen Deo nostro* (1652). Richard Rambuss, editor of Crashaw 2013, omits the shorter 1646 version.

¹¹⁸ Alexander Pope, “Pope to Cromwell, 17 December, 1710,” in Vol. 1 of *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. George Sherburn (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1956), 109.

who “shou’d be consider’d as *Versifiers* and *witty Men*, rather than as *Poets*.”¹¹⁹ “This Author,” Pope explains, “form’d himself upon *Petrarch*, or rather upon *Marino*. His thoughts one may observe, in the main, are pretty; but oftentimes far fetch’d, and too often strain’d and stiffned to make them appear the greater. For men are never so apt to think a thing great, as when it is odd or wonderful; and inconsiderate Authors wou’d rather be admir’d than understood.”¹²⁰ Pope even finds the meter difficult, if not impossible, to comprehend: “To speak of his *Numbers* is a little difficult, they are so various and irregular, and mostly Pindarick.”¹²¹ Like most Enlightenment critics, Pope disdains poetry that is confusing or misshapen.

Later in the century Samuel Johnson criticized Crashaw, Abraham Cowley, and other “metaphysical” poets for writing verses so full of “enormous and disgusting hyperboles” that “their thoughts and expressions were sometimes grossly absurd, and such as no figures or licence can reconcile to the understanding.”¹²² “What they wanted however of the sublime,” Johnson complains, “they endeavoured to supply by hyperbole; their amplification had no limits; they left not only reason but fancy behind them; and produced combinations of confused magnificence, that not only could not be credited, but could not be imagined.”¹²³ After a long series of

¹¹⁹ Pope, 110.

¹²⁰ Pope, 110.

For an extended discussion of Crashaw’s and other English poets’ relation to Giambattista Marino, see James Mirollo, *The Poet of the Marvelous: Giambattista Marino* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 263-64.

¹²¹ Pope, 110.

¹²² Samuel Johnson, Cowley, in *The Lives of the Poets*, ed. John H. Middelndorf, in Vol. 21 of *The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson*, eds. Robert DeMaria, Jr. et al., 3-84 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 23, 37, 41.

¹²³ Johnson, 28.

Johnson does not always find such metaphors distasteful: “If they frequently threw away their wit upon false conceits, they likewise sometimes struck out unexpected truth: if their conceits were far-fetched, they were often worth the carriage” (Johnson, 28-29).

examples from Cowley (the best of the metaphysical poets, according to Johnson), he concludes, “In all these examples it is apparent, that whatever is improper or vicious, is produced by a voluntary deviation from nature in pursuit of something new and strange; and that the writers fail to give delight, by their desire of exciting admiration.”¹²⁴ To the extent that Johnson accuses Cowley, Crashaw, and their peers of deviating from nature in pursuit of the strange, he follows a broader Enlightenment trend of denouncing logic and art that are unnatural and outlandish.

Sergeant previously complained that Baroco was among the “mishapen Figures” of logic and that “nothing can be more Unnatural and more Inartificial than to invent two other Figures and then to study how to lay many Elaborate Rules how to reduce them again to the First.”¹²⁵ He also equated using Baroco with abandoning “a plain and easie path of Reasoning for an Intricate and Perplext one.”¹²⁶ Later Rousseau, speaking of music, said that “une Musique Baroque est celle dont l’Harmonie est confuse, chargée de Modulations & Dissonances, le Chant dur & peu naturel, l’Intonation difficile, le Mouvement contraint” (a baroque music is one in which the harmony is confused and burdened with modulations and dissonances, the singing harsh and unnatural, the intonation difficult, the movement constrained).¹²⁷ Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy described the baroque in architecture as “un nuance du bizarre.... L’idée de baroque entraine avec soi celle du ridicule poussé à l’excès” (a nuance of the bizarre.... The idea of the baroque carries with it that of the ridiculous pushed to excess).¹²⁸ And Antoine-

¹²⁴ Johnson, 48.

¹²⁵ Sergeant, *The Method to Science*, 234.

¹²⁶ Sergeant, 234.

¹²⁷ Rousseau, *Dictionnaire de musique*, 41; this translation and the following ones from the French are mine.

¹²⁸ Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy, ed., *Encyclopédie méthodique par ordre des matières* (Paris: 1782), 210.

Joseph Pernety defined the “Baroque” in painting as “qui n’est pas selon les règles des proportions, mais du caprice” (what accords not with the rules of proportions but with those of caprice).¹²⁹ All these Enlightenment figures express a similar distaste for things that are unnatural, intricate, confusing, and excessive to the point of absurdity.

Examining these critiques of Baroco and baroque art alongside those of English metaphysical poetry reveals a conceptual consistency among them all. Indeed, all the critics above could be addressing the same thing—the same style. The meters of Crashaw and Cowley are irregular and out of proportion. Their metaphors are ridiculous and bizarre. Their syntax is excessively intricate. Their imagery is confusing and often pushed to absurdity. English literary critics since Johnson have called this style “metaphysical”—a word itself associated with the excesses of Scholastic reasoning. In an undated letter from the early seventeenth century, William Drummond of Hawthornden first applied the word to English verse by criticizing poets who “endeavored to abstract [their verses] to Metaphysical Ideas and Scholastical Quiddities.”¹³⁰ He argued that “what is not like the Ancients... may (indeed) be something like unto Poesy but it is no more Poesy than a Monster is a Man.”¹³¹ In a later, misogynist use of the term, John Dryden complained that John Donne “affects the metaphysics, not only in his satires, but in his amorous verses, where nature only should reign; and perplexes the minds of the fair sex with

¹²⁹ Antoine-Joseph Pernety, *Dictionnaire portatif de peinture, sculpture, et gravure* (Paris: 1757), 24.

For an analysis of these early views of the baroque and the distinction between *caprice* and *bizarrerie* in Enlightenment criticism, see Helen Hills, *Rethinking the Baroque* (New York: Ashgate, 2011), 12-14.

¹³⁰ William Drummond of Hawthornden, *The Poetical Works of William Drummond of Hawthornden*, ed. L. E. Kastner (New York: Haskell House, 1968), xxxiv.

¹³¹ Drummond, xxxiv.

nice speculations of philosophy.”¹³² Drummond and Dryden, like Pope and Johnson later, objected to an excessively abstract, unnatural, and puzzling poetic style. It is no coincidence that English critics from Drummond to Johnson describe this “metaphysical” style the same way that Enlightenment critics describe the logic of Baroco or the style of perplexingly ornate music, architecture, and painting. After all, they are describing the same thing. They are describing the baroque.¹³³

A return to the history and the critical reception of Baroco thus clarifies the consistency of the baroque as a concept. Baroco is both a name and a logic—a *logos*. It is the name for a logic that moves a system to excess. Just as Baroco marks the extension of the syllogistic system to excess, baroque poetry marks the extension of Renaissance *copia* to excess. This logic is not limited by time, place, or medium. The poetry of Lucan, the cupolas of Guarino Guarini, the retablos of Jerónimo de Balbás, and the music of Brian Ferneyhough all express a baroque logic. Indeed, anything can be called baroque if it exhibits outlandish complexity or absurd confusion. Understanding the baroque in such a way may help unite disparate theories of the style. Scholars have long appreciated the unique aesthetic traits of the baroque, including hyperbole, the fold, the spiral, the painterly, fragmentation, parody, and abstraction. Reconsidering these characteristics in light of the Scholastic syllogism may enable critics to reconceive these traits as symptoms of a common underlying logic—an intricate, excessive, and often bizarre logic once called Baroco.

¹³² John Dryden, *Discourse concerning the Original and Progress of Satire*, in Vol. 4 of *The Works of John Dryden: Poems, 1693-1696*, eds. A. B. Chambers, William Frost, and Vinton A. Dearing (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974), 9.

¹³³ Given the association of the word *metaphysical* with Scholastic logic, its isolated usage among English literary critics, and its misogynist history, it seems appropriate in most cases to substitute the word *baroque* in contemporary criticism.

Chapter Two

Nature

I shall lead thee *per ardua montium, et lubrica vallium, et roscida cespitem, et glebosa camporum*, through variety of objects, that which thou shalt like and surely dislike.

- Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*¹³⁴

¹³⁴ Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, ed. Holbrook Jackson (New York: The New York Review of Books, 2001), 32.

According to Édouard Glissant, “The baroque made its appearance in the West at a moment when a particular idea of Nature—as harmonious, homogeneous, and thoroughly knowable—was in force.”¹³⁵ In contrast to this image of a uniform and limited nature, the baroque promoted an image of the world as infinitely heterogeneous. “Baroque art mustered bypasses, proliferation, spatial redundancy..., anything exalting quantity infinitely resumed and totality infinitely ongoing.”¹³⁶ Baroque authors and artists understood their works to be artistic reflections of nature’s own logic of excess. As Thomas Browne writes in *Religio Medici* (1643), “Art is the perfection of Nature: Were the world now as it was the sixth day, there were yet a Chaos: Nature hath made one world, and Art another. In briefe, all things are Artificial, for Nature is the Art of God.”¹³⁷ With these words, Browne articulates a central paradox of the baroque and a tension in baroque criticism: the style is both natural and artificial.¹³⁸

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¹³⁵ Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2019), 77.

¹³⁶ Glissant, *Poetics*, 78.

¹³⁷ Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici and Urne-Buriall*, eds. Stephen Greenblatt and Ramie Targoff (New York: The New York Review of Books, 2012), 20.

¹³⁸ Art critics have long associated the baroque with nature. In *Conversations sur la connoissance de la peinture* (1677), Roger de Piles commends the baroque master Peter Paul Rubens for his imitation and exaggeration of nature: “He was so strongly persuaded that the aim of the painter was to imitate nature perfectly, that he did nothing without consulting her.... And he carried this knowledge so far, with a bold but wise and skilful exaggeration of these characteristics, that he rendered painting more alive and more natural, so to speak, than nature itself” (Roger de Piles, *Conversations sur la connoissance de la peinture* [Paris: Nicolas Langlois, 1677], 228, 257. Quoted in John Rupert Martin, *Baroque* [New York: Harper and Row, 1977], 45). A century later, Johann Winckelmann denounced Gian Lorenzo Bernini for “adhering too strictly to Nature” (Johann Winckelmann, *Reflections on the Imitations of the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, trans. Henry Fusseli [London: Printed for the Translator, 1765], 18). And in his unfinished work *The Origins of Baroque Art in Rome* (1908), Alois Riegl defined the baroque according to its *Naturalismus* (see Alois Riegl, *The Origins of Baroque Art in Rome*, eds. and trans. Andrew Hopkins and Arnold Witte [Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010], 249-54). But as ubiquitous as associations of the baroque with nature are in art history, nature is also associated with most other aesthetic styles. As John Rupert Martin warns, “Absolute naturalism, in any period is a will-o’-the-wisp: the notion of the work of painting or sculpture as a purely objective and artless transcription of reality has no more validity as applied to the Baroque of the seventeenth century than to the Realism of the nineteenth” (John Rupert Martin, *Baroque* [New York: Harper and Row, 1977], 41).

When neoclassical critics condemned the baroque as unnatural and merely artificial in the late-seventeenth century, they did so by reviving the older, classical image of nature. While baroque authors like Abraham Cowley imitated the “turning *Maze*” of nature’s “unexhausted store,”¹³⁹ neoclassical authors like Nicholas Boileau and Alexander Pope modelled their literature on a “plain” and “naked Nature.”¹⁴⁰ This chapter shows how the difference between these two images of nature fueled a controversy over the baroque in early modern England. On the one side, English authors influenced by Boileau and the Académie française defended an image of nature as plain and unadorned. On the other, authors like Cowley, Robert Burton, Thomas Browne, John Florio, John Donne, and Richard Lovelace promoted an image of nature full of excess and ornament. I argue that this latter image of nature was vital to the development English baroque literature in the early seventeenth century, and I demonstrate how English authors used techniques of extreme figural variation to imitate the natural creations of what John Donne calls a “Metaphorical God.”¹⁴¹ In the end, by uniting the theories of Walter Benjamin and Gilles Deleuze, I reconcile two early modern responses to the baroque image of nature—one that represented the infinity of world as catastrophic, the other as glorious. In short, baroque authors imitated the infinite variety of nature not only to redeem the world with meaning, but also to see the world as God does—all in one.

¹³⁹ Abraham Cowley, *Pindarique Odes*, in *Poems* (London: Printed for Humphrey Moseley, 1656), 5, 9.11, 9.10.

¹⁴⁰ Nicolas Boileau, *The Art of Poetry*, trans. John Dryden (London: Printed by R. Bentley and S. Magnes, 1683), 3, 1.42.

Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*, in *Alexander Pope*, ed. Pat Rogers (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1993), 27, line 294.

¹⁴¹ John Donne, “XIX. Expostulation” in *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1959), 124.

Limiting Excess: The Neoclassical Image of Nature

In *Reflections on the Imitations of the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks* (1765), Winckelmann is quick to recognize the vital importance of nature for baroque artists. Resurrecting the classical debate over “lifelikeness” versus “beauty” in art,¹⁴² he criticizes Bernini for “pointing out Nature as chiefly imitable,” since nature only leads to “a more tedious and bewildered road to the knowledge of perfect beauty.”¹⁴³ He continues, “Bernini, by adhering too strictly to Nature, acted against his own principles, as well as obstructed the progress of his disciples.”¹⁴⁴ In a 1766 mock response to his own book, Winckelmann emphasizes this point with a lampoon of baroque complexity: “Variety is the great and only rule to which [baroque] decorators submit. Perceiving that there is no perfect resemblance between two things in nature, they likewise forsake it in their decorations.”¹⁴⁵ According to Winckelmann, the baroque is a bad style because it is too natural—too similar to what he calls *Lusus Naturae*.¹⁴⁶ For him, art should not imitate the excesses of nature.

A few decades later, Immanuel Kant makes room for the baroque style in *The Critique of Judgement* (1790). In the “General Remark on the First Section of the Analytic,” Kant appreciates the way baroque art imitates the excesses of the natural world. Just as “nature, which is there extravagant in its varieties to the point of opulence, subject to no coercion from artificial

¹⁴² This critique of Bernini echoes the classical debate over the natural “lifelikeness” of sculptures by Demetrios of Alopecce and paintings by Peiraikos versus the formal “beauty” of sculptures by Kresilas and others (John Rupert Martin, *Baroque* [New York: Harper and Row, 1977], 41).

¹⁴³ Winckelmann, *Reflections*, 17-18.

¹⁴⁴ Winckelmann, 18.

¹⁴⁵ Winckelmann, 122.

¹⁴⁶ He writes that “learning never had, nor indeed ought to have, any share in an art so nearly related to what we call *Lusus Naturae*” (Winckelmann, 124).

rules,”¹⁴⁷ “the baroque taste in furniture pushes the freedom of the imagination almost to the point of the grotesque, and makes this abstraction from all constraint by rules the very case in which the taste can demonstrate its greatest perfection in projects of the imagination.”¹⁴⁸

Nonetheless, Kant insists that artists should limit the style to specific uses. The baroque is perfect for “pleasure gardens,” “the decoration of rooms,” and “tasteful utensils and the like,” because these are media in which “regularity that comes across as constraint is to be avoided as far as possible.”¹⁴⁹ But if the style is used in other forms, artists may risk obscuring the understanding of their aesthetic objects. In other words, Kant is nervous that the natural style of the baroque might push the human imagination beyond the limits of understanding. As Jean-Francois Lyotard explains, “[I]n the excess of its productive play with forms or aesthetic Ideas, the imagination can go so far as to prevent the recognition by concept.... This fury evokes the ‘excesses’ of the baroque.”¹⁵⁰

Given all this anxiety over the excessive naturalness of the baroque during the eighteenth century, it is striking that the style was simultaneously criticized as *unnatural* by other influential critics. Samuel Johnson called the style a “deviation from nature.”¹⁵¹ And Jean-Jacques Rousseau described it as “peu naturel.”¹⁵² For these critics, the baroque represented the original sin of art

¹⁴⁷ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 126.

¹⁴⁸ Kant, 126.

¹⁴⁹ Kant, 126.

¹⁵⁰ Jean-François Lyotard, *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 74.

¹⁵¹ Samuel Johnson, Cowley, in *The Lives of the Poets*, ed. John H. Middelndorf, in Vol. 21 of *The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson*, ed. Robert DeMaria, Jr., et al., 3-84 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 48.

¹⁵² Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Dictionnaire de musique*, Vol. 9 (Paris: 1768), 41.

history—the fall from nature into artifice and abstraction.¹⁵³ Against the excesses of the baroque, neoclassical authors like Johnson promoted an image of nature as “naked,” “unadorned,” and “plain.” Alexander Pope contrasts this image with the “glaring Chaos” of baroque literature in *An Essay on Criticism* (1709):

Some to *conceit* alone their taste confine,
And glittering thoughts stuck out at every line;
Pleased with a work where nothing’s just or fit;
One glaring Chaos and wild heap of wit.
Poets like painters, thus, unskilled to trace
The naked nature and the living grace,
With gold and jewels cover every part,
And hide with ornaments their want of art.¹⁵⁴

In these verses, Pope condemns the *conceitismo* of baroque poetics, accusing it of obfuscating *naked nature* with a *glaring Chaos and wild heap of wit*. For him, the literary style is unnatural insofar as it floods verses with *glittering thoughts* of *gold and jewels* that only *hide with ornaments their want of art*. Unlike nature, which is *naked* and full of *living grace*, the baroque is never *just* or *fit*—everything is out of proportion and excessive.

French critics associated with the Académie française popularized this opposition between plain nature and baroque aesthetics during the late-seventeenth century. In fact, Pope’s negative sentiments toward the style can be traced back to Dryden’s seminal 1683 translation of Nicolas Boileau’s *L’Art poétique* (1674). In the following verses, Boileau attacks poets who prefer an “extravagant” and “glitt’ring” style to a “Plain” and “Natural” one:

Most Writers, mounted on a resty Muse,
Extravagant, and Senceless Objects chuse;
They Think they erre, if in their Verse they fall

¹⁵³ Understanding the baroque as a departure from the natural and a drive toward artificial abstraction remains common today. In his influential *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque* (1983), Gilles Deleuze claims that the “Baroque is abstract art par excellence” (Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1992], 35).

¹⁵⁴ Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*, 26-27, lines 289-96.

On any thought that's Plain, or Natural:
Fly this excess and let Italians be
Vain Authors of false glitt'ring Poetry.
All ought to aim at Sence; but most in vain
Strive the hard Pass, and slipp'ry Path to gain:
You drown, if to the right or left you stray;
Reason to go has often but one way.¹⁵⁵

In a dismissal of the style that would prove common among Northern European critics in the centuries to come, Boileau stigmatizes the Italians for creating and encouraging “excess” in poetics—“Fly this excess and let Italians be / Vain Authors of false glitt’ring Poetry.”¹⁵⁶ By the late-seventeenth century, many French and English critics were defining their aesthetic programs in opposition to the baroque, which they often characterized as Italian or Spanish.¹⁵⁷ In response to this foreign style, Boileau promoted a new classical model of poetics as the “one way” of “Plain, or Natural” verse.¹⁵⁸

For neoclassical critics like Boileau and Dryden, a poetic style was natural to the extent it limited rhetorical figures and conformed to longstanding forms of classical literature. One of the most extraordinary expressions of these aesthetics commitments is found in Antoine Furetière’s *Nouvelle Allegorique ou Histoire des dernieres trouble arrive au Royaume d’Eloquence* (1658). In an allegory of the triumph of neoclassical poetics over baroque poetics, *Nouvelle Allegorique* tells the story of how Princess Rhetoric of the Kingdom of Eloquence defended her state against the barbarous figures of “prosopopées,” “epiphonemes,” “comparaisons,” “exagerations,”

¹⁵⁵ Boileau, *The Art of Poetry*, 3, 1.42-48.

¹⁵⁶ Boileau, 3, 1.43-44.

¹⁵⁷ These verses from Boileau also articulate the growing opposition in early modern discourse between Northern and Southern European aesthetics, wherein English and French taste is set against the “extravagant” taste of Italy and Spain—an aesthetic fiction whose cultural effects persist today (Boileau, 3, 1.43-44).

¹⁵⁸ Boileau, 3, 1.43-44.

“authoritez,” “ironies,” “hyperboles,” “allusions,” and other tropes.¹⁵⁹ An illustration included in the book (see Appendix 1) depicts these figures attacking the “academia,” while the classical forms of “romans,” “lettres,” “escad dramatiques,” “sermons,” and others serve to defend Princess Rhetoric and the Kingdom of Eloquence. In the end, the forces of Eloquence win and expel the excesses of rhetorical figuration.¹⁶⁰

In England, the Royal Society promoted its own style of “plain” and “natural” language. In *The History of the Royal Society of London, For the Improving of Natural Knowledge* (1667), Thomas Sprat commends the society for endeavoring “to separate the knowledge of *Nature*, from the colours of *Rhetorick*, the devices of *Fancy*, or the delightful deceit of *Fables*.”¹⁶¹ For Sprat, this is vital to the project of the Royal Society because “unless they had been very watchful to keep them in due temper, the whole spirit and vigour of their *Design*, had been soon eaten out, by the luxury and redundance of *speech*.”¹⁶² He laments that “the ill effects of this superfluity of talking, have already overwhelm’d most other *Arts* and *Professions*” and that “of all the Studies of men, nothing may be sooner obtain’d, than this vicious abundance of *Phrase*, this trick of *Metaphors*, this volubility of *Tongue*, which makes so great a noise in the World.”¹⁶³ Sprat admires the Royal Society’s commitment to understanding Nature through a plain style of discourse, free of ornamental figures that confuse and obscure thought. He wonders, “Who can

¹⁵⁹ Frontispiece to Antoine Furetière, *Nouvelle Allegorique ou Histoire des dernieres trouble arrive au Royaume d'Eloquence* (Paris: Guillaume de Luyne, 1658), accessed on September 10, 2018, https://als.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammatik#/media/File:Allegory_of_Grammar.gif. See Appendix 1.

¹⁶⁰ Frontispiece to Furetière, https://als.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammatik#/media/File:Allegory_of_Grammar.gif. See Appendix 1.

¹⁶¹ Thomas Sprat, *The History of the Royal Society of London, For the Improving of Natural Knowledge* (London: Printed by T.R. for J. Martyn, 1667), 62, quoted in William H. Gass, “Excerpt from Baroque Prose,” *LitMag* 1, no. 1 (2017), 156-57.

¹⁶² Sprat, 111.

¹⁶³ Sprat, 111-12.

behold, without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties, these specious Tropes and Figures have brought on our Knowledge?"¹⁶⁴ To be sure, Sprat was an enthusiastic defender of the Society's commitment to writing about nature in a language stripped of tropes, figures, and fancy.¹⁶⁵

Some members of the Royal Society even attempted to create a new language stripped of all figural obscurity and confusion. In *An Essay Towards a Real Character, and a Philosophical Language* (1668), a text dedicated to the construction of a clearly defined philosophical language in English, John Wilkins distinguishes between natural and artificial forms of words. On the one hand, *natural words* are "Proper," "Simple," and "Express" in meaning.¹⁶⁶ They are "plain, open, flat, explicite" and signify "according to the first intention."¹⁶⁷ On the other hand, *artificial words* are "Tralatitious" and "Figurate" with meanings that are "implied, implicate, tacit, intimated... [and] Difficult to be understood."¹⁶⁸ They are also "improper..., Aenigmatical, full, or Defective; having something left out."¹⁶⁹ Wilkins imagines that if our thoughts be "rendered according the genuine and natural importance of Words," most philosophical and religious debates would be resolved.¹⁷⁰ He explains,

¹⁶⁴ Sprat, 112.

¹⁶⁵ This position on language can be traced back to Francis Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* (1605) and his belief that the "affectionate studie of eloquence and copie of speech... grew speedily to an excesse: for men began to hunt more after wordes, than matter, and more after the choiseness of the Phrase, and the round and cleane composition of the sentence, and the sweet falling of the clauses, and the varying and illustration of their workes with tropes and figures: then after the weight of matter, worth of subiect, soundnesse of argument, life of inuention, or depth of iudgment" (Francis Bacon, *The Twoo Bookes of Francis Bacon. Of the proficience and aduancement of Learning, diuine and humane* (London: Henry Tomes, 1605], 18-19).

¹⁶⁶ John Wilkins, *An Essay Towards a Real Character, and a Philosophical Language* (London: Printed for Sir Gellibrand and for John Martin, 1668), 47.

¹⁶⁷ Wilkins, 47.

¹⁶⁸ Wilkins, 47.

¹⁶⁹ Wilkins, 47.

¹⁷⁰ Wilkins, 47.

This design will likewise contribute to the clearing of some of our Modern differences in Religion, by unmaking many wild errors, that shelter themselves under the disguise of affected phrases; which being Philosophically unfolded..., will appear to be inconsistencies and contradictions. And several of those pretended, mysterious, profound notions, expressed in great swelling words, whereby some men set up for reputation, being this way examined, will appear to be, either nonsense, or very flat and jejune.¹⁷¹

In the Royal Society's battle against "the Curse of Confusion" and "the impostures and cheats that are put upon men, under the disguise of affected insignificant phrases," Englishmen like Wilkins opposed the clarity of nature to the confusion of literary artifice.¹⁷² These and other attacks on figurative language had a deleterious effect on the development of the baroque in early modern England.¹⁷³

Naturalizing Excess: The Baroque Image of Nature

Baroque authors never considered their figurative language to be unnatural. As early as 1512, Erasmus points to nature as a model for literary *copia* (see chapter one). And rather than presenting nature as naked or plain, he depicts it overflowing with spectacular variety. He commends the fact that "Nature above all delights in variety: in all this huge concourse of things, she has left nothing anywhere unpainted.... Just as the eyes fasten themselves on some new spectacle, so the mind is always looking round for some fresh object of interest."¹⁷⁴ This image

¹⁷¹ Wilkins, *Philosophical Language*, 14.

¹⁷² Wilkins, 14-15.

¹⁷³ The neoclassical movement affected the development of the baroque across all of early modern Europe and not just in literary contexts. To offer an example of the repercussions in a different aesthetic medium, Joseph Connors has noted the effects of neoclassicism on the baroque *ars tornandi*: "In the treatise of 1775 by Hulot, 'Maître Tourneur & Mécanicien breveté du Roi', the lathe is described as essential for all the details and furnishings of architecture. Yet to Hulot the tool seemed hopelessly lashed to the aesthetics of the dying baroque. He criticizes turners ('les moulures ont de mauvaises formes, leurs assemblages sont barroques') and urged them to abandon their gothicisms and to absorb the *bon goût* of the new classical style in architecture. He envisaged the reformed lathe as a servant of neoclassicism" (Joseph Connors, "Ars Tornandi: Baroque Architecture and the Lathe," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 53 [1990], 233).

¹⁷⁴ Desiderius Erasmus, *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style*, trans. Betty I. Knott, in Vol. 24 of *Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. Craig R. Thompson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 302

of the infinite variety of nature was commonplace by the seventeenth century. Thomas Browne insists in *Religio Medici* (1643) that even those things in nature that seem similar, such as two members of the same species, are full of variety. He assures his reader, “Nor doth the similitude of creatures disparage the variety of nature.... For even in things alike, there is diversitie, and those that doe seeme to accord doe manifestly disagree.”¹⁷⁵ This image of natural excess, where no two things in the world are alike, is the baroque image of nature, and it was essential to the development of English baroque literature in the seventeenth century.

Committed to not only understanding but also imitating nature in their writing, natural philosophers like Browne and Ralph Cudworth pursued a “*ratio mersa et confusa*, reason immersed and plunged into matter, and as it were, fuddled and confounded with it.”¹⁷⁶ And Browne’s prose reflects the contradictions and confusions of the baroque image of nature. He confesses that “in Philosophy where truth seems double-faced, there is no man more paradoxical than my self.”¹⁷⁷ Critics have long acknowledged his commitment to paradoxical reason and circuitous prose. Stephen Greenblatt explains, “Browne was a connoisseur of uncertainty who delighted in circuitous methods and ambiguous conclusions. Any given paragraph of Browne’s prose is likely to contain several ‘but’s, ‘if’s, and ‘yet’s; it is also likely to contain several opinions—‘some think,’ ‘others say’—which are almost never reconciled.”¹⁷⁸ Austin Warren has collected some of the phrases Browne uses to maintain such ambiguity:

A kind of *catena* or litany can be drawn from the *Religio*: “to speak more narrowly,” “to speak strictly,” “to speak properly”; “I am, I confess, naturally inclined to...” a heresy “I did never positively maintain... but have often wished had been consonant to Truth...”

¹⁷⁵ Browne, *Religio Medici*, 68.

¹⁷⁶ Ralph Cudworth, *The True Intellectual System of the Universe* (London: Printed for Richard Rorston, 1678), 238.

¹⁷⁷ Browne, *Religio Medici*, 9.

¹⁷⁸ Stephen Greenblatt and Ramie Targoff, introduction to Browne, *Religio Medici*, x.

“These opinions I never maintained with pertinacity....” “If we shall literally understand it....” “If we shall strictly examine....” “I can neither prove nor absolutely deny” that.... “I do believe that,” “I wonder how,” “It is a riddle to me now,” “I could easily believe that,” “Now if you demand my opinion, I confess....”¹⁷⁹

As Browne says in the *Religio*, “I love to lose my selfe in a mystery, to pursue my reason to an *o altitudo*.”¹⁸⁰ These mysteries are laid bare on the page as Browne’s thoughts wander from one idea to another in speculative turns of reason that relish the bounteous variety of truths. Confronting an infinite number of possible verities, Browne chooses to include and to accumulate—to let his thoughts run naturally where they may.

Critics often comment on the naturalness of Browne’s baroque prose. Frank Warnke distinguishes the style by its “asymmetry of sentence structure, colloquial immediacy of manner, and consistent attempt to render not a persuasive and polished version of thought already arrived at and completed but rather the illusion of thought in the very process of being thought.”¹⁸¹ Warnke traces the style back to the Pyrrhonic prose of Michel de Montaigne’s *Essays* in which detours, contradictions, and revisions of reason proliferate. Translated into English in 1603 by John Florio, the *Essays* proved fundamental to the emergence of English baroque prose during the early seventeenth century. Indeed, Browne’s image of “fuddled” and “confounded” reason is deeply indebted to both Montaigne and Florio.¹⁸² In “De la Vanité” the Frenchman confesses that his “entendement ne va pas tousjours avant, il va à reculons aussi.... C’est un mouvement d’yvroigne titubant, vertigineux, informe, ou des joncs que l’air manie causellement selon soy” (“My vnderstanding doth not alwayes goe forward, it sometimes goes also backward.... It is the

¹⁷⁹ Austin Warren, “The Style of Sir Thomas Browne,” *The Kenyon Review* 13, no. 4 (1951), 685.

¹⁸⁰ Browne, *Religio Medici*, 12.

¹⁸¹ F.J. Warnke, “Baroque Once More: Notes on a Literary Period,” in *New Literary History* (Winter, 1970), 147.

¹⁸² Cudworth, *True Intellectual System*, 238.

motion of a drunkard, stumbling, reeling, giddie-brain'd, formeles; or of reedes, which the ayre dooth casually waue to and fro, what way it bloweth").¹⁸³ And in "Of Exercise or Practice," he explains the project of describing one's mind—"c'est une espineuse entreprinse, et plus qu'il ne semble, de suyvre une alleure si vagabonde que celle de nostre esprit; de penetrer les profondeurs opaques de ses replis internes" ("It is a thornie and crabbed enterprise, and more the nit makes shew of, to follow so strange and vagabond a path, as that of our spirits. To penetrate the shadie, and enter the thicke-covered depths of these internall winding cranks").¹⁸⁴ Like Browne, Montaigne is committed to pursuing a "strange and vagabond path" of reason in prose.¹⁸⁵

Montaigne makes clear from the start of the *Essays* that he is committed to displaying his natural self in language. As he explains in his "Letter to the Reader," "Je veus qu'on m'y voie en ma façon simple, naturelle et ordinaire, sans contention et artifice: car c'est moy que je peins" (I would have people see me in my simple, natural, and ordinary way, without contention or artifice: since it is myself that I paint).¹⁸⁶ If there are any "défauts" ("imperfections") in such an image, they only serve to express more sincerely his true self to the reader.¹⁸⁷ He writes, "Que si j'eusse esté entre ces nations qu'on dict vivre encore sous la douce liberté des premiers loix de nature, je t'asseure que je m'y fusse tres-volontiers peint tout entire, et tout nud" ("For, if my fortune had beene to have lived among those nations, which yet are said to live vnder the sweete libertie of Natures first and vncorrupted lawes, I assure thee, I would most willingly have

¹⁸³ Michel de Montaigne, *Les Essais*, ed. Marcel Conche, édition Villey-Saulnier (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004), 964. Unless otherwise noted, all translations of Montaigne are from Michel de Montaigne, *The Essays*, trans. John Florio (London: Printed by Val. Sims for Edward Blount, 1603), 577.

¹⁸⁴ Montaigne, *Les Essais*, 378; Florio, *Essayes*, 219.

¹⁸⁵ Montaigne, 378; Florio, 219.

¹⁸⁶ Montaigne, 4; my translation.

¹⁸⁷ Montaigne, 4; Florio, *Essayes*, 6v.

pourtrayed my selfe fully and naked”).¹⁸⁸ Montaigne is not ashamed of his natural style of thinking, and the *Essays* place the labyrinthine complexities of his quotidian thought on display in their natural forms. Montaigne’s parenthetical asides, marginal opinions, tangential anecdotes, and multiple revisions to the work display his mind naturally at work—*fully and naked*. In his unfinished and posthumously published book *Baroque Prose* (2018), William Gass comments on the naturalness of such prose:

Baroque prose loves the parenthetical, the marginal, the afterthought, the postscript, which it then inserts into the middle of things like herbs are stirred into a boiling pot. Why does the stroller stroll instead of trot?... why.... to look about, to survey, to ponder further, to stop thought long enough to take a good look at it. Oh, yes, and to delay the inevitable end of our journey.¹⁸⁹

Gass appreciates how baroque prose flows in long diversions and abrupt spurts, just as one might follow and then lose a train of thought while walking home. Thought is naturally excessive insofar as it continually departs itself (Lt. *excessus*).

Robert Burton offers his own description of this natural style of prose in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621).¹⁹⁰ In “Democritus Junior’s Letter to the Reader,” Burton explains that the book was “writ with as small deliberation as I do ordinarily speak, without all affectation of big words, fustian phrases, jingling terms, tropes, strong lines, that like Acestes’ arrows caught fire as they flew, strains of wit, brave heats, eulogies, hyperbolical exornations, elegancies, etc., which many so much affect.”¹⁹¹ Sentences like this one have appeared paradoxical to many readers. Is

¹⁸⁸ Montaigne, 4; Florio, 6v.

¹⁸⁹ Gass, *Baroque Prose*, 158.

¹⁹⁰ Melancholy is the quintessential affect of baroque excess. According to ancient theories of humorism, melancholy was a product of excessive amounts of black bile (*melaina chole*) in the body. As discussed at the end of this chapter, melancholy was a popular affective response to the religious, political, and scientific revolutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

¹⁹¹ Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 31.

this really how Burton speaks?¹⁹² Burton's style is colloquial, but its *accumulatio* seems long-winded to the point of excess. Elsewhere he writes, "I am *aquae potor*, drunk no wine at all, which so much improves our modern wits, a loose, plain, rude writer, *ficum voco ficum et ligonem ligonem*, and as free, as loose, *idem calamo quod in mente*, I call a spade a spade, *animis haec scribe, non auribus*, I respect matter, not words."¹⁹³ Here the accumulation of Latin phrases in a circular expansion of one idea is emblematic of Burton's natural style. To properly understand these claims to plainness, we must keep in mind his image of nature, because it is the natural world to which Burton compares the overflowing and irregular style of his baroque prose. Burton explains,

'Tis not my study or intent to compose neatly, which an orator requires, but to express myself readily and plainly as it happens. So that as a river runs sometimes precipitate and swift, then dull and slow; now direct, then *per ambages* [winding]; now deep, then shallow; now muddy, then clear; now broad, then narrow; doth my style flow: now serious, then light; now comical, then satirical; now more elaborate, then remiss, as the present subject required, or as at that time I was affected. And if thou vouchsafe to read this treatise, it shall seem no otherwise to thee than the way to an ordinary traveler, sometimes fair, sometimes foul; here champaign, there enclosed; barren in one place, better soil in another: by woods, groves, hills, dales, plains, etc. I shall lead thee *per ardua montium, et lubrica vallium, et roscida cespitum, et glebosa camporum*, through variety of objects, that which thou shalt like and surely dislike.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹² There are those who have found the style plain: "Stripped, however, of these characteristic and entertaining encumbrances, Burton's prose is direct and normal. It has a brisk, staccato style, which guarantees the fluency of his long and leisurely book.... He does not invent a phrase for its own sake, and then stand back to admire it as one feels Browne and Donne doing. His style is too colloquial for that. It is like good talk." (Holbrook Jackson, preface to Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, xxiii).

¹⁹³ Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 31.

¹⁹⁴ Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 32.

Passages like this one have led many critics to question Burton's claim to a plain style. Examining a similar passage, Gass asks, "What are we now to think?" (William Gass, "Introduction" in Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, xv). His critique of orators and their "strong lines" is just insofar as their "balance, gnomic terseness and... elevation of thought and diction... could seem, when it failed, to yield the artificial, riddling, and bombastic.... Nevertheless," Gass continues, "Burton's looseness can only be called 'exuberance' now, 'celebration,' and indicative of a nominalism that feels that if every person huddling under an umbrella is not named they shall have no protection" (Gass, xv).

For Burton's baroque sensibility, a plain style runs like the natural world in ebbs and flows of variety and surprise. It flows quickly like a river, spreads wide like a plain, ascends like a hill, then descends like a dale.¹⁹⁵ Burton's style is wholly natural—not naked, but copious.

This baroque image of nature as various and complex is a model not only for baroque prose but also for baroque poetry. In his translation of Pindar's *Second Olympian*, Abraham Cowley expands the original Greek to present an image of nature as a paragon of aesthetic complexity and variety. Compare Pindar's verses with Cowley's translation of them:

... σοφὸς ὁ πολλὰ εἰδὼς φυᾶ·
μαθόντες δὲ λάβροι
παγγλωσσία κόρακες ὥς ἄκραντα γαρύετον
Διὸς πρὸς ὄρνιχα θεῖον.¹⁹⁶

Let *Art* use *Method* and good *Husbandry*,
Art lives on *Natures Alms*, is weak and poor;
Nature herself has unexhausted store,
Wallows in *Wealth*, and runs a turning *Maze*,
That no *vulgar Eye* can trace.
Art instead of mounting high,
About her *humble Food* does hov'ering fly,
Like the ignoble *Crow*, *rapine* and *noise* does love,
Whilst *Nature*, like the sacred *Bird of Jove*,
Now bears loud *Thunder*....¹⁹⁷

Pindar's verses focus on the limitations of poets who do not follow nature; the *boisterous* (λάβροι) and *garrulous* (παγγλωσσία) *learners* (μαθόντες) sound like *crows* (κόρακες) vainly singing *before the heavenly bird of God* (Διὸς πρὸς ὄρνιχα θεῖον). But Cowley encourages his

¹⁹⁵ As Tom Conley explains, "Literature of what Jean Rousset had called the Baroque Age inspires fluvial fantasy. Figures of change and permanence, mutation and constancy, bending and twisting, whether in poetry or prose, sculpture or painting, rivers flow abundantly. Watery sites welcome aggrieved lovers to take stock of themselves, to find solace, or even to end their lives. Eddies, pools, and ponds become mental mirrors. In the eyes of the Baroque soul the very sight of the swirl and twist of moving waters can open sluices of pathos and melancholy." (Tom Conley, "Line and Trait of the Baroque River," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Baroque*, ed. John D. Lyons [Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019], 44)

¹⁹⁶ Pindar, *Olympian Odes*, ed. and trans. William H. Race (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1997), 72, lines 86-88.

¹⁹⁷ Cowley, *Pindarique Odes*, 5, 9.8-17.

readers to imitate the sublime riches of natural *copia*. “*Nature herself has unexhausted store, / Wallows in Wealth, and runs a turning Maze.*”¹⁹⁸ Cowley’s extension of Pindar presents a baroque image of nature in which the copious complexity of the world offers a divine model for human art.

In their attempt to imitate the *turning Maze* and *unexhausted store* of nature, baroque poets often push their verses to excess. In *Christ’s Victory and Triumph* (1610), Giles Fletcher presents this image of the world full of personified animism in celebration of the Second Coming:

Hearke how the floods clap their applauding hands,
The pleasant valleyes singing for delight,
And wanton Mountaines daunce about the Lands,
The while the fieldes, struck with the heau’nly light,
Set all their flowr’s a smiling at the sight,
The trees laugh with their blossoms, and the sound
Of the triumphant shout of praise, that crown’d
The flaming Lambe, breaking through heau’n, hath passage found.¹⁹⁹

Fletcher’s metaphors push our image of nature toward an outlandish vision in which *floods clap their applauding hands*, *trees laugh*, and *Mountaines daunce about the Lands*. Nature is full of copious variety and boundless dynamism. In his baroque nature poem, “On a Drop of Dew,” Andrew Marvell mobilizes personification to similar effect:

See how the orient dew,
Shed from the bosom of the morn
Into the blowing roses,
Yet careless of its mansion new;
For the clear region where ’twas born
Round in itself incloses:
And in its little globe’s extent,
Frames as it can its native element.

¹⁹⁸ Cowley, 5, 9.10-11.

¹⁹⁹ Giles Fletcher, *Christ’s Victorie, and Triumph in Heauen, and Earth, over, and after death* (Cambridge, UK: Printed by C. Legge, 1610), 71.

.....
But gazing back upon the skies,
Shines with a mournful light;
Like its own tear,
Because so long divided from the sphere.²⁰⁰

Besides showcasing the irregularity of syntax, meter, and rhyme typical of baroque poetry, these verses work to dilate the simplest of natural phenomena—a drop of morning dew—into a kaleidoscopic emblem of natural magnificence. As Warnke explains, “Marvell, absorbed as he frequently is by external nature, almost always eschews verbal landscape-painting in favor of a radical evocation of nature as ceaseless flux and metamorphosis.”²⁰¹ In these verses, the dew drops like sweat *shed from the bosom of the morn* and a flower blooms into a *mansion new*. As it turns from this luxurious house of petals, the drop becomes a *globe*—a convex mirror framing *its native element* the sky—and then a *tear* that mourns its own fall *from the sphere* above. This phantasmagoric vision of a minor part of the natural world is typical of baroque poetry more broadly. Baroque poets amplify the simplest of natural creatures—grasshoppers, ants, flowers, and vines—into literary emblems of the diversity and complexity of nature. They pushed natural forms to excess in their imitations of the baroque image of nature.

Figures of the Infinite: Glory and Catastrophe

In 1576 the English astronomer Thomas Digges expanded the Copernican model of the universe to infinity. To a new edition of his father Leonard Digges’s *A prognostication euerlastinge of right good effecte*, Thomas appended his own translation of selections from Copernicus’ *De revolutionibus orbium caelestium* (1543) along with an illustration of the book’s cosmological system (see Appendix 2). The publication of this appendix proved revolutionary

²⁰⁰ Andrew Marvell, *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Nigel Smith (Oxford, UK: Routledge Press, 2013), 41.

²⁰¹ Warnke, “Baroque Once More,” 149.

not only for its presentation of Copernicus' heliocentric model for the first time in English, but also for its unique alterations to the system. As Stephen Johnston explains, Digges's model "went beyond Copernicus' own scheme, by showing an infinite universe in which the stars extended indefinitely outwards from the solar system."²⁰² As the outer circle of the model reads, "This orbe of stares fixed infinitely vp extendeth hit self in altitvde sphericallye."²⁰³ By resurrecting ideas from Lucretius' *De rerum natura* and Nicholas of Cusa's *De docta ignorantia*,²⁰⁴ Digges departed from closed models of the universe. For the first time in early modern England, he presented an image of the natural world as boundless and open to the infinite.

During the 1570s and 1580s, England became a hub for new ideas about the infinite nature of the universe. Indeed, Giordano Bruno expanded Digges's revolutionary image of the universe during his visit to England from 1583 to 1585. First published by John Charlewood in London in 1584, Bruno's *De l'infinito vniverso et Mondi* pushed Digges's model to new levels of excess by conceiving not only the outer ring of the universe as infinite, but also every other part. Bruno explains, "Non sono fini, termini, margini, muragla che ne defrodino et sutragano la infinita copia de le cose. Indi seconda é la terra e il suo mare ; indi perpetuo e' il uampo del sole : sumministrandosi etemamente esca á gli uoraci fuochi, et humori á gl'attenuati mari: perche dall'infinito sempre noua copia de materia sotonasce" ("There are no ends, boundaries, limits or walls which can defraud or deprive us of the infinite multitude of things. Therefore the earth and

²⁰² Stephen Johnston, "Thomas Digges (c. 1546-1595)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last modified in 2004, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/7639>.

²⁰³ Thomas Digges, "A perfit description of the Caelestiall Orbes," in Leonard Digges, *A prognostication euerlastinge of right good effecte* (London: Printed by Thomas Marsh, 1576), 43.

²⁰⁴ See E. R. Harrison, "The Dark Night-Sky Riddle: A 'Paradox' That Resisted Solution," *Science* 226, no. 4677 (1984), 942.

the ocean thereof are fecund; therefore the sun's blaze is everlasting, so that eternally fuel is provided for the voracious fires, and moisture replenisheth the attenuated seas. For from infinity is born an ever fresh abundance of matter").²⁰⁵ By combining the classical atomic theories of Lucretius with the later astronomical theories of Nicolas of Cusa, Digges, and others, Bruno offers the image of a world overflowing with an infinite variety of matter.

Bruno lampoons astronomers who conceive the universe as limited by spheres: "Hor prouedere signori Astrologi conli uostri pedissequi physici, per qué uostri cerchi che ui discrueno le phantsiate noue sphere mobile, con le quali uenete ad impriggionarui il ceruello di sorte che me ui presentate non altrimenti che come tanti papagalli ni gabbia, mentre raminghi ui ueggio ir faltellando, uersando, et girando entro quello" ("Make then your forecasts, my lords Astrologers, with your slavish physicians, by means of those astrolabes with which you seek to discern the fantastic nine moving spheres; in these you finally imprison your own minds, so that you appear to me but as parrots in a cage, while I watch you dancing up and down, turning and hopping within those circles").²⁰⁶ Defending the merits of his own image of the universe, Bruno continues,

Ma é un grandissimo ritratto, mirabile imagine, figura eccelsa uestigio altissimo, infinito ripresentante di ripresentato infinito, et spettacolo conueniente all'eccellenza et eminenza di chi non può esser capito, compreso, appresso. Cossi si magnifica l'eccellenza de dio, si manifesta la grandezza de l'imperio suo: non si glorifica in uno, ma in soli innumerabili: non in una terra, vn mondo: ma in diececento mila, dico in infiniti.²⁰⁷

[On the contrary we recognize a noble image, a marvellous conception, a supreme figure, an exalted shadow, an infinite representation of the represented infinity, a spectacle worthy of the excellence and supremacy of Him who transcendeth understanding, comprehension or grasp. Thus is the excellence of God magnified and the greatness of his

²⁰⁵ Giordano Bruno, *De l'infinito vniverso et Mondi* (London: Printed by John Charlewood, 1584), 13r. All translations of Bruno are from Dorothy Waley Singer, *Giordano Bruno: His Life and Thought with Annotated Translation of His Work On the Infinite Universe and Worlds* (New York: Henry Schuman, 1950), 245.

²⁰⁶ Bruno, 13r-13v; Singer, *Bruno*, 245.

²⁰⁷ Bruno, *De l'infinito*, 13v.

kingdom made manifest; he is glorified not in one, but in countless suns; not in a single earth, a single world, but in a thousand thousand, I say in an infinity of worlds.]]²⁰⁸

Bruno takes Digges's insight into the infinity of the universe to its extreme conclusion. The universe has no single center. Because nature is infinite, there must be an infinite number of suns and worlds. He imagines a universe of infinite dynamism and complexity, free of both limit and center.²⁰⁹

Many English authors pursued the subject of an infinite universe in prose and poetry during the seventeenth century. Enthralled by the image of an infinite world,²¹⁰ Margaret Cavendish explored the consequences of such a hypothesis in both philosophy and fiction. In *Philosophicall Fancies* (1653), she offers a definition "Of Matter and Motion," in which she celebrates their variously infinite expressions in the world:

Matter and motion are infinite... And though there is but one kinde of matter, yet there are infinite degrees of matter, as thinner and thicker, softer and harder, weightier and lighter; and as there is but one matter, so there is but one motion, yet there are infinite degrees of motion, as swifter and slower; and infinite changes of motion: And although there is but one matter, yet there are infinite of parts in that matter, and so infinites of Figures: if infinite figures, infinite sizes; if infinite sizes, infinite degrees of highness, and infinite degrees of smalnesse, infinite thickness, infinite thinnesse, infinite lightnesse, infinite weightinesse; if infinite degrees of motion, infinite degrees of strengthes; if

²⁰⁸ Singer, *Bruno*, 246.

²⁰⁹ For an extended discussion of Bruno's theory and its influence on his own poetics, see Giancarlo Maiorino, "The Breaking of the Circle: Giordano Bruno and the Poetics of Immeasurable Abundance," in *The Cornucopian Mind and the Baroque Unity of the Arts*, 47-78 (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990).

²¹⁰ Besides the texts of Bruno and his followers, the texts of Epicurus and Lucretius proved influential on authors like Cavendish. Here is a relevant passage from Epicurus, quoted by Diogenes Laertius: "‘Ἄλλα μὲν καὶ κόσμοι ἄπειροί εἰσιν, οἱ θ' ὅμοιοι τούτῳ καὶ ἀνόμοιοι. αἱ τε γὰρ ἄτομοι ἄπειροι οὔσαι, ὡς ἄρτι ἀπεδείχθη, φέρονται καὶ πορρωτάτω. οὐ γὰρ κατανήλωνται αἱ τοιαῦται ἄτομοι, ἐξ ὧν ἂν γένοιτο κόσμος ἢ ὑφ' ὧν ἂν ποιηθείη, οὔτ' εἰς ἓνα οὔτ' εἰς πεπερασμένους, οὔθ' ὅσοι τοιοῦτοι οὔθ' ὅσοι διάφοροι τούτοις. ὥστε οὐδὲν τὸ ἐμποδοστατήσόν ἐστι πρὸς τὴν ἀπειρίαν τῶν κόσμων'" ("Moreover, there is an infinite number of worlds, some like this world, others unlike it. For the atoms being infinite in number, as has just been proved, are borne ever further in their course. For the atoms out of which a world might arise, or by which a world might be formed, have not all been expended on one world or a finite number of worlds, whether like or unlike this one. Hence there will be nothing to hinder an infinity of worlds") (Diogenes Laertius, Vol. 2, Book 10 of *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, *Epicurus*, trans. R.D. Hicks [Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1925], 574-75).

*infinite degrees of strengths, infinite degrees of power, and infinite degrees of knowledge, and infinite degrees of sense.*²¹¹

Cavendish follows the baroque logic of excess in contemplating the infinity of nature. If matter is infinite, then there must be *infinite degrees*—*thinner, thicker, softer, harder, weightier, lighter, swifter, and slower*. If matter is infinite, there must be *infinities of Figures*—infinite variations of *highness, smalnesse, thickness, thinnesse, lightnesse, and weightinesse*. If matter is infinite, there must be *infinite degrees of strengths, power, knowledge, and sense*. Her baroque logic could continue *ad infinitum*.

Cavendish also published several poems on the infinite nature of the universe in *Poems and Fancies* (1653). One of these poems, “Of Many Worlds in This World,” offers a meditation on the potential consequences of an infinite material world. She writes,

Nature is curious, and such works may shape,
Which our dull senses easily escape:
For creatures, small as atoms, may there be,
If every one a creature’s figure bear.
If atoms four, a world can make, then see
What several worlds might in an ear-ring be:
For, millions of those atoms may be in
The head of one small, little, single pin.
And if thus small, then ladies may well wear
A world of worlds, as pendants in each ear.²¹²

The excessive logic from *Philosophicall Fancies* continues here in verse. If nature is infinite, then *creatures, small as atoms, may there be*. If *atoms four, a world can make, then what several worlds might in an ear-ring be*—*a world of worlds*. In her own unique style of cavalier poetry, Cavendish offers a vision of the natural world overflowing with life in the smallest of objects.

And her baroque logic of excess develops even further in poems like “If Infinite Worlds, Infinite

²¹¹ Margaret Cavendish, *Philosophicall Fancies* (London: Printed by Thomas Roycroft for J. Martin and J. Allestrye, 1653), 1-2.

²¹² Margaret Cavendish, “Of Many Worlds in this World,” in *Poems and Fancies* (London: Printed by T.R. for J. Martin, and J. Allestrye, 1653), 44-45.

Centers,” “The Infinities of Matter,” “A World Made by Foure Atomes,” “A World in an Eare-Ring,” “Severall Worlds in Severall Circles,” and “It is Hard to Believe, That There are Other Worlds in this World.” The infinite nature of the universe proves an inexhaustible source of literary inspiration for Cavendish’s baroque prose and poetry.

Other English authors expressed a more ambiguous attitude toward the infinite. In *Antony and Cleopatra* (ca. 1607), William Shakespeare continually associates the Egyptian queen with the infinite variety of nature. In Act II Scene II, Domitius Enobarbus describes Cleopatra as if she embodied the baroque image of nature:

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety. Other women cloy
The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry
Where most she satisfies....²¹³

Like nature, Cleopatra’s copious style is unbounded. Enobarbus does not diminish her *infinite variety* with classical commitments to *varietas* (see chapter one), but paradoxically claims that *she makes hungry / Where most she satisfies*. She is the source of a never-ending desire for ornamental excess. As such, she personifies the goal of baroque aesthetics—to express an image of infinity without causing *satietas* (satiety) or *fastidium* (disgust). As Christine Buci-Glucksmann writes, “The Baroque dreamed of an eye that would see itself to infinity.”²¹⁴ Cleopatra embodies that baroque desire to see the infinite without surfeit.

This association of Cleopatra with an aesthetics of the infinite is not morally neutral for Shakespeare. He reveals both the wonder and the danger of a style of *infinite variety*. Earlier in

²¹³ William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. John Wilders (London: The Arden Shakespeare, Bloomsbury Publishing, 1995), 142, 2.2.245-48.

²¹⁴ Christine Buci-Glucksmann, “Author’s Preface,” in *The Madness of Vision: On Baroque Aesthetics*, trans. Dorothy Z. Baker (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2013), xv.

Act II Scene II, Enobarbus delivers a well-known description of Cleopatra “upon the river of Cydnus” meeting Mark Antony for the first time:

I will tell you.
The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Burned on the water; the poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver,
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggared all description: she did lie
In her pavilion, cloth-of-gold of tissue,
O’er picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature. On each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling cupids,
With divers-coloured fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did.²¹⁵

In this vertiginous image of luxury, Shakespeare calls into question the seductiveness of Cleopatra’s excessive aesthetic by noting how her *fancy outwork[s] nature*. In another account of Cleopatra’s entrance into Rome, Enobarbus relates how

... The city cast
Her people out upon her, and Antony,
Enthroned i’th’ market-place, did sit alone,
Whistling to th’air, which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra, too,
And made a gap in nature.²¹⁶

Cleopatra’s unnatural aesthetics of infinite excess is portrayed as a risk not only to Rome but also to nature itself. Her seductiveness proves so powerful that she would pull all the air from the world. These lines depict the queen as a model of oriental excess, resurrecting classical antagonisms between Roman culture and the excesses of the East, as well as between Attic

²¹⁵ Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, 139-40, 2.2.200-14.

²¹⁶ Shakespeare, 141, 2.2.223-28.

rhetoric and Asiatic rhetoric. Shakespeare's Enobarbus raises doubts in this scene about Cleopatra's aesthetics of *infinite variety*. Does such a style lead to wonder or confusion? Pleasure or ruin? Glory or catastrophe?

This moral debate over the aesthetics of the infinite is even more pronounced in Donne's *An Anatomie of the World, The First Anniversary* (1611). In this elegy for Elizabeth Drury, Donne presents an allegorical reading of a confused and disfigured world left in ruins. Among the "infirmities" of this "sick World," Donne points to the disorienting effects of new astronomical systems like those of Digges and Bruno.²¹⁷ He writes,

We thinke the heavens enjoy their Sphericall,
Their round proportion embracing all;
But yet their various and perplexed course,
Observ'd in divers ages, doth enforce
Men to finde out so many Eccentrique parts,
Such divers down-right lines, such overthwarts,
As disproportion that pure forme; it teares
The Firmament in eight-and-forty sheires,
And in these Constellations then arise
New starres, and old doe vanish from our eyes:
As though heav'n suffered earthquakes, peace or war,
When new Towers rise, and old demolish't are.²¹⁸

He says these infinite images of the universe have made "the worlds proportion disfigured."²¹⁹

Earlier in the poem, Donne calls out new philosophers who have upset the harmonious understanding of the world:

And new Philosophy calls all in doubt,
The Element of fire is quite put out;
The Sun is lost, and th'earth, and no man's wit
Can well direct him where to look for it.
And freely men confesse that this world's spent,
When in the Planets, and the Firmament

²¹⁷ John Donne, *An Anatomie of the World, The First Anniversary*, in Vol. 1 of *The Poems of John Donne*, ed. Herbert J.C. Grierson (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1912), 233, 232, lines 65, 23.

²¹⁸ Donne, 239, lines 251-62.

²¹⁹ Donne, 240, line 302.

They seeke so many new; they see that this
Is crumbled out again to his Atomies.
'Tis all in pieces, all cohaerence gone;
All just supply, and all Relation.²²⁰

While the baroque image of nature led some to joy, it made others mourn. A world with no center and a universe with no end upset previous understandings of the harmonious proportions of nature. For the speaker of Donne's poem, such a world appears *all in pieces, all coheraence gone*. *The First Anniversary* presents an image of the natural world as a heap of scattered fragments—ruins of what the world once was.

In *John Donne and Baroque Allegory: The Aesthetics of Fragmentation* (2017), Hugh Grady notes a divide in modern scholarship on the baroque that mirrors this early modern divide on nature. On the one hand, critics like Mario Praz, Joseph Anthony Mazzeo, and their followers argue that baroque poets viewed “the world as a ‘metaphysical’ poem and God a ‘metaphysical’ poet” to be imitated in literature.²²¹ Building on the early modern theories of Baltasar Gracián and Emanuele Tesauro, these scholars understand the baroque preoccupation with wit (*acutezza* or *ingegno*) and conceits (*conceitti*) as an imitation of the complexity of nature itself. For example, Grady points to Tesauro's claim “that God was a ‘witty creator, an *arguto favellatore*, a witty writer or talker’ ... [and that] ‘the whole of nature speaks in conceits.’”²²² But Grady could have also pointed to Donne, who speaks of a “Metaphorical God.”²²³ In Meditation XIX, Donne glorifies God's allegorical style:

My God, my God, thou art a direct God, may I not say a literal God, a God that wouldst be understood literally and according to the plain sense of all that thou sayest? but thou

²²⁰ Donne, 237, lines 205-14.

²²¹ Grady, *Baroque Allegory*, 173.

²²² Grady, 175.

²²³ John Donne, “XIX. Expostulation,” in *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1959), 124.

art also (Lord, I intend it to thy glory, and let no profane misinterpreter abuse it to thy diminution), *thou art a figurative, a metaphorical God too; a God in whose words there is such a height of figures, such voyages, such peregrinations to fetch remote and precious metaphors, such extensions, such spreadings, such curtains of allegories, such third heavens of hyperboles....* Neither art thou thus a figurative, a metaphorical God in thy word only, but in thy works too. *The style of thy works, the phrase of thine actions, is metaphorical. The institution of thy whole worship in the old law was a continual allegory; types and figures overspread all, and figures flowed into figures, and poured themselves out into farther figures.*²²⁴

Donne's God is baroque. Speaking "in such a height of figures, such voyages, such peregrinations to fetch remote and precious metaphors, such extensions, such spreadings, such curtains of allegories, such third heavens of hyperboles," God offers a divine model for authors to imitate.²²⁵ And this divine style extends beyond scripture to nature. As Katherine Calloway writes, "Donne's natural world, though disconcerted by the Fall, is still the creation of a 'metaphorical God,' rife with meanings."²²⁶ Indeed, Donne "celebrates the physical as a means of accessing the divine, explores the extent to which natural means can point to spiritual truth, and even emulates the activity of a metaphorical God with his own 'remote and precious metaphor,' the so-called metaphysical conceit.... 'Copernicus in poetry' was emulating God's original creative process."²²⁷ In other words, Donne models his own poetic style on God and nature.

²²⁴ Donne, 124; my emphasis.

²²⁵ Donne explains that the early church fathers copied this divine style into scripture: "This [style] hath occasioned thine ancient servants, whose delight it was to write after thy copy, to proceed the same way in their expositions of the Scriptures, and in their composing both of public liturgies and of private prayers to thee, to make their accesses to thee in such a kind of language as thou wast pleased to speak to them, in a figurative, in a metaphorical language" (Donne, 124).

²²⁶ Katherine Calloway, "A 'Metaphorical God' and the Book of Nature: John Donne on Natural Theology," *Studies in Philology* 116, no. 1 (2019), 152-53.

²²⁷ Calloway, "Metaphorical God," 157.

On the other hand, Walter Benjamin and Grady argue that baroque authors did not imitate nature as much as they responded to its “fallen, fragmented” state in the modern world.²²⁸ For these critics, the baroque is a melancholic reaction to a modernity of catastrophic fragmentation. As Grady explains, baroque poets respond to “a modernizing world of fragments deprived of intrinsic meaning by the epochal world-historical changes it had undergone,” including the horrors of the Thirty Years’ War, the colonization of America, and new scientific models of an infinite universe.²²⁹ Grady reads Donne’s anniversary poems in light of this new worldview, explaining how the *First Anniversary* “announces the end of that premodern dream and the advent of a modernity of fragments.”²³⁰

Shee, shee is dead, shee’s dead; when thou knowst this
 Thou knowst how ugly a monster this world is:
 And learn’t thus much by our Anatomie,
 That here is nothing to enamour thee...²³¹

And this refrain from the *First Anniversary* continues in the *Second Anniversary* with an even more explicit reference to the fragmentary nature of the world:

Shee, shee is gone; she is gone; when thou knowest this,
 What fragmentary rubbidge this world is

²²⁸ Grady, *Baroque Allegory*, 191.

²²⁹ The Thirty Years’ War was especially consequential for the development of the German Baroque. Benjamin explains that the war left a profound “awareness of mutability” and an “insight into the transience of things” among the German people (Benjamin, *Origins*, 243). C.V. Wedgwood’s seminal history *The Thirty Years War* (1938) was, like Benjamin’s trauerspiel book, conceived in the early twentieth century “against the background of depression at home and mounting [political] tension” in Germany (C.V. Wedgwood, *The Thirty Years War* [New York: The New York Review of Books, 2005], 7). The “distress,” “plight,” and “suffering” of the seventeenth century had obvious parallels to their own historical moment and inspired them to write about the early modern period (Wedgwood, 7). As George Steiner explains, “As during the crises of the Thirty Years’ War and its aftermath, so in Weimar Germany the extremities of political tension and economic misère are reflected in art and critical discussion.... Thus a study of the baroque is no mere antiquarian, archival hobby: it mirrors, it anticipates and helps grasp the dark present” (George Steiner, introduction to Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne [London: Verso, 1998], 24). For an updated, comprehensive account of the German baroque, see Peter J. Burgard, *Baroque: Figures of Excess in Seventeenth-Century European Art and German Literature* (Leiden: Wilhelm Fink, 2019).

²³⁰ Grady, *Baroque Allegory*, 78, 77.

²³¹ Donne, *An Anatomie of the World, The First Anniversary*, in *The Poems of John Donne*, 241, lines 325-28.

Thou knowest, and that it is not worth a thought;
He honours it too much that thinks it nought.²³²

Similar sentiments to these from Donne can be found in other English poems of the seventeenth century, including Andrew Marvell's *Upon Appleton House*: "'Tis not, what once it was, the world; / But a rude heap together hurled."²³³ Benjamin argues that this melancholic response to the catastrophe of the Renaissance worldview of harmonious nature paradoxically produces the baroque's naturalism. Without the hope of an eschatological redemption, "the religious man of the Baroque thus holds fast to the world because he feels himself being driven along with it toward a cataract."²³⁴ From this immanent *holding fast to the world*, an aesthetic style emerges that mirrors the delirious complexity of nature. Benjamin explains,

The beyond is emptied of everything in which even the slightest breath of world can be felt, and from it the Baroque extracts a profusion of things that tended to elude every formation and at its high point brings them to light in drastic form so as to clear a last heaven and to place it, as vacuum, in a condition to swallow up the earth one day with catastrophic violence. The same state of affairs, only transposed, is at issue with the insight that Baroque naturalism is 'the art of least distances... In every case, the naturalistic means serves the reduction of distances.... In order to leap back the more surely into the hypertrophy of form and into the forecourts of the metaphysical, it seeks its springboard in the region of the liveliest objective actuality.'²³⁵

Without a clear image of divinity in the world, with *the beyond emptied of everything*, baroque authors rely on those visible forms with *the liveliest objective reality* to create a *springboard into the hypertrophy of form and the forecourts of the metaphysical*. They cling to nature to find God. The baroque is mimetic insofar as it allegorizes natural forms to redeem the world.

²³² Donne, *Of the Progresse of the Soule, The Second Anniversary*, in *The Poems of John Donne*, 253, lines 81-84.

²³³ Andrew Marvell, *Upon Appleton House*, in *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Nigel Smith (Oxford, UK: Routledge, 2013), 241, 96.1-4.

²³⁴ Benjamin, *Origin*, 50.

²³⁵ Benjamin, 50-51, internal quote by Wilhelm Hausenstein, *Vom Geist des Barock* (Munich: R. Piper and Co., 1920), 42.

The critical issue at stake here is the role of figuration in baroque literature. Do baroque figures redeem a “fallen, fragmented” nature?²³⁶ Or do they continue the glorious work of an *arguto favellatore*, a *Metaphorical God*? Is the baroque a style of melancholic guilt? Or inspired wonder? The answer is surely both. In his unique sense of the word allegory,²³⁷ Benjamin understands this figurative dilemma as one of the “antinomies of the allegorical.”²³⁸ “In allegorical perception,” he explains, “the profane world is both elevated in rank and devalued.”²³⁹ Nature appears both fallen and sacred to baroque authors. By confronting the infinite, authors are first met with confusion and disorientation at a world without a center, but then allegorize the ruins of the infinite to read the world as an allegorical creation of God with sacred meaning. Impossible to comprehend *in toto*, nature appears as a fragmented series of allegorical signs, which, “from the very fact of their pointing to something else, ... appear no longer commensurable with profane things, which raises them onto a higher plane, and which can, indeed, sanctify them.”²⁴⁰ Baroque authors thus abandon their melancholic response to the

²³⁶ Grady, *Baroque Allegory*, 191.

²³⁷ Benjamin’s concept of allegory is controversial both for its expansive definition and limited application. Allegory, for Benjamin, includes figurative language typically called metaphor, and his study of the form is largely restricted to the baroque and its differences from the Romantic symbol. As Fredric Jameson puts it, “[W]hat Benjamin really wants to call allegory is baroque decoration, which either in its state of over-ripeness or as a litter of ruins is read as an expression of Melancholy (Dürer’s famous engraving actually takes us back to 1514), of ephemerality and ultimately of death itself. It is a thematics very propitious for the interests of present-day trauma theory and much of the affect theory that develops out of it, but much less useful for structural generalization” (Fredric Jameson, *Allegory and Ideology* [London: Verso, 2019], 31). Gordon Teskey nonetheless argues that “the postmodern use of ‘the allegorical’ ..., as a discourse that acknowledges incommensurable registers in itself, derives from Walter Benjamin’s initial use of the term in a historically specific context, when the hierarchical transcendentalism of the Renaissance gave way to what Benjamin regarded as the dialectical transcendentalism of the baroque; but in Benjamin the term remains deeply theological and has not been freed of the theological since.” (Gordon Teskey, *Allegory and Violence* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996], 3-4). While allegory is vital to the development of baroque literature, this dissertation maintains that the baroque logic of excess is not restricted to a single mode of figuration but accumulates as many as possible.

²³⁸ Benjamin, *Origin*, 184.

²³⁹ Benjamin, 184.

²⁴⁰ Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: Verso, 1998), 176. This is the only quote from the Osborne translation, which more renders this quote more literally than Eiland.

infinite image of the world by immersing themselves in allegories of fallen forms. In this state of “allegorical immersion,”

The allegorist awakens in God’s world.... This dissolves the cipher of the most fragmented, most extinct, most dispersed.... All this turns to dust with that *one* turnabout whereby allegorical immersion has to clear away the last phantasmagoria of the objective world and, thrown back entirely upon itself, rediscovers itself no longer playfully in the earthly world of things but seriously under heaven. Precisely this is the essence of melancholy immersion: that its ultimate objects, in which it thinks to assure itself most fully of what is debased, abruptly change into allegories, and that these allegories fulfill and revoke the nothingness in which they present themselves, just as the intention finally does not faithfully abide in sight of bones but faithlessly leaps across to resurrection.²⁴¹

In baroque literature, the Saturnian view of an incomprehensible world gives way to an allegorical mode of writing that prepares the reader for a transformation of the profane into the sacred, the visible into the invisible. By imitating the figurative language of God, which Donne describes at length in Meditation XIX, baroque authors seek a subjective communion with the divine. Quoting Karl Borinski, Benjamin concludes that, for baroque authors and artists, “‘The *ponderación misteriosa*, the intervention of God in the work of art, is presumed possible.’ Subjectivity—which, like an angel, falls into the deep—is retrieved by allegories and is held fast in heaven, in God, through *ponderación misteriosa*.”²⁴² Baroque authors, made melancholy by a

²⁴¹ Benjamin, *Origin*, 254-55.

²⁴² Benjamin, 258, internal quote by Karl Borinski, *Die Antike in Poetik und Kunsttheorie*, trans. Howard Eiland, Vol. 1 (Leipzig: Dietrich’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1924), 193.

As Eiland explains, “The Spanish phrase *ponderación misteriosa* (*ponderación* means both ‘pondering’ and ‘weighing’) derives from the Jesuit writer Baltasar Gracián’s treatise *Agudeza y arte de ingenio* (Wit and the Art of Invention; 1648), discourse 6: ‘De la agudeza por ponderación misteriosa’” (Benjamin, *Origin*, 258n229). Gracián elaborates the meaning of *ponderación misteriosa* with the following: “Consiste el artificio de esta especie de agudeza en levantar misterio, entre la conexión de los extremos, ò terminos correlatos de el sugeto, repito causas, efectos, adjuntos, circunstancias, contingencias; y despues de ponderada aquella coincidencia, y union, dase una razon sutil, adecuada, que la satisfaga” (Baltasar Gracián, *Agudeza y Arte de Ingenio* [1648], in *Obras de Lorenzo Gracián: Tomo Segundo* [Madrid: Pedro Marin, 1773], 36).

“fallen, fragmented” nature, redeem the world with sacred significance through the mysterious contemplation of works that imitate the infinite figures of a *Metaphorical God*.²⁴³

Gilles Deleuze confirms that Benjamin “made a decisive step forward in our understanding of the Baroque when he showed that allegory was not a failed symbol, or an abstract personification, but a power of figuration entirely different from that of the symbol.”²⁴⁴

While symbolic figuration works to “isolate, purify, or concentrate the object,” allegorical figuration infinitely expands the object “according to a whole network of natural relations.”²⁴⁵

The object of baroque allegory “overflows its frame in order to enter into a cycle or a series.”²⁴⁶

Baroque allegory amplifies its object in cycles of variation. Rooted in Erasmian *copia* (a value itself modeled on nature), the baroque develops a poetics of infinite figural variation. Crashaw’s

The Weeper sets the image of the Mary Magdalene’s tears “into a cycle” that “overflows its frame” in outlandish relations to nature—variously calling them springs, rivers, rills, hills, crystals, stars, cream, floods, the ocean, and more.²⁴⁷ And T.S. Eliot sees similar techniques at work in Donne’s anniversary poems. To the extent they are “crowded with beauties” and display a “recurrence in variation,” Eliot suggests these poems are more “characteristic of Crashaw’s and

²⁴³ Grady, *Baroque Allegory*, 191.

²⁴⁴ Deleuze, *The Fold*, 125.

²⁴⁵ Deleuze, 125.

²⁴⁶ Deleuze, 125.

²⁴⁷ Deleuze, 125.

See chapter one for a discussion of Crashaw’s “Weeper.”

of the Italian and the Spanish and even the Dutch poetry of the baroque period.”²⁴⁸ He points to this cycle of variations in the *First Anniversary* as an example:

Shee, shee is dead; shee’s dead: when thou knowst this,
Thou knowst how lame a cripple this world is.

.....
Shee, shee is dead; shee’s dead: when thou knowst this
Thou knowst how ugly a monster this world is:

.....
Shee, shee is dead; shee’s dead: when thou knowst this,
Thou knowst how wan a Ghost this our world is:

.....
Shee, shee is dead; shee’s dead: when thou knowst this,
Thou knowst how drie a Cinder this world is.²⁴⁹

To Eliot’s mind, these baroque variations are “unscrupulous” and showcase Donne’s “deliberate overstimulation [and] *exploitation* of the *nerves*.”²⁵⁰ He calls the poem a “voluptuary of thought” and notes how the variations verge toward excess and the absurd: “A precisian might object that if the world is a cripple it cannot be also a cinder.”²⁵¹ But Donne’s poem is typical of the baroque logic of excess. Its figurative variations tend toward disorientation and confusion.

Abraham Cowley’s “Hymn to Light” (1663) offers another example of a baroque poem in which literary figures cycle in variation toward excess. Each stanza of the 104-line poem presents an allegorical emblem of light. Here are five exemplary stanzas:

Thou Tide of Glory which no Rest dost know,
But ever Ebb, and ever Flow!
Thou Golden shower of true *Jove*!
Who does in thee descend, and Heav’n to Earth make Love!
.....

²⁴⁸ T.S. Eliot, “Clark Lecture V: Donne’s Longer Poems,” in *The Complete Prose of T.S. Eliot: The Critical Edition: The Perfect Critic, 1919-1926*, eds. Anthony Cuda and Ronald Schuchard (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press and Faber & Faber Ltd, 2014), 698.

²⁴⁹ Donne, *Anatomy of the World*, 238, 241, 242, 244, lines 237-38, 325-26, 369-70, 427-28, quoted in Eliot, “Clark Lecture,” 698.

²⁵⁰ Eliot, “Clark Lecture,” 699.

²⁵¹ Eliot, 699.

Thou Scythian-like dost round thy Lands above
 The Suns gilt Tent for ever move,
 And still as thou in pomp dost go
 The shining Pageants of the World attend thy show.

 A Crimson Garment in the Rose thou wear'st;
 A Crown of studded Gold thou bear'st,
 The Virgin Lillies in their White,
 Are clad but with the Lawn of almost Naked Light.

 Through the soft wayes of Heaven, and Air, and Sea,
 Which open all their Pores to Thee;
 Like a cleer River thou dost glide,
 And with thy Living Stream through the close Channels slide.

 But the vast Ocean of unbounded Day
 In th'Empyraean Heaven does stay.
 Thy Rivers, Lakes, and Springs below,
 From thence took first their Rise; thither at last must Flow.²⁵²

In these five stanzas, Cowley varies the image of light over a dozen times—light becomes *Scythian-like*, a *Tide of Glory*, a *Golden shower*, a *gilt Tent*, a *Crimson Garment*, a *Crown of studded Gold*, a *Cleer River*, a *Living Stream*, a *vast Ocean*, *Rivers*, *Lakes*, and *Springs*. The poem does not depict a single allegory of light, but a series of allegories of light. Cowley seemingly exhausts every possible metaphor to the point of absurd confusion. Indeed, the metaphorical connections between water and light reach a high point in the final stanza quoted above, in which it is impossible to distinguish between the realms of light and water. The baroque logic of the poem pushes the cycle of emblems toward outlandish confusion as it unfolds infinite figurations of light.

Baroque figures of the infinite are not limited to grand and sacred objects like Mary Magdalene's tears, the fallen world, and light. Richard Lovelace employs the same methods of

²⁵² Abraham Cowley, *Hymn to Light*, in *Abraham Cowley: Poetry & Prose*, ed. L.C. Martin (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1949), 50-54.

baroque variation in poems about the smallest of natural creatures: grasshoppers, ants, flies, and snails. In “The Snayl,” he offers an emblem of “politic self-containment”—“Wise Emblem of our Politick World, / Sage Snayl, within thine own self curl’d.”²⁵³ But alongside the political allegory, Lovelace interlaces variations of hyperbolic figures that push the imagination to absurd excess:

Compendious Snayl! Thou seem’st to me,
Large *Euclids* strickt Epitome;
And in each Diagram, dost Fling
Thee from the point unto the Ring.
A Figure now Triangulare,
An Oval now, and now a Square;
And then a Serpentine dost crawl
Now a straight Line, now crook’d, now all.²⁵⁴

The poem varies the natural figure of the snail in myriad ways: the shell is a *Ring*, *Triangulare*, an *Oval*, a *Square*, a *Serpentine* coil, a *straight* and then a *crook’d Line*, *now all* in one. The variations roll into one another to create a shapeshifting perspective on a single object. Baroque authors construct a perspective of infinite variation in words. Donne’s *First Anniversary*, Crashaw’s “Weeper,” Cowley’s “Hymn to Light,” and Lovelace’s “The Snayl” all bring the infinite nature of an object (the fallen world, tears, light, and a snail) into kaleidoscopic view.

To generate literary figures of the infinite, these authors rely on what Deleuze calls “Baroque perspective”—a mode of perception in which the truth of infinite variation reveals itself to the subject.²⁵⁵ Deleuze explains that the baroque image of the world is one of a “cone or

²⁵³ Thomas N. Corns, “Thomas Carew, Sir John Suckling, and Richard Lovelace,” in *The Cambridge Companion to English Poetry, Donne to Marvell*, ed. Thomas N. Corns (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 216.

Richard Lovelace, “The Snayl,” in *Lucasta. Posthume Poems, 1659-1660*, ed. C.H. Wilkinson (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1930), 136, lines 1-2.

²⁵⁴ Lovelace, 136, lines 5-12.

²⁵⁵ Deleuze, *The Fold*, 20.

cupola, whose base, always in extension, no longer relates to a center but tends toward an apex or a summit,” a point of view that includes infinite variation.²⁵⁶ Building on the work of Michel Serres, Deleuze writes that “in a world of infinity, or of variable curvature that has lost notion of a center, [one must stress] the importance of setting point of view in the place of the missing center.”²⁵⁷ By placing the perspective of the subject in the place of the missing center, the image of the world can become one of infinite possibility or chaotic disorientation. Serres explains the problem in geometric terms:

Let's suppose in effect a plurality of mathematical objects in an apparent disorder: a circle, two right angles, a point, an ellipse, hyperbola, etc. The science of conic sections shows the existence of a point from which the apparent disorder is organized into a real harmony. It is the summit of the cone of which the curves in question are only sections.... The difficulty resides in the fact that, for a given plurality, for an actual disorder, there only exists one point from which everything is an order: this point exists and it is unique. From every other perspective disorder seems to reign, as well as indetermination. Therefore, to understand a given plurality of things (best understood as different degrees of our knowledge concerning the given) will consist in discovering this point where their disorder is resolved, *uno intuitu*, in the law of a unique order, *Reciprocally, in as much as there is an appearance of disorder, we have not yet found this point. Disorder, or rather, the degree of disorder, is only the measure of our distance from this point.*²⁵⁸

Baroque authors are committed to finding this point of view from which the infinite variations of nature might be perceived together. Whether out of melancholy or joy, baroque authors strive to imagine the infinite variety of nature through a poetics of continual variation.

Emanuele Tesauro provides an early modern counterpart to this baroque theory of perspective in *Il cannocchiale aristotelico* (1654). For Tesauro and other baroque authors, metaphor is an instrument for seeing the unity of disparate objects. He emphasizes that metaphor

²⁵⁶ Deleuze, 125.

²⁵⁷ Deleuze, 21.

²⁵⁸ Michel Serres, *Le système de Leibniz et ses modèles mathématique* (Paris: Presse Universitaire de France, 1968), 244, quoted in Gregg Lambert, *On the (New) Baroque* (Aurora, CO: The Davies Group, 2001), 176-77.

is distinct “dal nostro Autore Aristotele chiamato Imagine” (from what our author Aristotle called an Image).²⁵⁹ With images, Tesauro explains,

Tutti gli obietti con le sue propie parole successivamente si ci presentano. Ma la Metafora, tutti à stretta li rinzeppa in un Vocabulo: & quasi in miraculoso modo gli ti fa travedere l'un dentro all'altro. Onde maggiore è il tuo diletto: nella maniera, che più curiosa & piacevol cosa è *mirar molti obietti per un'istrafóro di prospettiva*, che se gli originali medesimi successivamente ti venisser passando dinanzi agli occhi.²⁶⁰

[All objects appear one-by-one and in their own words. But metaphor packs them all tightly into one word, and almost miraculously makes you see them one inside the other. Hence your delight is greater, in the same way that it is more curious and pleasant to see many objects in a secret perspective-device, than if the same originals were to pass one-by-one before your eyes.]²⁶¹

Tesauro demonstrates how metaphor functions like *un 'istrafóro di prospettiva* in the frontispiece to his 1663 edition of the book (see Appendix 3). Three figures are depicted on the page. On the left, Aristotle stands above an allegorical representation of Poesis (poetry), directing a telescope from her eye toward the sun with hidden spots upon it. On the right, a personification of Pictura (painting) sits in front of an ovular (almost ocular) canvas on which she is painting an anamorphic image of the words “Omnis in Unum” (“All in One”), reflected clearly by a conical mirror at the center. Zooming out from Pictura’s canvas, the relation between the painting and the telescope directly above it becomes clearer. The canvas represents the power of Poesis’s new technology. As Poesis looks through the telescope directly into the sun, she sees what Pictura paints: *omnis in unum*. She not only sees sunspots invisible to the human eye, but also sees

²⁵⁹ Emanuele Tesauro, *Il cannocchiale aristotelico. Faksimile-Neudruck der Ausgabe von Turin, 1670*, ed. August Buck (Berlin: Verlag Gehlen, 1968), 301; my translation.

²⁶⁰ Tesauro, 301, quoted in Snyder, Jon R. “Art and Truth in Baroque Italy, or the Case of Emanuele Tesauro’s *Il cannocchiale aristotelico*,” *Modern Language Notes* 131, no. 1 (2016), 87n31.

²⁶¹ Snyder, “Art and Truth,” 87.

everything in one.²⁶² Through the power of Aristotle's telescope, Poesis can see as God sees. And as Tesauro makes clear in his text, the telescope is metaphor. Metaphor is an instrument of vision similar to refraction that allows the mind to see disparate aspects of the universe through a single lens. And just as baroque scientists used refraction to see the universe in a new way, baroque poets used metaphor to do the same. As Johnson says, "the most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together" in baroque poetry.²⁶³ They yoked the infinite universe together through figuration to perceive all of nature and to see as God sees—*videre omnem in unum*.

²⁶² In an exemplary analysis of the frontispiece, Jon Snyder discusses the relevance of the image's Horatian motto ("Egregio inspersos reprehendit corpore naevos") to contemporary science and explains the relationship between the telescope and canvas by means of a passage buried in Tesauro's book: "Nearly six hundred pages later, in reference to anamorphosis Tesauro remarks on "those figures that on a flat surface look like spots, but in a cylindrical mirror appear well-proportioned and beautiful" (Snyder, 80). At the threshold of the treatise, the message to readers or viewers is, in any case, pellucidly clear: without the aid of the most modern ways of thinking and seeing, the text's truth will prove to be just as indecipherable as is the motto *omnis in unum* without the assistance of the catoptric mirror" (Snyder, 80). But this reading risks losing sight of the hidden, yet central importance of metaphor in the frontispiece. Does "the frontispiece encourage readers or viewers to consider metaphor to be analogous to the anamorphic representation on the canvas, which can be viewed and deciphered only with the aid of new technology" (Snyder, 80), as Snyder claims, or is metaphor in fact that new technology—the fundamental tool of *argutezza*—which allows us to see the unseen and unite all in one? (See Snyder, 77-81)

²⁶³ Johnson, Cowley, 26.

Chapter Three

Translation

In mille fogge il suo cantar distingue
e trasforma una lingua in mille lingue.

- Giambattista Marino, *Adone*²⁶⁴

²⁶⁴ Giovan Battista Marino, *Adone*, ed. Emilio Russo (Milan: BUR Biblioteca Rizzoli, 2018), 695, 7.32.7-8.

Baroque authors imitate nature, but they also imitate each other. In *Senses of Style: Poetry Before Interpretation* (2017), Jeff Dolven shows how literary style is an essentially social phenomenon that develops through imitation:

Imitation is basic to style. Why imitate? A first answer, and the grandest: the desire to imitate is the basic human experience of a universal, cosmic harmony, the original principle of our complicity with society and cosmos and of the two with each other.... Another answer is the prospect of assimilation, or even dissolution, dissolving into a crowd or dissolving altogether. To imitate is to make yourself fit in, a promise of belonging, the solace of membership, the harbor of familiar things.... In every case, there is desire: desire in the subject, and charisma in the object. The sense of style makes a map that is not defined by neutral gradients of similarity and dissimilarity, but is instead a manifold of tropisms and aversions, the very opposite of the ideal of aesthetic indifference. To respond to something in terms of its style is to ask, always if not always explicitly, *would I want to do something like that, make something like that, live that way?*²⁶⁵

Styles form aesthetic communities that share similar tropes in their works. These similarities define the contours of a style. As Dolven explains, “A reader must already know the tropes of the baroque to recognize the baroque.”²⁶⁶ Excessive combinations of *copia*, *accumulatio*, *hyperbole*, *sententia*, and *hyperbaton* are typical signs, but the baroque is more than a list of tropes. Styles are social. They emerge in the wake of charismatic authors, and they evolve with the demands of culture and the vagaries of taste and time. Imitation is the social dimension of style, and authors write *like* the authors they *like*. “If likeness were an activity, the activity would be called imitation.”²⁶⁷ Richard Crashaw is *like* Giambattista Marino because Crashaw *likes* Marino. To trace these affinities is to unfold the multilingual and global network of translations through which the baroque developed in the early modern world.

²⁶⁵ Jeff Dolven, *Senses of Style: Poetry Before Interpretation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 110-11, 117-18.

²⁶⁶ Jeff Dolven, “Leap Year,” *ELH* 84, no. 2. (2017), 367.

²⁶⁷ Dolven, *Senses of Style*, 109.

This chapter begins to map that network by resituating early modern English literature within the multilingual context of the baroque. I show how English authors began modelling their style on ancient and continental works famous for their excess, including the poems of Pindar, Lucan, Giambattista Marino, and Luis de Góngora. I demonstrate that English baroque translations followed a logic of excess, becoming increasingly complicated and hyperbolic overtime. By closely reading translations of Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581) and Giambattista Marino's *La strage degli innocenti* (1632), I reveal how authors like Joseph Beaumont, Richard Crashaw, and John Milton hyperbolized already hyperbolic sources. I then turn to the growing political crisis in seventeenth-century England to argue that many authors began translating Lucan's *Pharsalia* not only for its content but also for its baroque style, which appeared commensurate with the epistemic excesses of the period. I conclude with an analysis of the limits of the baroque by closely reading Thomas Stanley's unfinished translation of Góngora's *Soledad primera* (1613). I argue that the baroque logic of excess is only limited by our individual capacities as readers and writers. As a whole, this chapter emphasizes how the baroque constructs literary communities across geographic and diachronic boundaries, all committed to excess.

Baroque Imitation and Reformation

In his preface to *Ovid's Epistles, Translated by Several Hands* (1680), John Dryden claims that imitation is a liminal form of translation: "Imitation [is] where the Translator (if now he has not lost that Name) assumes the liberty, not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion; and taking only some general hints from the Original, to

run division on the Ground-work, as he pleases.”²⁶⁸ For Dryden, imitation is an extreme case of translation, and this understanding of translation proves instructive. What happens to a work when a translation abandons the source text’s literal words? What must remain in a text for it to be called a translation? According to Dryden, imitation is *to write like* another—it is “an Endeavour of a later Poet to write like one, who has written before him, on the same Subject.... [That is,] to set him as a Pattern, and to write, as he supposes that Author would have done, had he liv’d in our Age, and in our Country.”²⁶⁹ In other words, to imitate is to translate style.

Dryden develops his concept of imitation from Abraham Cowley’s *Pindarique Odes, Written in Imitation of the Stile & Maner of the Odes of Pindar* (1656). As Cowley explains in his own preface, a “word for word” translation of Pindar would read like “*one Mad-man* had translated *another*.”²⁷⁰ On the one hand, “the great difference of time betwixt his age and ours” would make them “but confusedly appear” to modern readers.²⁷¹ On the other hand, he wonders if any poet could ever be translated word for word—“I would gladly know what applause our best pieces of *English Poesie* could expect from a *Frenchman* or *Italian*, if converted faithfully, and word for word.”²⁷² Cowley confesses that he “never saw a *Copy* better then the *Original*, which indeed cannot be otherwise, for men resolving in no case to shoot *beyond* the *Mark*, it is a thousand to one if they shoot not *short* of it.”²⁷³ For these reasons, Cowley explains, “I have in these two *Odes* of *Pindar* taken, left out, and added what I please; nor make it so much my aim

²⁶⁸ John Dryden, “Preface,” *Contributions to Ovid’s Epistles*, in Vol. 1 of *The Works of John Dryden, Poems 1649-1680* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1956), 114-15.

²⁶⁹ Dryden, 116.

²⁷⁰ Abraham Cowley, *Pindarique Odes*, in *Poems* (London: Printed for Humphrey Moseley, 1656), 75r.

²⁷¹ Cowley, 75r.

²⁷² Cowley, 75r.

²⁷³ Cowley, 75r.

to let the Reader know precisely what he spoke, as what was his *way* and *manner* of speaking; which has not been yet (that I know of) introduced into *English*, though it be the noblest and highest kind of writing in Verse.”²⁷⁴ Cowley is focused on translating the *way and manner* of Pindar’s *Odes*—the style. Dryden confirms that “a Genius so elevated and unconfin’d as Mr. Cowley’s was but necessary to make Pindar speak English, and that was to be perform’d by no other way than Imitation.”²⁷⁵ It could be *perform’d by no other way*, because a word for word translation would entirely lose Pindar’s “*way and manner* of speaking.”²⁷⁶ It would lose Pindar’s style.

If Cowley succeeded in making “Pindar speak English,” he did so by stretching the rules of English poetics with a new style.²⁷⁷ Gilles Deleuze encourages us to think of style “like a foreign language within a language.”²⁷⁸ A style does not simply move from one language to another without linguistic and literary consequences. Styles create new intra-linguistic modes of writing and speaking. Deleuze explains, “When I say style is like a foreign language, it is none other than the language we speak—it is a foreign language *in* the language we speak. Stretched to its internal limit, toward this outside of language, language begins to stutter, to stammer, to scream, and to whisper.”²⁷⁹ To be sure, Cowley’s imitation of Pindar’s style broke the traditional limits of early modern English. Dryden briefly alludes to the irregularities of Pindar’s poetic style in *Of Dramatick Poesie: An Essay* (1668): “[T]he numbers vary and the rhyme is dispos’d

²⁷⁴ Cowley, *Pindarique Odes*, 75v.

²⁷⁵ Dryden, “Preface,” 117.

²⁷⁶ Cowley, *Pindarique Odes*, 75v.

²⁷⁷ Dryden, “Preface,” 117.

²⁷⁸ Gilles Deleuze, “Preface: A New Stylistics,” in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2007), 370.

²⁷⁹ Deleuze, “A New Stylistics,” 374.

carelessly, and far from often chymeing.”²⁸⁰ But Cowley offers a more sympathetic description of those linguistic excesses in “The Praise of Pindar”:

So *Pindar* does new *Words* and *Figures* roul
Down his impetuous *Dithyrambique Tide*,
Which in no *Channel* deigns t’abide,
Which neither *Banks* nor *Dikes* controul.
Whether th’*Immortal Gods* he sings
In a no less *Immortal strain*,
Or the great Acts of *God-descended Kings*,
Who in his Numbers still survive and *Reign*.
Each rich embroidered *Line*,
Which their triumphant *Brows* around,
By his sacred Hand is bound,
Does all their *starry Diadems* outshine.²⁸¹

Cowley’s praise of Pindar’s style is emblematic of baroque authors’ admiration of literary excess. He commends how Pindar can form an *impetuous Dithyrambic tide* of new *Words* and *Figures* that *in no Channel deigns t’abide* and *which neither Banks nor Dikes controul*. And this excess of literary figuration is something later Neoclassical critics would ridicule as absurd. As François Blondel complains in *The Comparison of Pindar and Horace* (1673), translated into English by Edward Sherburn in 1696, “[T]ruly there is in Pindar some Fashions of speaking so hardly, and so far from our common use, that a Man can hardly consider them, without finding them ridiculous.”²⁸² Blondel continues, “What besides they find ill in Pindar’s Works, are the enormous Digressions or Excursions he makes, which have for the most part so little of Rapport to the principal Subject of the Ode, that they appear like large pieces of Cloth of Gold sow’d to

²⁸⁰ John Dryden, *An Essay of Dramatick Poesie*, Vol. 17 of *The Works of John Dryden* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1972), 71, lines 25-26.

²⁸¹ Cowley, *Poems*, 18.

²⁸² François Blondel, *The Comparison of Pindar and Horace... English’d by Sir Edward Sherburn* (London: Printed for Thomas Bennet, 1696), 66.

some Stuff, of less value.”²⁸³ These critiques of Pindar are strikingly similar to critiques of baroque poetry (see chapters one and two), and this is no accident.²⁸⁴ Imitations of Pindar’s baroque style of Doric verse were essential to the development of English baroque poetics.²⁸⁵

Early modern literary critics believed that similar imitations contributed to the reformation of English literary style during the Renaissance. In the *Art of English Poesie* (1589), George Puttenham comments on the reformation of English style during the sixteenth century:

Sir Thomas Wyatt the elder and Henry, Earl of Surrey, were the two chieftains, who having traveled into Italy and there tasted the sweet and stately measures and style of the Italian poesy, as novices newly crept out of the schools of Dante, Ariosto, and Petrarch, they greatly polished our rude and homely manner of vulgar poesy from that it had been before, and for that cause may justly be said the first reformers of our English meter and style.²⁸⁶

According to Puttenham, the first reformers of English Renaissance literature were the imitators of Dante, Ariosto, and Petrarch.²⁸⁷ By imitating these Italian poets, writers like Wyatt and Surrey constructed a new style of English, and Puttenham highlights these two poets in particular as “the two chief lanterns of light to all others that have since employed their pens upon English

²⁸³ Blondel, 67.

²⁸⁴ John Hamilton explains that this neoclassical reaction to Pindar was widespread across Europe. For Johann Christoph Gottsched, “[T]he German Pindaric ode, far from denoting the peak achievement of song, instead names the very mutilation (*Verstümmeln*) of language. This conclusion is not Gottsched’s alone, but subscribes to a commonly held distaste on the part of neoclassicists for the excesses of baroque poetry” (John T. Hamilton, *Soliciting Darkness: Pindar, Obscurity and the Classical Tradition* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003], 162).

²⁸⁵ Of course, Cowley was not the only English author to imitate Pindar’s style. Stella Revard has offered compelling evidence that John Milton’s “doric lay” *Lycidas* is deeply indebted to Pindar (Stella P. Revard, “‘Lycidas,’” in *A Companion to Milton*, ed. Thomas N. Corns [Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2001], 260), and Richard Stoneman has similarly argued that Milton’s “Ode on the Morning of Christ’s Nativity” is “Pindaric in its stanzaic form.” Stoneman has also claimed that Richard Crashaw “Pindarises in his Latin dithyrambs as well as his English odes” (Richard Stoneman, *Pindar* [London: I.B. Tauris, 2014], 176).

²⁸⁶ George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy: A Critical Edition*, eds. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007), 148.

²⁸⁷ It is worth noting that Puttenham distinguishes between meter and style—the former being a question of poetic form.

poesy.”²⁸⁸ He writes, “[T]heir conceits were lofty, their styles stately, their conveyance cleanly, their terms proper, their meter sweet and well-proportioned, in all imitating very naturally and studiously their master Francis Petrarch.”²⁸⁹ While their imitations of classical authors like Virgil, Horace, and Ovid were widely recognized, Puttenham is careful to emphasize the importance of contemporary Italian authors on the development of English poetry, too. To be sure, early modern critics like Puttenham knew that continental authors, past and present, were vital to the ongoing reformation of English literary style.

Of course, these “first reformers of our English meter and style” were not the last.²⁹⁰ A new generation of poets began articulating new values and new continental models during the first decades of the seventeenth century. Henry Reynolds’s *Mythomestes* (1632) is one of the few works of English literary criticism during the period and offers valuable information about the stylistic trends in England at the time. Reynolds was himself a translator of Tasso’s *Aminta* (1573) and part of an artistic community centered around Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, that “included Inigo Jones, Henry Peacham, and John Selden.”²⁹¹ In his neoplatonic treatise on poetic style and the representation of truth in language, Reynolds provides a list of his chief poetic models by language. Among the Italians, he explains,

I must preferre chiefly three; as the grave and learned Tasso, in his *Sette giorni* (a divine worke) and his *Gierusalem liberata*, so farre as an excellent pile of meere Morall Philosophy may deserve: Then Ariosto for the artfull woofe of his ingenious though

²⁸⁸ Puttenham, 150.

²⁸⁹ Puttenham, 150.

²⁹⁰ Puttenham, 148.

²⁹¹ George Thorn-Drury, “Reynolds, Henry,” rev. Graham Parry, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last modified in September 2004, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/23415>.

unmeaning fables, the best, perhaps, have in that kind beene sung since Ovid: And lastly, that smooth writ *Adonis* of Marino, full of various conception and diversity of learning.²⁹²

Reynolds's models of 1633 are distinct from Puttenham's of 1589. Petrarch and Dante have been replaced by two modern Italian poets—Torquato Tasso and Giambattista Marino. And while the significance of Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* to the development of early modern English literature has been well documented,²⁹³ the admiration of Marino among contemporary English authors is still poorly recognized.²⁹⁴ Marino's importance for the emergence of English baroque literature was nonetheless obvious to critics in the eighteenth century. Samuel Johnson argues that the style first emerged in England with Donne's imitation of Marino—"This kind of writing, which was, I believe borrowed from Marino and his followers, had been recommended by the example of Donne, a man of very extensive and various knowledge."²⁹⁵ James Mirollo has speculated that Marino likely met a wide array of English authors in the courts of France and Italy,²⁹⁶ but the extraordinary number of translations of Marino into English demonstrates his

²⁹² Henry Reynolds, *Mythomestes*, in Vol. 1 of *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, 1605-1650* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1908), 146.

²⁹³ For a recent and encyclopedic example, see Jason Lawrence, *Tasso's Art and Afterlives: The Gerusalemme Liberata in England* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2017).

²⁹⁴ James Mirollo's *The Poet of the Marvelous: Giambattista Marino* (1963) includes a short section on Marino's importance in England.

²⁹⁵ Samuel Johnson, *The Works of Samuel Johnson* (London: J. Haddou, 1820), 21.

Pope also mocks Crashaw for forming "himself upon Petrarch, or rather upon Marino" (Alexander Pope, "Letter XXVI Dec. 17, 1710 [Pope to Cromwell]," in Vol. 5 of *The Works of Alexander Pope* (London: T. Cooper, 1739), 107). Even later critics like Edmund Gose credit Donne with inaugurating the baroque style in English. Gose claims that the poetic "tendency to imaginative extravagance [was not] confined to England; it invaded all parts of Europe at the same moment, and in a manner so simultaneous as to baffle the critical historian. Three remarkable writers—Marini [*sic*], Góngora, Donne—started this analytic and hyperbolic style at the same time, and it is very difficult to say whether either of the three was affected by the practices of the others" (Gose, *Life and Letters*, 342). The following pages resist this understanding.

²⁹⁶ Mirollo claims that "Marino could easily have made the acquaintance of Herbert of Cherbury and Thomas Carew, both at the French court during his stay there and both future translators of his poetry (Mirollo, *Poet of the Marvelous*, 243). He argues that Sir Henry Wotton may have secured Marino's "release from the duke of Savoy's prison" and that Albertus Morton gave him "a letter of introduction to the [English] king" (Mirollo, 243). He even gives us reason to believe that Marino sent a sonnet to William Alexander.

seminal importance.²⁹⁷ As Mirollo explains, “The first translation of Marino into English was made by Samuel Daniel” with his “A Description of Beauty” (not published until after the poet’s death in 1623), but William Drummond of Hawthornden was Marino’s earliest and most fervent promoter in England, publishing “some two dozen” translations of Marino’s poetry from 1616 to 1656.²⁹⁸ Crashaw famously translated the first book of *La strage degli Innocenti* (1632)—*Sospetto d’Herode*—in *Steps to the Temple* and the madrigal “Foco d’Amore diviso” of *Lira II* in *Delights of the Muses*. And the many other English translators of Marino include Philip Ayres, Thomas Carew, Herbert of Cherbury, Edward Sherburne, Eldred Revett, Thomas Stanley, the anonymous R.T. of *The Slaughter of the Innocents by Herod* (1675), and J.S. (likely James Shirley) of *La Notte* (1655) in Bonarelli’s *Phylis of Scyros*.²⁹⁹ To be sure, the enthusiastic imitation of Marino’s style—*marinismo*—was essential to the development of English baroque poetics.³⁰⁰

Besides Italian models like Marino, Reynolds’s *Mythomestes* also includes a list of classical models. Among the Latins, Reynolds prefers the Silver Age authors “Seneca the

²⁹⁷ Mirollo presents an excellent catalogue of these translations and imitations in his chapter on “The Marinesque Current in England,” in Mirollo, 243-64.

²⁹⁸ Mirollo, 251-52.

For example, see Drummond’s Sonnets VIII, IX, XVII, XXIII, “Nero’s Image,” “Amphion of Marble,” “On the Virgin Mary,” “For the Nativity of Our Lord,” “For the Prodigal,” “The Book of the World,” “A Sigh,” “Man’s Knowledge, Ignorance, &c,” “For Dorus,” and others. Marino is referenced as a source for these poems in William Drummond, *The Poetical Works of William Drummond of Hawthornden*, ed. L.E. Kastner, Vol. 2 (Manchester, UK: University of Manchester Press, 1913), 331-33, 368-69, 387-89, 396-98 and William Drummond, *The Poems of William Drummond*, ed. W.M.C. Ward, Vol. 2 (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1894), 285-87, 307-09, 315-16.

²⁹⁹ See Mirollo, 243-64.

³⁰⁰ Ruth Wallerstein has claimed that other poets like Andrew Marvell were deeply influenced by the Marino too. She sees his influence especially in “A Drop of Dew,” “The Gallery,” “The Fair Singer,” “Eyes and Tears,” “The Garden,” and “The Nymph Complaining for the Death of her Fawn.” See Ruth Wallerstein, *Richard Crashaw: A Study in Style and Poetic Development* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1935), 19-97.

Tragedian, Lucan, and Martial the Epigrammatist.”³⁰¹ And while these authors were both known and admired by earlier English authors, they were imitated and translated at significantly higher rates during the seventeenth century.³⁰² Thomas Farnaby’s popular annotated editions of Juvenal, Persius, Lucan, Martial, and Seneca, which were reprinted during the 1610s, 20s, and 30s, may have contributed to this growing interest in Silver Age authors in early modern England. And while poets of the Golden Age like Virgil, Horace, and Ovid still held a central position in the canon, English authors were increasingly willing to defend the merits of Silver Age authors, often maligned during the sixteenth century. In *Anacrisis: Or a Censure of some Poets Ancient and Modern* (ca.1634). William Alexander, Earl of Stirling, confesses, “I like the Phrase, Stile, Method, and discreet Carriage of *Virgil*; the Vigour and Variety of Invention in *Ovid*; the deep Judgement and grave Sentences of *Horace* and *Juvenal*; the Heroical Conceptions, showing an innate Generosity, in *Statius Papinianus* and *Lucan*.”³⁰³ But after listing his admiration for Silver Age authors like Lucan, Alexander feels the need to defend himself:

I cannot wonder enough at that Man [Julius Scaliger] (deservedly renowned and admirably learned) who with a passionate Kind of Partiality... would have advisedly vilify Lucan in so extreme a Measure, saying, *Videtur potius latrare quam canere*, whom

³⁰¹ Reynolds, *Mythomestes*, 146.

Reynolds also admires “*Salust*, who may passe among the best of our modernes” (Reynolds, 146).

³⁰² Edward Paleit notices a “gap between theory and practice in individual humanists’ reading habits. [Erasmus] refers admiringly to Lucan in his letters, in one actually including him in a list of favoured ‘authorities’ for composing Latin.... And yet—Erasmus found room to cite from Lucan on only five occasions in [his *Adagia*] a collection of over four thousand sayings, finding Cicero nearly a hundred times more convenient. It is hard to believe in intense familiarity with the *Bellum Civile* given such data” (Edward Paleit, *War, Liberty, and Caesar: Responses to Lucan’s Bellum Civile, ca.1580-1650* [Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013], 34). Erasmus commends Lucan but does not seem very familiar with his work (see Paleit, *War, Liberty, and Caesar*, 34-35).

³⁰³ William Alexander, *Anacrisis*, in Vol. 1 of *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century, 1605-1650* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1908), 183.

The importance of Ovid’s own baroque style for the development of early modern baroque literature should not be underestimated. Leah Whittington has argued that “Ovid’s baroque style” is distinguished by an “aesthetics of extremes” that was reflected in later baroque works like Tasso’s *Gerusalemme liberata* (Leah Whittington, *Renaissance Suppliants: Poetry, Antiquity, Reconciliation* [Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016], 42).

Statius Papinianus and Martial (his Superiours in Poesy) both celebrating his Birth by eternal Testimonies, have magnified so much.³⁰⁴

Less than a century earlier, Scaliger and Joachim Camerarius, two of the most influential literary critics of the sixteenth century, wrote brutal critiques of Lucan's literary excess. In book 6 of his *Poetices libri septem* (1561), Scaliger describes Lucan as follows: "Effrenis mens, sui inops, serva impetus, atque idcirco immodica, raptaque calore simul & colorem ipsum rapiens, hostem maximum eius temperamenti, quod in uno omnino Marone & admirabile est & divinum. Proinde ut nimis fortasse libere dicam, interdum mihi latrarem non canere videtur" (His mind is unbridled, destitute of itself, a furious guide, and therefore excessive; it is seized by passion, at the same time seizing passion itself, the greatest enemy of his moderation, which for Virgil is all admirably contained in one and divine. Thus, even if I might speak too freely, to me he does not seem to sing but bark).³⁰⁵ And in his *Prolegomena Didaskalika* (1589), Camerarius offers another critique the Neronian poet: "Caepit autem tum immodico studio frequentari & expeti, sententiosa & concise ac fracta oratio, graecissans plane compositione sua... Haec est commatica et enthymemetica" (Moreover he is frequently taken with excessive enthusiasm, his speech is sententious and broken and chopped up, and he aspires to imitate the Greeks throughout his

³⁰⁴ Alexander, 183.

Alexander even argues that Lucan may be a superior poet to Virgil: "If [Scaliger] had as narrowly sifted *Virgil*, whom he will needs justify as without any Blemish, without reposing as by an implicate Faith upon his Sufficiency, he would have found an Error in him more gross than any that is in *Lucan*.... He (seeking to extol the Valour of *Aeneas*, which only could be done by the Valour of some valorous Enemy whom he had vanquished) doth so extreemly extenuate the Courage of *Turnus* at his Death, leaving him no Time to revocer it, that where out of a Poetick Liberty he should have afforded more than was ordinary, wanting nothing but Fortune, and at least inferious to none but to him whom he would grace with his Ruin, he doth make die like a Dastard, casting thereby down all the Glory intended for *Aeneas*, overcoming but a Coward" (Alexander, 183).

³⁰⁵ Julius Scaliger, *Poetices*, Liber VI (Lyon: A. Vicentius, 1561), 325; my translation.

entire composition, which is divided and syllogistic).³⁰⁶ Yet Alexander proceeds to praise the very characteristics of Lucan's style that Scaliger and Camerarius oppose. He writes that "Julius Scaliger doth aggravate much any Hyperbole, wherein he hath seemed to exceed, and hath not remarked, at least will not remember, the unmatchable Height of his Ravishing Conceits to provoke Magnanimity."³⁰⁷ What once appeared as barking (*latrans*) hyperboles during the Renaissance are now appreciated as *high*, *ravishing*, and *magnanimous* conceits—words that adequately describe not only Silver Age poetry, but also the baroque.

English translations of authors famous for their excess were vital to the development of the English baroque. Just as Puttenham argued that the English imitators of Dante, Petrarch, and Ariosto were "the first reformers of our English meter and style," the English imitators of Pindar, Marino, and Lucan were among the baroque reformers of English meter and style.³⁰⁸ But this is only part of the story. There are countless other baroque authors, both classical and modern, whose translation proved critical to the development of the baroque style in early modern England, including Statius, Luis de Góngora, Lope de Vega, Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski, Herman Hugo, Antoine Girard de Saint-Amant, Girolamo Preti, and many others.³⁰⁹ But rather than presenting a complete catalog of every English baroque translation, the remainder of this chapter focuses on three specific examples of how the English baroque emerged through practices of translation.

³⁰⁶ Ioachim Camerarius, "In M. Annaei Lvcani Pharsaliam *Prolegomyna Didasklika*," in *M. Annaei Lucan de bello civili vel Phalariae Libri decem*, ed. Georg Bersmann (Leipzig: 1589), sig. Y7^v-8^r, quoted in Paleit, *War, Liberty, and Caesar*, 47n64; my translation.

See Paleit, *War, Liberty, and Caesar*, 46-49 for more on Camerarius' understanding of Lucan.

³⁰⁷ Alexander, *Anacrisis*, 183.

³⁰⁸ Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, 148.

³⁰⁹ English translators of these authors include Thomas Stephens, Thomas Stanley, Eldred Revett, Richard Crashaw, and James Shirley, among others.

Hyperbolic Translation

In *Hyperboles: The Rhetoric of Excess in Baroque Literature and Thought* (2010), Christopher Johnson claims that hyperbole is “the Baroque’s most baroque figure.”³¹⁰ Indeed, he argues that “[b]aroque hyperbole is more than a figure of style: it is a mode of thought, a way of being.”³¹¹ This hyperbolic definition of hyperbole proves Johnson’s point. Hyperbole shapes language and the meanings it expresses. “It is a mode of thought” that stretches and expands the limits of discourse.³¹² And as such, Johnson’s approach to hyperbole is not only consistent with the baroque logic of excess, but also with early modern definitions of hyperbole. In the popular grammar school textbook *Rhetoricae libri duo* (1598),³¹³ Charles Butler lists hyperbole as one of four *communes affectiones* of elocution.³¹⁴ For Butler, hyperbole is distinct from other tropes like *metonymy* and *synecdoche* insofar as it offers a general mode by which to employ myriad other figures for rhetorical purposes. More specifically, hyperbole is the *affectio elocutionis* that makes phrases “*elator & audacior*” (more heightened and more daring).³¹⁵ It expands them, heightens them, and pushes them toward excess. Understanding hyperbole as a mode of thought or an *affectio elocutionis* that drives speech toward excess allows us to reconceptualize the baroque as

³¹⁰ Christopher Johnson, *Hyperboles: The Rhetoric of Excess in Baroque Literature and Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 16.

³¹¹ Johnson, 4.

³¹² Johnson, 4.

³¹³ John Brinsley recommends this text in his *Ludus literarius* (1612): “For the Figures belonging to Poetry, see Butlars *Rhetoricke*” (John Brinsley, *Ludus literarius* [London: Printed for Thomas May, 1612], 197).

³¹⁴ “Communes eius affectiones sunt quatuor. Nam si tropus durior sit & inaequalior, Catachresis dicitur. Si elator & audacior, Hyperbole. Si in unâ voce multiplex, Metalepsis. Si in pluribus continuatus, Allegoria” (There are four common affects (of elocution). Indeed if the trope is harsher and more irregular, it is called catachresis. If it is more heightened and more daring, it is called hyperbole. If it expresses many things in a single expression, it is called metalepsis. If it is continued in many ways, it is called allegory) (Charles Butler, *Rhetoricae libri duo* [Oxford, UK: 1598], 2; my translation).

³¹⁵ Butler, 2.

a hyperbolic style. It also allows us to reconceptualize baroque translation as a hyperbolic mode of translation—a mode of translation that stretches a source text to excess. If translation is an essentially metaphoric practice (one of *carrying over* meaning from one language to another), then hyperbole is certainly one way in which this practice can be executed. Baroque authors *throw* meaning *over* normal limits into excess. To demonstrate how English baroque translations are hyperbolic, this section focuses on translations that depict a single figure—Satan.

Satan is a hyperbolic figure.³¹⁶ He is the overthrower *par excellence*. But he is also uniquely suited to hyperbolic figuration because he paradoxically warrants both amplification and diminution—the two proper functions of hyperbole according to Quintilian (“virtus eius ex diverso par, augendi atque minuendi” [“It has an equal value in the opposite functions of Amplification and Attenuation”]).³¹⁷ To be sure, Satan proves an ideal subject for hyperbole because he is not only greater and more evil than any natural being, but also lesser in worth and dignity. Satan can be exaggerated infinitely in both directions without breaking decorum. And English poets relished the opportunity to stretch the limits of hyperbole when depicting his

³¹⁶ Of course, depictions of Satan were popular in medieval morality plays and earlier religious poetry. But as many have noted, the Satan of Marco Girolamo Vida’s *Christiad* (1535), Tasso’s *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581), Erasmo Valvasone’s *L’Angeleida* (1590), Phineas Fletcher’s *The Locusts, or Apollyonists* (1627), Marino’s *La strage degli innocenti* (1632), Abraham Cowley’s *Davideis* (1656), Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1667), and Beaumont’s *Psyche* (1668) draw on the older tradition while also turning Satan into a more human, rhetorical, and sophisticated character.

³¹⁷ Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education, Vol. III: Books 6-8*, ed. and trans. Donald A. Russell (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 2002), 464-65, 8.6.68.

At the end of book 8 of *Institutio Oratoria*, Quintilian elaborates on these different forms of hyperbole (amplification and diminution), explaining that they work in opposite directions of exaggeration—one is used for things greater and larger than normal and the other for things lesser and smaller. As Quintilian clarifies, “Tum est hyperbole virtus cum res ipsa de qua loquendum est naturalem modum excessit: conceditur enim amplius dicere, quia dici quantum est non potest, meliusque ultra quam citra sta oratio” (“Hyperbole only has positive value when the thing about which we have to speak transcends the ordinary limits of nature. We are then allowed to amplify, because the real size of the thing cannot be expressed, and it is better to go too far than not to go far enough”) (Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, 468-69, 8.6.76; translation by Russell).

character, especially in their translations of Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581) and Marino's *La strage degli innocenti* (1632).

This baroque tradition of Satan enters English poetics with the translation of Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*. The first translations of the Italian epic were Richard Carew's *Godfrey of Bulloigne or the recovery of Hierusalem: an heroicall poem* (1594) and Edward Fairfax's *Godfrey of Bulloigne: or the recoverie of Jerusalem* (1600, 1624). And while Tasso's epic already depicts Satan with hyperbolic verses, Carew and Fairfax both amplify the original.

Compare Tasso's book 4 stanza 7:

Orrida maestà nel fero aspetto
Terrore accresce, e più superbo il rende:
Rosseggian gli occhj, e di veneno infetto,
Come infausta cometa, il guardo splende:
Gl'involge il mento, e su l'irsuto petto
Ispida e folta la gran barba scende:
E in guisa di voragine profonda,
S'apre la bocca d'atro sangue immonda.³¹⁸

to Carew's translation:

In his fierce looke an horred maiestie
Encreaseth terrour, and more proud it makes,
Ruddy his eyes and plaguefull venomy:
His countenance as lucklesse Comete flakes,
A beard bigge, bushy, knotted gristelly:
From wrapped muzzle down his rough bosom strakes,
And as a gulfe where bottome none is vewd,
He yawnes his iawes with clottie bloud embrewd.³¹⁹

and to Fairfax's translation:

The tyrant proud frown'd from his loftie cell,
And with his lookes made all his monsters tremble,
His eies, that full of rage and venome swell,

³¹⁸ Torquato Tasso, *La Gerusalemme liberata* (Florence: Felice le Monnier, 1853), 72, 4.7.

³¹⁹ Torquato Tasso, *Godfrey of Bulloigne, or The recouerie of Hierusalem. An heroicall poeme / written in Italian by Seig. Torquato Tasso, and translated into English by R.C. Esquire: and now the first part containing fiue cantos, imprinted in both languages*, trans. Richard Carew (London: Printed by John Windet for Thomas Man, 1594), 141, 4.7.

Two beacons seeme, that men to armes assemble,
His feltred lockes, that on his bosome fell,
On rugged mountaines briers and thornes resemble,
His yawning mouth, that fomed clotted blood,
Gapte like a whirlepoole wide in Stygian flood.³²⁰

In an attempt to maintain all of Tasso's words as well as their order,³²¹ Carew's 1594 translation renders the Italian into a stilted English that nonetheless maintains the hyperbolic qualities of Tasso's Satan. While his eyes are still like comets, Carew extends the imagery of the final couplet. The depths of the *voragine profonda* can no longer be seen and *la bocca d'atro sangue immonda* that merely opens becomes *jaws embrewd with clottie bloud* that yawn. But Fairfax's translation pushes these hyperboles further. Satan's comet-eyes become beacons which summon his army. He turns *ispida e folta la gran barba* into a beard of *rugged mountaines briers and thorns*. Satan's mouth is now not only *yawning*, but also *foaming* with clotted blood, and the *voragine profonda* is now a gaping *whirlepoole wide in Stygian flood*. The addition of figural details serve to amplify, heighten, and intensify the image of Satan. Fairfax hyperbolizes Tasso's hyperbole. These early translations of *Gerusalemme liberata* bring Tasso's imagery of Satan into English and inaugurate a long tradition of hyperbolizing Satan.

This hyperbolic tradition becomes more excessive later in the seventeenth century as English poets turn to Marino's depiction of Satan in *La strage degli innocenti*³²²—a depiction

³²⁰ Torquato Tasso, *Godfrey of Bulloigne, or The recouerie of Ierusalem. Done into English heroicall verse, by Edward Fairefax Gent*, trans. Edward Fairfax (London: Arthur Hatfield for John Jaggard and M. Lownes, 1600), 57, 4.7.

³²¹ The editor R.C. claims in his preface that he has included the Italian with the English to show how "strict a course the translator hath tyed himselfe in the whole work, vsurping as little liberty as any whatsoever, that euer wrote with any commendations" (Tasso, *Godfrey of Bulloigne*, trans. Richard Carew, ii).

³²² Marino considered this epic his best poem. As Claes Schaar explains, "He was highly pleased with his *Strage*, praising it in a letter as *a mio gusto una delle migliori composizioni, che mi sieno uscite della penna, e senza comparazione più perfetta dell'Adone...*" (Claes Schaar, *Marino and Crashaw: Sospetto d'Herode: A Commentary* [Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, Lund Studies in English, 1971], 10, internal quote from Menghini, *La Vita e le opere de G.B. Marino* [Rome: 1888], 281).

which was itself a hyperbole of Tasso's Satan. Consider these verses from the epic's first book,

Sospetto d'Erode:

Di sette corna alta corona in testa;
Fan d'ogn'intorno al suo diadema regio,
Hidre verdi, e Ceraste horribil fregio.

Negli occhi, oue mestitia alberga, e morte,
Luce fiammeggia torbida, e vermiglia.
Gli sguardi obliqui, e le pupille torte
Sembran Comete, e lampadi le ciglia,
E da le nari, e da le labra smorte
Caligine, e fetor vomita, e figlia,
Iracondi, superbi, e disperati,
Tuoni i gemiti son, folgori i fiati.³²³

[On its top a seven-pointed crown;
Circling his temples sits the royal diadem:
Green and horrible snakes that strike at him.

In his eyes, black death and deep sorrows;
Flickers and flashes of uncertain light;
With slanting gazes, his pupils borrow
The likeness of comets in flight;
Nose and lips heave vomit he cannot swallow,
A foul, stinking gust that blights life.
Wrathful and despairing, his bellows ring loud,
Thundering blasts of the cursèd and proud.]³²⁴

If Marino's Satan is indebted to Tasso's depiction (with his comet eyes and groaning mouth), it is also an elaborate hyperbole of it. His head is adorned with a crown of seven snake-entwined horns. His eyes are flaming lights of murky vermillion that look like comets, and their lashes

³²³ Giambattista Marino, *La strage degli innocenti* (Naples: Ottavio Beltrano, 1632), 4-5, 1.6-7.

³²⁴ Giambattista Marino, *The Massacre of the Innocents*, trans. Erik Butler (Cambridge, MA: Wakefield Press, 2015), 7, 1.6-7.

look like shooting stars (*lampadi*).³²⁵ His nostrils and lips produce fog and smell of vomit. His groans and breaths are thunder and lightning. His face is a cosmic scene of violence.

As mentioned above, Marino was translated into English many times during the seventeenth century. And among religiously devout poets like Crashaw, Beaumont, and Milton, *La strage* was perhaps his best poem for imitation.³²⁶ Its divine and epic theme gave English poets license to affirm Marino's extravagant style and push it to excess. The first English translation of *La strage* was undertaken by Crashaw in November 1637 and printed in *Steps to the Temple* (1646).³²⁷ In his translation of the first book, Crashaw regularly hyperbolizes Marino's own lavish hyperboles. For example,

Negli occhi, oue mestitia alberga, e morte,
Luce fiammeggia torbida, e vermiglia.

³²⁵ In his 1611 Italian-English dictionary, John Florio defines *lampada* as "any kind of lampe. Also a streame or beame of fire or brightnesse" and *lampadie* as "blazing stares like unto bruning torches" (John Florio, *Queen Anna's New World of Words, or Dictionarie of the Italian and English tongues* [London: Printed by Melch. Bradwood, for Edward Blount and William Barret, 1611], 275).

³²⁶ These poets often found Marino's secular subjects like Adonis to limit his extraordinary style. In *Psyche*, Beaumont writes,

Whose consort to complete, afore-hand came
Marino's Genius, with a voice so high,
That straight the world rung with *Adonis* name
Unhappie man and Choise! O what would thy
Brave Muse have done in such a Theme as mine,
Which make *Profanesse* almost seem *Divine*! (Joseph Beaumont, *Psyche, or, Loves mysterie in XX cantos* [London: Printed by John Dawson for George Boddington, 1648], 48, 4.97)

On the one hand, Marino's style was so extraordinary that it made his *Profanesse almost seem Divine*! On the other hand, the subject of these poems prevented them from the ecstatic readings their style deserved. Commenting on the quote from *Psyche* above, Warren notes, "For Beaumont, who was repelled by the loose secularity of *L'Adone*, the wonder of Marino's achievement lay in its manner, such as to make 'Profaness almost seem Divine'; and the disparity between the inconsequential substance and the splendor of style marked the triumph of Marino's 'vast wit'" (Warren, *Richard Crashaw*, 119).

³²⁷ L.C. Martin, *The Poems English, Latin, and Greek of Richard Crashaw* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1927), 108.

Explaining the manuscript, Martin writes, "Sospetto d'Herode &c.] MS. T6 (two separate copies, here distinguished as A and B. In the footnotes T, alone, stands for both copies. Ta or Tb represents one or the other separate copy. In Tb the punctuation &c., seems occasionally to have been corrected in a different hand. 'Tb corr.' in the footnotes refers to these corrections.) Separate title-page in Ta: La Strage De Gli Innocentj Del Cauallier Marino Nouember 25th 1637. Same in Tb with punctuation and 'Translated by R. C.' added in another hand" (Martin, 108).

Gli sguardi obliqui, e le pupille torte
Sembran Comete, e lampadi le ciglia.³²⁸

becomes

His eyes, the sullen dens of death and night,
Startle the dull air with a dismal red:
Such his fell glances as the fatal light
Of staring comets, that look kingdoms dead.³²⁹

In the first line, Crashaw amplifies Satan's eyes into *sullen dens* where both *death and night* dwell. And in the next lines, he makes them *startle the dull air*, instead of simply flame.

Marino's eyes that *Sembran Comete* become *staring comets that look kingdoms dead*. Crashaw intensifies Marino's hyperboles into more violent and powerful images. But at other times, Crashaw's hyperboles just stretch Marino's images to more fanciful heights. As Claes Shaar notices, he often does so "by piling hellish paraphernalia literally on top of one another."³³⁰

Consider these verses from Marino's sixth stanza alongside Crashaw's translation:

Porta (e sol questo è del suo regno il vanto)
Di sette corna alta corona in testa;
Fan d'ogn'intorno al suo diadema regio,
Hidre verdi, e Ceraste horribil fregio.³³¹

... the tire
That crowns his hated head on high appears;
Where sev'n tall horns (his empire's pride) aspire.
And to make up hell's majesty, each horn
Sev'n crested Hydras horribly adorn.³³²

³²⁸ Marino, *La strage degli innocenti*, 5, 1.7.1-4.

³²⁹ Richard Crashaw, *Sospetto d'Herode*, in *Steps to the Temple* (1648), in *The English Poems of Richard Crashaw*, ed. Richard Rambuss (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 43, 7.1-4.

³³⁰ Schaar, *Marino and Crashaw*, 109.

³³¹ Marino, *La strage degli innocenti*, 4, 1.6.4-8.

³³² Crashaw, *Sospetto d'Herode*, 42, 6.4-8.

Crashaw transforms Marino's seven-horned crown into a fractal. While Marino limits each horn to one snake in the Italian, Crashaw places *sev'n crested hydras* around each horn, presenting a spectacular image in which seven horns split into forty-nine snakes with even more heads. The baroque logic of excess keeps pushing the figure to absurd extremes. We might even expand the image to include each head's bifurcated tongue to extend the multiplying edges of Satan's crown even further. Similar hyperbolic embellishments can be found throughout Crashaw's translation. Hell is not simply "i regni miei lucenti" but "the never-fading field of Light."³³³ The East is not merely "La reggia oriental" but "the Ruby portalls of the East."³³⁴ Praz understands these transformations as Crashaw "imparting poetic life to certain trite metaphors and purple patches of Marino."³³⁵ But Crashaw's translation is more than a question of skill. He is actively hyperbolizing as many parts of Marino's poem as possible. There is a method to his translation—a baroque method of hyperbolic translation.

This practice of hyperbolic translation continues with Beaumont's depiction of Satan in his epic poem *Psyche* (1648). Here are two stanzas from the first canto:

His awfull Horns above his Crown did rise,
 And made them shrink in theirs; his Forehead was
 Plated with triply *Impudence*; his Eyes
 Were Hell reflected in a double Glasse.
 Two Comets stareing in their bloody stream,
 Two Beacons boyling in their pitch and flame.

His Mouth well-neer as wide's his Palace Door,
 But much more black: his Cheeks which never could

³³³ Marino, *La strage degli innocenti*, 15, 1.27.2.

Crashaw, *Sospetto d'Herode*, 48, 27.3.

Mario Praz analyzes these verses in Praz, *The Flaming Heart*, 334.

³³⁴ Marino, *La strage degli innocenti*, 9, 1.16.2.

Crashaw, *Sospetto d'Herode*, 45, 16.2.

³³⁵ Praz, *The Flaming Heart*, 223.

Blush in their own, had rak'd the world for store,
And deeply dy'd their guilt in humane Blood.
His griezly Beard all singed, did confesse
Wha kinde of Breath us'd though his lips to presse.³³⁶

Beaumont synthesizes the entire baroque tradition of poetry on Satan. His *griezly Beard all singed* echoes Carew's translation of Tasso's *ispida barba* as *gristelly beard*. His *Two Beacons* come from Fairfax's translation of Tasso. And his *Two Comets staring* imitate Crashaw's *staring comets*. But by synthesizing these English baroque translations of Tasso and Marino, Beaumont also hyperbolizes the tradition. He combines all the most fantastic elements from each translation into a spectacular image of Satan with eyes that are both *Comets* and *Beacons*—eyes that stare in a *bloody stream* and boil in *pitch and flame*. His Satan has horns and a mouth as wide as *his Palace Door*. And his jaws don't *yawn* but *gnash*. But Beaumont also contributes his own original hyperboles to the tradition. His Satan carries "His Mace, on which ten thousand Serpents knit, / With restlesse madness, gnaw'd themselves and it."³³⁷ Beaumont's *Psyche* unites and amplifies the hyperboles of previous baroque translations to the point of excess. How are we to imagine "ten thousand Serpents knit / With restlesse madness" as they "gnaw'd themselves and it"?³³⁸ The hyperbolic figuration is astonishing and difficult to comprehend. With Beaumont's *Psyche*, the baroque logic of excess extended the image of Satan to absurd excess.

In *Paradise Lost* (1667), Milton simultaneously extends and clarifies the excesses of this baroque tradition of hyperbolic translation. Following Quintilian's advice on hyperbole, Milton hyperbolizes Satan both by amplification and diminution. First, he depicts a Satan larger than any previous representation:

³³⁶ Beaumont, *Psyche*, 2, 1.12-13.

³³⁷ Beaumont, 2, 1.11.5-6.

³³⁸ Beaumont, 2, 1.11.5-6.

... His other parts besides,
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
 Lay floating many a rood in bulk as huge
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size:
 Titanian, or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
 Briareos or Typhon whom the den
 By ancient Tarsus held or that sea-beast
 Leviathan, which God of all His works
 Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream.³³⁹

His shield is as wide as the moon, his spear as long as a pine:

... His ponderous shield,
 Ethereal temper, massy, large and round,
 Behind him cast. The broad circumference
 Hung on his shoulders like the moon whose orb
 Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
 At evening from the top of Fesolè,
 Or in Valdarno to descry new lands,
 Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
 His spear (to equal which the tallest pine
 Hewn on Norwegian hills to be the mast
 Of some great admiral were but a wand).³⁴⁰

This cosmic image of Satan amplifies his corporal size to such excess that *the tallest pine* or *the mast of some great admiral* seems *but a wand*. And the image of Satan's shield, embellished with a baroque conceit, appears as large as the moon magnified by Galileo's telescope. But then Milton begins shifting hyperbolic registers. By book 4, the planet-sized fiend sits "like a cormorant" on the Tree of Life and "squat[s] like a toad close at the ear of Eve."³⁴¹ And he later tempts Eve as a serpent. Milton imagines Satan as more and less than human.

But Milton employs the paradoxes of hyperbolic size even more dramatically in his depiction of Satan's peers. Early in book 1, they are described as "locusts warping on the eastern

³³⁹ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 8-9, 1.194-202, quoted in Roston, *Milton and the Baroque*, 103.

³⁴⁰ Milton, 11, 1.286-94.

³⁴¹ Milton, 83, 100, 4.196, 800.

wind” turning the day into night.³⁴² Like Satan, his fellow fallen angels are worthy of both aggrandizing and diminishing, and the swarm of insects offers a paradoxical image of both. Alone, each is smaller than a hand, but together they swarm into clouds that block the sky. Milton presents an even more hyperbolic blending of the micro and macro at the end of book 1, when the fallen angels gather together at Pandemonium:

... As bees
In spring time when the sun with Taurus rides
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters, they among fresh dews and flow’rs
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothèd plank,
The suburb of their Straw-built citadel,
New rubbed with balm, expatiate and confer
Their state affairs, so thick the aery crowd
Swarmed and were straitened, till the signal giv’n,
Behold, a wonder! They but now who seemed
In bigness to surpass Earth’s giant sons
Now less than smallest dwarfs in narrow room
Throng numberless like that Pygméan race
Beyond the Indian mount or fairy elves
Whose midnight revels by a forest side
Or fountain some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon
Sits arbitress and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course. They on their mirth and dance
Intent with jocond music charm his ear.
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds!
Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense and were at large,
Though without number still amidst the hall
Of that infernal court....³⁴³

Satan and his cohort are both giants and dwarfs, planets and bees. They exhibit both qualitative and quantitative immensities as Milton varies his use of hyperbolic amplification and diminution. And the shifting from one hyperbole to the other creates a dizzying spectacle of size. To be sure,

³⁴² Milton, 13, 1.341.

³⁴³ Milton, 25-6, 1.768-92.

unlike previous representations of Satan, Milton employs both sides of hyperbolic elocution to construct his baroque devils.

It is clear that Milton's Satan is more than a hyperbolic translation of the tradition mapped above. He does not simply add more horns or extend old metaphors for Satan's eyes and mouth. Milton adds clarity to Satan's hyperbolic figure. When Crashaw has Satan rise from the flames to fly, he writes,

He shook himself, and spread his spacious wings,
Which, like two bosom'd sails embrace the dim
Air with a dismal shade: but all in vain;
Of study adamant is his strong chain.³⁴⁴

But when Milton has Satan do the same, he writes,

Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature. On each hand the flames
Drivn backward slope their pointing spires and, rolled
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft incumbent on the dusky Air
That felt unusual weight till on dry land
He lights—....³⁴⁵

To say this passage is hyperbolic is to say little. The curling flames fall down Satan's back like the infinite curls of baroque ornament, combining into the *billows* of a united curl that flames behind him—a *horrid vale*. The soot- and ash-filled air weigh upon his wings as the reader falls into the enjambed line *that felt unusual weight*. Like Satan himself, Milton breaks free from the

³⁴⁴ Crashaw, *Sospetto d'Herode*, 45, 18.5-8.

³⁴⁵ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 9, 1.221-28.

William Hazlitt points to this passage in book 2 as echoing Crashaw's translation: "... At last his sail-broad vans / He spreads for flight and in the surging smoke / Uplifted spurns the ground..." (Milton, 51, 2.927-29). See William Hazlitt, *Lectures on the Literature of the Age of Elizabeth and Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (London: Daldy, York Street, Covent Garden, 1870), 199.

chains of a hyperbolic tradition that led Beaumont to confusingly excessive figures, not by rejecting hyperbole, but by clarifying it.

Milton employs the rhetorical quality of *enargeia* to bring his baroque hyperboles to life. According to Quintilian, *enargeia* is the final figure of rhetorical ornamentation insofar as it polishes the others into a vivid and credible image: “Magna virtus res de quibus loquimur clare atque ut cerni videantur enuntiare. Non enim satis efficit neque, ut debet, plene dominatur oratio si usque ad aures valet, atque ea sibi iudex de quibus cognoscit narrari credit, non exprimi et oculis mentis ostendi” (“It is a great virtue to express our subject clearly and in such a way that it seems to be actually seen. A speech does not adequately fulfill its purpose or attain the total domination it should have if it goes no further than the ears, and the judge feels that he is merely being told the story of the matters he has to decide, without their being brought out and displayed to his mind’s eye”).³⁴⁶ According to Quintilian, the effective use of *enargeia* in speech should be even more compelling than reality itself. When Virgil depicts a boxing match in book 5 of the *Aeneid*, he does so with such vividness “ut non clarior futura fuerit spectantibus” (“that it could not have been any clearer to the spectators”).³⁴⁷ The same could be said of Milton’s depiction of Satan standing to fly. The hyperbole renders the gravity of the scene real. Milton’s style is not merely hyperbolic, it is vividly so. Mary Gaylord understands this quality of *enargeia* to be an essential feature of baroque poetics: “Baroque images rely on vivid description called *enargeia* in classical rhetoric, meant to produce effects of astonishment and awe conveyed in the Latin term *admiration*.”³⁴⁸ To be sure, Milton’s baroque style is unique for its extraordinary *enargeia*. His

³⁴⁶ Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, trans. Donald Russell, 374-7, 8.3.

³⁴⁷ Quintilian, trans. Donald Russell, 376-77, 8.3.

³⁴⁸ Mary Gaylord, “The Making of Baroque Poetry,” in *Early Modern Spain: Renaissance and Baroque*, ed. David Gies (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 227.

lucid hyperboles “produce effects of astonishment and awe” unlike earlier English translations of Satan.³⁴⁹ His baroque style reveals a hyperbolic Satan with extraordinary clarity. Gordon Teskey has highlighted the relationship between the maxim *stylus virum arguit* and the rhetorical quality of *enargeia*. He explains, “The verb arguo, ‘to show’, is from Greek argos ‘bright’, which has the same root as the ancient literary term, enargeia ‘clearness’, the supreme quality of Homer’s style. A style is a brightening, a revealing....”³⁵⁰ But what does Milton’s baroque style reveal? In verses like the ones above, it reveals a world full of excess, hyperbole, confusion, and passion in absolute clarity. Milton’s baroque style allows us to see through the chaotic logic of excess and behold the hyperbolic Satan in bright clarity. *Stylus Satanam arguit*.

Epistemic Translation

In *Épistémè baroque: Le mot et la chose* (2013), Jean-Claude Vuillemin understands the baroque as a “dénomination épistémique.”³⁵¹ Like Michel Foucault,³⁵² Vuillemin sees the baroque episteme as the product of a radical rupture in Renaissance consciousness. He explains,

[L]e Baroque demeure résolument contemporain de cette époque ‘out of joint’ (*Hamlet*, I, v), qui donna néanmoins naissance à la science ‘moderne’ congruente à une nouvelle vision du cosmos. C’est au cours de cette époque détraquée—‘*Quite out of joint*’, ainsi que renchérit John Donne dans son *Anatomy of the World* (1611) avant de préciser que tout est en pièces et a versé dans l’incohérence : ‘’Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone’—que la terre et l’individu vont devoir définitivement renoncer à leur place au centre de l’univers.³⁵³

[The Baroque remains resolutely contemporary with this “out of joint” epoch (*Hamlet* I.V), which nevertheless gave birth to a modern science congruent with a new vision of

³⁴⁹ Gaylord, 227.

³⁵⁰ Gordon Teskey, “Shakespeare’s Styles,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare’s Poetry*, ed. Jonathan Post (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 9.

³⁵¹ Jean-Claude Vuillemin, *Épistémè baroque: Le mot et la chose* (Paris: Hermann Éditeurs, 2013), 20.

³⁵² See Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses: Une archéologie des sciences humaines* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1966).

³⁵³ Vuillemin, *Épistémè baroque*, 19.

the cosmos. It is over the course of this unhinged epoch—"Quite out of joint," as John Donne quips in his *Anatomy of the World* (1611) before explaining that everything is in pieces and turned to incoherence: "'Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone"—that the earth and the individual must definitively renounce their place at the center of the universe.]"³⁵⁴

In the first decades of the seventeenth century, baroque authors offer literary descriptions of this epistemic rupture (see chapter two). For Vuillemin, this rupture signified the end of one world and the beginning of another. "Sinon la fin du monde, le Baroque marque en tout cas la fin d'un monde—celui marqué par l'optimisme de la Renaissance—et inaugure l'émergence de nouvelles modalités de compréhension de l'univers et de l'individu" (If not the end of the world, the baroque marks in any case the end of a world—the one marked by the optimism of the Renaissance—and inaugurates the emergence of new modalities of comprehending the universe and the individual).³⁵⁵ He argues that the "implosion de l'Église unitaire en factions rivales" (implosion of the unitary church in rival factions) coincided with a new scientific mode of understanding the place of humanity within the cosmos.³⁵⁶ Together, these cultural changes generated a new form of consciousness (*homo barochus*) with newfound religious, political, and scientific desires.³⁵⁷ But *homo barochus* had aesthetic desires, too. The concept of aesthetic style

³⁵⁴ My translation.

³⁵⁵ Vuillemin, 18; my translation.

³⁵⁶ Vuillemin, 21; my translation.

Vuillemin writes, "*Épistémè* baroque donc qui va mettre en scène et instaurer de nouveaux cadres de références qui, relativisant les croyances religieuses déjà mises à mal par l'implosion de l'Église unitaire en factions rivales, conduiront inéluctablement du théocentrisme à un anthropocentrisme revisité et marqué, entre autres caractéristiques, par l'émergence d'un sujet laïque favorisant la sécularisation d'une pensée éthique, d'une morale sans religion et d'une pratique politique radicalement nouvelle" (Baroque episteme will thus put into play and support new frames of reference which, by reframing religious beliefs already challenged by the implosion of the unitary church in rival factions, will inevitably drive from theocentrism to a revisited anthropocentrism and marked, among other characteristics, by the emergence of a secular subject promoting the secularization of ethical thought, a morality without religion, and a radically new political practice) (Vuillemin, 21; my translation).

³⁵⁷ As he explains, "[L]a nouvelle façon d'envisager le monde va offrir à l'*homo barochus*, individu prométhéen s'il en est, la possibilité, ou au moins le désir, de maîtrise de êtres et des choses" (the new way of envisioning the world is going to offer to *homo barochus*, a promethean individual if ever there were one, the possibility, or at least the desire, to master beings and things) (Vuillemin, 21; my translation).

cannot be separated from episteme. Every style expresses an episteme, and the episteme expressed cannot be separated from its style.³⁵⁸ The baroque is both a style and an episteme, and it is impossible to understand one without the other. Vuillemin admits this double nature of the baroque when he confesses his agreement with Guy Debord that “[l]e baroque est l’art d’un monde que a perdu son centre” (the baroque is the art of a world that has lost its center).³⁵⁹ Indeed, it is the *art* of a world which has lost its center. The baroque is the translation of an episteme without center into art.

In the same way that Vuillemin sees Donne’s baroque style as a response to the scientific, political, and religious crises of early modern Europe, Gian Biagio Conte sees Lucan’s style as a response to the political and ethical crises of Nero’s Rome. Conte believes that Lucan’s excessive rhetorical figures are the material means for a political and moral response to his chaotic world. His classical baroque style constitutes a poetic attempt to redeem the world from chaos in a way that older literary forms could not. As Conte explains,

[T]he rhetoric animating [Lucan’s] language is not a sign of empty ornamental artifice but the gesture of a style that, paradoxically, in order to recover its authenticity, in order to be certain of not betraying with words the message of an ideology without hope, can no longer entrust itself to simple, direct expression, but of necessity speaks by having recourse to the emphatic schemata of rhetorical discourse. Thus it looks to rhetoric, to its laborious and calculated constructions, to compensate for the loss of credibility into which the simple forms of epic language have fallen.³⁶⁰

Lucan employs evermore excessive figures to give coherence to the world. He constructs a hyperbolic style commensurate with the logic of reality. Describing Lucan’s style, Conte points to “the urgent narrative rhythm of the periods, which follow one another in unbridled haste and

³⁵⁸ To use a Spinozist formulation, style is both *fabrica fabricans* and *fabrica fabricata*. Or to extend the Latin etymon *stilus*, the baroque is both *the pen* and *the letter it leaves*.

³⁵⁹ Guy Debord, *La société du spectacle* (Paris: Buchet-Chastel, 1967), 182, quoted in Vuillemin, *Épistème baroque*, 19; my translation.

³⁶⁰ Conte, *Latin Literature*, 449.

leave parts of the phrase overflowing the boundaries of the hexameter.”³⁶¹ He explains how “the impassioned urgency of [Lucan’s] thoughts is reflected in the continual enjambment, and [how] the syntax of the words aims at escaping from the bonds of the hexameter while giving an unusual expressive tension in the verse.”³⁶² Besides the syntactical excesses of Lucan’s hexameter that render his poetry so passionate and full of tension, his verses also overflow with excessive figuration. Hyperbole and paradox, as well as conceits, enthymemes, and sententiae, are fused together in his verses. And English authors of the seventeenth century took note.

The number of English translations of Lucan’s *Bellum Civile* printed from 1600 to 1660 is remarkable.³⁶³ The first was Christopher Marlowe’s *Lucans first booke, translated line for line by Chr. Marlowe*, posthumously printed by Peter Short and Felix Kingston in 1600 alongside Marlowe’s unfinished *Hero and Leander*.³⁶⁴ Then Sir Arthur Gorges published a translation of the entire epic in 1614.³⁶⁵ Thomas May published the first three books of his popular translation

³⁶¹ Conte, 448.

³⁶² Conte, 448.

³⁶³ Even though Lucan was a vital part of medieval and Renaissance educational practices, he was not actively translated and read in English until the seventeenth century.

³⁶⁴ Patrick Cheney explains, “We are not sure when Marlowe made his translation, but most critics select either the Cambridge years (around 1585 [Gill, ed., *Complete Works* I:88]) or 1592-3, when the theatres were close (Lewis, *English Literature* 486; Shapiro, ‘Lucan’ 32-4)” (Patrick Cheney, *Marlowe’s Counterfeit Profession: Ovid, Spenser, Counter-Nationhood* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997], 333; brackets are Cheney’s). And as Philip Hardie explains, “For an excessive and transgressive poetics in the manner of Lucan one looks to the tragedies of Marlowe... Lucan’s subject matter and manner translates easily and early on to the English stage in plays such as Norton and Sackville’s *Gorboduc* (1561), Thomas Hughes’ *The Misfortune of Arthur* (1588), the anonymous *Caesars Revenge* (1592/6?), and Chapman’s *Caesar and Pompey* (c. 1604), as well as the plays of Marlowe and, to a lesser extent, Shakespeare. One reason for Lucan’s easy transfer to the stage is the close affinity, biological and literary, between Lucan and Seneca.... Another reason is the importance of the French tragedian Robert Garnier (1544-1590) as a conduit of Lucanian material to the English dramatist” (Hardie, “Lucan in the English Renaissance,” 498-99).

³⁶⁵ Christopher Marlowe and Lucan, *Hero and Leander: begunne by Christopher Marloe: whereunto is added the first booke of Lucan translated line for line by the same author*, trans. Christopher Marlowe (London: Printed for Iohn Flasket, 1600).

in 1626 and the complete edition in 1627.³⁶⁶ May's edition was so popular it was printed again in 1631, 1635, 1650, and 1659, and he even wrote *A continuation of Lucan's historicall poem till the death of Iulius Caesar* in seven books, which was reprinted with Lucan's original in multiple runs (1630, 1633, 1650, 1657, and 1659).³⁶⁷ John Fletcher translated passages from Lucan for his play *The False One* (ca. 1619), co-written with Philip Massinger.³⁶⁸ And Sir John Beaumont translated a few selections from the epic which were collected in his posthumously published *Selections* (1629).³⁶⁹ And while most scholarship on these English translations of Lucan have focused on the way they responded to the English Civil War,³⁷⁰ few have considered the importance of Lucan's style for English writers of the period.

It is not without reason that critics have called Lucan's style baroque.³⁷¹ Following the work of Fraenkel Eduard, classicist R.A. Tucker suggests that "*baroque* is an apt adjective for

³⁶⁶ Lucan, *Lucan's Pharsalia or the civill warres of Rome, betweene Pompey the Great and Iulius Caesar. The three first books, Translated into English by T.M.*, trans. Thomas May (London: Printed by I.N. & A.M., 1626).

Lucan, *Lucan's Pharsalia: or The civill warres of Rome, betweene Pompey the great, and Iulius Caesar The whole ten booke. Englished, by Thomas May Esquire*, trans. Thomas May (London: Printed for Thomas Iones and Iohn Marriott, 1627).

³⁶⁷ For more information on this printing history, see Andrew Shifflett, *Stoicism, Politics, & Literature in the Age of Milton: War and Peace Reconciled* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 167n8.

Thomas May, *A continuation of Lucan's historicall poem till the death of Iulius Caesar by T M.* (London: Printed for James Boler, 1630).

³⁶⁸ Compare the lines beginning "To be or just, or thankful makes Kings guilty..." from Act I Scene 1 with Lucan's "Ius et fas multos faciunt, Prolema, nocentes..." (John Fletcher and Philip Massinger, *The False One*, in Vol. 4 of *The Works of Mr. Francis Beaumont and Mr. John Fletcher*, ed. Seward [London: Printed for J. and R. Tonson and S. Draper, 1750], 1.1.91).

³⁶⁹ John Beaumont, *Bosvorth-field with a taste of the variety of other poems, left by Sir Iohn Beaumont, Baronet, deceased: set forth by his sonne, Sir Iohn Beaumont, Baronet; and dedicated to the Kings most Excellent Maiestie* (London: Printed by Felix Kingston for Henry Selle, 1629).

³⁷⁰ See David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999) and Edward Paleit, *War, Liberty, and Caesar: Responses to Lucan's Bellum Ciuile, ca.1580-1650* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013). Both offer brilliant studies on the changing sympathies toward Lucan and their relation to English politics.

³⁷¹ See Fraenkel Eduard, "Lucan als Mittler des Antiken Pathos" (1927), H. Bardon's "Le Goût à l'époque des Flaviens" (1962), O.A.W. Dilke's "Magnus Achilles and Statian Baroque" (1963), R.A. Tucker's "Lucan and the

the rhetorical, highly colored, pointed poetry of [Lucan's] *Bellum Civile*, rich with *sententiae*, dramatic, often macabre and vividly horrific *ad nauseam*.”³⁷² He goes on to insist that “the ‘new style’ of Lucan’s epic is patently different from the style in favor in the Augustan era” and is better associated with the baroque insofar as the style “can encompass the elaborate, the ornate, the bizarre, the grotesque, or even the macabre, the use of brilliant color, the rhetorical, [and] the flamboyant.”³⁷³ And Lucan’s baroque style was uniquely suited to describe the epistemic contexts of first-century Rome. For example, consider these lines from the first book in which Lucan offers an apocalyptic image of the world:

Invida fatorum series summisque negatum
 Stare diu nimioque graves sub pondere lapsus
 Nec se Roma ferens. Sic, cum conpage soluta
 Saecula tot mundi suprema coegerit hora,
 Antiquum repetens iterum chaos, omnia mixtis
 Sidera sideribus concurrent ignea pontum
 Astra petenet, tellus extendere littora nolet
 Executietque fretum, fratri contrira Phoebe
 Ibit et obliquum bigas agitare per orbem

Baroque: A Revival of Interest” (1969), D.W.T.C. Vessey’s “Lucan, Statius and the Baroque Epic” (1970), et al. Perhaps the first text to refer to a Roman baroque style, albeit for the visual arts, is Ludwig von Sybel’s *Weltgeschichte der Kunst* (1888), which itself likely drew on Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff’s work on the Hellenistic baroque. See Rene Wellek’s “The Concept of Baroque in Literary Scholarship” (1946) for more on the historiography of the classical baroque.

³⁷² R.A. Tucker, “Lucan and the Baroque: A Revival of Interest,” *Classical World: A Quarterly Journal on Antiquity* 62, no. 8 (1969), 295.

According to Tucker, Fraenkel Eduard distinguishes “three distinct periods in Latin epic: the archaic, the classical, and the post-classical, counter-classical, or baroque. The chief exponents of these three periods, in Fraenkel’s view, are Ennius in the archaic period, Vergil in the classical period, and Lucan in the baroque period” (Tucker, 295).

³⁷³ Tucker, 295.

Tucker makes a long series of connections between the baroque style and American culture of the late 1960s: “The colors which are now most in fashion with the younger generation—such colors as tangerine, bright yellow, electric blue, black, magenta, hot pink, and poison green—certainly must be called baroque. The poster art so popular nowadays, in which the message to be conveyed is subordinated to the artistic design, the lettering being so cursive and distorted as to make reading difficult, furnishes another example. A taste for the macabre is evidenced not only by the increase of violent and shocking portrayals in motion pictures and television but also by the success of the recent stage play *Marat-Sade* which has also been made into a motion picture and other plays of similar nature. Alongside the current liking for things from the past (such as baroque music and baroque epic) is the contradictory, but equally baroque, reaction against the past now everywhere evident among the young, as seen, for example, in the trend in clothing styles” (Tucker, 295).

Indignata diem poscet sibi, totaque discors
Machina divolsi turbabit foedera mundi.
In se magna ruunt : laetis hunc numina rebus
Crescendi posuere modum....³⁷⁴

Lucan presents an earth in which the entire “discors / Machina divolsi turbabit foedera mundi” (discordant machine of the shattered world will fall into confusion).³⁷⁵ The enjambment of *machina* and the syntactical separation of *divolsi mundi* emphasize the torsion of the earth. And the English baroque translators of Lucan imitate this poetic disorientation. Here is how Marlowe renders the verses:

The fates are enuious, high seats quickly perish,
Vnder great burdens fals are euer greeuous;
Roome was so great it could not beare it self:
So when this worlds compounded vnion breakes,
Time ends and to old *Chaos* all things turne,
Confused stars shall meete, celestiall fire
Fleete on the flouds, the earth shoulder the sea,
Affording it no shoare, and *Phæbe*’s waine,
Chace *Phæbus* and inrag’d affect his place,
And strive to shine by day, and ful of strife
Disolue the engins of the broken world.
All great things crush themselues....³⁷⁶

And here is May’s 1627 translation:

Fates enuious course, continuance still deny’d
To mighty States, who greatest falls still feare,

³⁷⁴ Lucan, *The Civil War (Pharsalia)*, trans. J.D. Duff (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1928), 6, 8, 1.70-82.

J.D. Duff offers this modern prose translation:

It was the chain of jealous fate, and the speedy fall which no eminence can escape; it was the grievous collapse of excessive weight, and Rome unable to support her own greatness. Even so, when the framework of the world is dissolved and the final hour, closing so many ages, reverts to primeval chaos, then [all the constellations will clash in confusion,] the fiery stars will drop into the sea, and earth, refusing to spread her shores out flat, will shake off the ocean; the moon will move in opposition to her brother, and claim to rule the day, disdaining to drive her chariot along her slanting orbit; and the whole distracted fabric of the shattered firmament will overthrow its laws. Great things come crashing down upon themselves—such is the limit of growth ordained by heaven for success. (Lucan, trans. J.D. Duff, 7, 9, 1.70-82; brackets are Duff’s).

³⁷⁵ Lucan, 8, 1.80-1; my translation.

³⁷⁶ Lucan, *The first booke of Lucan*, trans. Christopher Marlowe, 1.70-81.

And Rome not able her owne weight to beare.
 So when the knot of Nature is dissolu'de,
 And the worlds Ages in one hower innol'd
 In their old Chaos, Seas with Skyes shall ioyne,
 And Starres with Starres confounded loose their shine:
 The Earth no longer shall extend her shore
 To keepe the Ocean out: the Moone no more
 Follow the Sunne, but scorning her old way
 Crosse him, and claime the guidance of the day.
 The falling worlds now iarring frame no peace,
 No league shall hold; great things themselues oppresse.³⁷⁷

Vuillemin could easily have pointed to these verses as descriptions of the baroque episteme:

*when this worlds compounded vnion breakes, when the knot of Nature is dissolu'de, and to old
 Chaos all things turne, Seas with Skyes shall ioyne, Confused stars shall meete, The Earth no
 longer shall extend her shore / To keepe the Ocean out: the Moone no more / Follow the Sunne,
 The falling worlds now iarring frame no peace, And strive to shine by day and ful of strife /
 Disolue the engins of the broken world. No league shall hold. All great things crush themselues.*

This worldview of Lucan's *Bellum Civile*, translated into English, expresses the same chaotic logic of excess that English baroque authors used to describe their own world. Shakespeare's Hamlet complains "the time is out of joint,"³⁷⁸ and Donne bemoans "what fragmentary rubbishge this world is."³⁷⁹ Donne continues,

The Element of fire is quite put out;
 The Sun is lost ...

 When in the Planets, and the Firmament
 They seeke so many new; they see that this
 Is crumbled out again to his Atomies.

³⁷⁷ Lucan, *Lucan's Pharsalia*, trans. Thomas May, 1.76-88

³⁷⁸ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, in *The Norton Shakespeare, Based on the Oxford Edition*, second edition, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2008), 1716, 1.5.189.

³⁷⁹ Donne, *Of the Progresse of the Soule, The Second Anniversary*, in *The Poems of John Donne*, 253, lines 82.

'Tis all in pieces, all cohaerence gone;
All just supply, and all Relation.³⁸⁰

The disorientation of an epistemic crisis leads these authors to express their world in hyperbolic and cosmic images of destruction, ruin, and chaos. The once great and harmonious center—whether cosmological, political, religious, or moral—is now gone, “and to old Chaos all things turn.”³⁸¹ Lucan, Marlowe, May, Shakespeare, Donne, and other baroque authors express their broken worlds in a logic of excess. They express their baroque episteme in baroque verse.

English authors were well aware of the similarities between Lucan's world and their own. Edward Paleit has shown how Thomas May “appropriated Lucan's anti-monarchism for an attack on regal absolutism... and its instruments.”³⁸² But May translates more than the political content of Lucan's epic. He translates Lucan's style and the feeling of living in a broken world, full of uncontrollable passion. As religious and political crises grew in England during the 1620s and 30s, Lucan's style—*ardens et concitatus* (burning and passionate), according to Quintilian—offered English poets a way to express the disorienting flood of passionate divisions.³⁸³ When May translates the famous scene from book 5 in which Caesar forces the poor fisherman Amyclas to carry him across the stormy sea in a small fishing boat, May does so in a style that reflects England's own experience of epistemic crisis:

Tum quoque tanta maris moles crevisset in astra,
Ni superum rector pressisset nubibus undas.
Non caeli nox illa fuit: latet obsitus aer
Infernae pallore domus nimisque gravatus

³⁸⁰ Donne, *Anatomie*, 237, lines 206-14.

³⁸¹ Lucan, *The first booke of Lucan*, trans. Christopher Marlowe, 1.74.

³⁸² Paleit, *War, Liberty, and Caesar*, 238.

³⁸³ Quintilian writes, “Lucanus ardens et concitatus et sententiis clarissimus et, ut dicam quod sentio, magis oratoribus quam poetis imitandus” (“Lucan is ardent, passionate, particularly distinguished for his *sententiae*, and (if I may say what I think) more to be imitated by orators than poets”) (Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, 300-01, X.1.90).

Deprimitur, fluctusque in nubibus accipit imbrem.
 Lux etiam metuenda perit, nec fulgura currunt
 Clara, sed obscurum nimbosus dissilit aer.
 Tum superum convexa tremunt, atque arduus axis
 Intonuit, motaque poli conpage laborant.
 Extimuit natura chaos; rupisse videntur
 Concordes elementa moras....³⁸⁴

Contented with no limit but the skyes
 Then also would those welling seas arise
 Upto the starres; had not great Ioue kept downe
 Their waues with cloudes, nor sprung that night alone
 From naturall causes; the thike aire was growne
 Infected with the dampes of Acheron,
 And clogg'd with foggy stormes, waues from the maine
 Fly to the cloudes, and fall like showres againe.
 The lightnings light is lost; it shines not cleare,
 But shootes obscurely through nights stormy aire.
 The heavens then trembled; the high pole for feare
 Resounded, when his hindges mooved were.
 Nature then fear'd the old confusion:
 The elemental concord seem'd undone.³⁸⁵

May captures the energy and confusion of Lucan's Latin verses with hyperbolic figures and verses that are not only cut with caesuras but also overflowing with enjambment. Even more striking is the way May embellishes Lucan's style with extra sententiae—encouraging us to read the scene as a moral analogy. *Contented with no limit but the skyes* is a fitting aphorism for his times. Charles I was consolidating royal power with elaborate spending. Members of the Reformed Church believed they were creating “the New Heaven and the New Earth” across the Atlantic.³⁸⁶ Levellers, Diggers, and Republicans all aspired for revolution. And Francis Bacon

³⁸⁴ Lucan, *The Civil War*, 286, 5.625-35.

³⁸⁵ Lucan, *Lucan's Pharsalia, or The Civill Warres of Rome, between Pompey the great and Iulius Caear. The Whole Ten Bookes Englished by Thomas May, esquire*, trans. Thomas May (London: Printed for Thomas Jones and John Makriott, 1627), 135-36.

³⁸⁶ John Davenport, *A Sermon Preach'd at the Election of the Governour, at Boston in New England, May 19, 1669* (Cambridge, MA: 1670), 15, quoted in Francis J. Bremer, *Building a New Jerusalem: John Davenport, a Puritan in Three Worlds* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 168.

sought to revolutionize Aristotelian logic with a *Novum Organum* (1620). To be sure, *The elemental concord seem'd undone*. The epistemic contexts of baroque translation are critical for understanding why English baroque authors turned to Lucan in the seventeenth century. The *Bellum Civile* not only offered English poets a hyperbolic vision of a world torn apart, but it also offered them a style well suited to respond to such a world. Perhaps May and other poets felt like Amyclas in his fishing boat, hijacked by human forces beyond their control and thrown into chaos. Perhaps Lucan offered a way to keep their heads above water, and to respond to the world with style.

Exhaustion and the Limits of Translation

In his prologue to the 1954 edition of *Historia universal de la infamia*, Jorge Luis Borges offers his definition of the baroque: “Yo diría que barroco es aquel estilo que deliberadamente agota (o quiere agotar) sus posibilidades y que linda con su propia caricatura.... [Y]o diría que es barroca la etapa final de todo arte, cuando éste exhibe y dilapida sus medios” (I would say that the baroque is that style which deliberately exhausts [or seeks to exhaust] its own possibilities and that borders on self-caricature.... I would say that the baroque is the final stage of all art, when it shows off and squanders its techniques).³⁸⁷ While this definition is itself a self-caricature, many people find the baroque exhausting. For example, Mary Gaylord notes that critics of Luis de Góngora typically understand his style as an “exhaustion of classical and Petrarchan

John Cotton, a founder of Massachusetts Bay Colony, sent a letter in the 1630s to John Davenport, a founder of New Haven, in which he described the new colony as a “the New Heaven and the New Earth” (Davenport, 168). Davenport’s references the letter in the sermon cited above.

³⁸⁷ Jorge Luis Borges, *Historia universal de la infamia* (New York: Random House, Vintage Español, 1995), 9; my translation.

imitation.”³⁸⁸ According to these scholars, all the “brilliant images and dazzling verbal pyrotechnics not only say nothing new..., they seem to spin over an abyss of nothingness.”³⁸⁹ Borges himself criticizes the proliferation of metaphors in Góngora’s poetry as “una mera grosería, un mero énfasis” (pure rudeness, pure emphasis).³⁹⁰ And Humberto Huergo describes Góngora’s *Soledades* as “a two-thousand-line poetic maze essentially about nothing, ... boasting bold syntactic twists and esoteric metaphors that almost obliterate their referent.”³⁹¹ But these criticisms of Góngora are not new. According to Gaylord, Góngora’s use of rhetorical figures “heaped up to excess, one on top of the other, rankled critics like Juan de Jáuregui, who wrote an *Antidoto contra la pestilente poesia de las ‘Soledades’* (‘Antidote to the Pestilential Poetry of the Soledades’), and humanist Francisco Cascales, author of the 1634 *Cartas filológicas* (‘Philological Epistles’).”³⁹² In his “Respuesta a las cartas de don Luis de Góngora y de don Antonio de las Infantas” (1616), Lope de Vega argues that Góngora’s *Soledades* are “tan intrincadas y escabrosas [y] son tan superficiales sus misterios que entendiendo todos lo que quieren decir, ninguno entiende lo que dicen” (so intricate and thorny and their mysteries are so superficial that everyone understands what they try to say but no one understands what they say).³⁹³ For these critics, Góngora’s style is so excessive that his poetic figures can no longer be

³⁸⁸ Mary Gaylord, “The Making of Baroque Poetry,” in *Early Modern Spain: Renaissance and Baroque* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 222.

³⁸⁹ Gaylord, 222.

³⁹⁰ Jorge Luis Borges, “La metáfora,” in *Historia de la eternidad* (Madrid: Alianza, 1996), 77, quoted in Johnson, *Hyperboles*, 134; my translation.

³⁹¹ Humberto Huergo, “Luis de Góngora,” in *Oxford Bibliographies*. 2018. Online: www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195399301/obo-9780195399301-0383.xml.

³⁹² Gaylord, “The Making of Baroque Poetry,” 228.

³⁹³ Lope de Vega, “Respuesta a las cartas de don Luis de Góngora y de don Antonio de las Infantas,” in *Lope y Góngora frente a frente*, ed. Díaz, Emilio Orozco (Madrid: Gredos, 1973), 245, quoted in Johnson, *Hyperboles*, 137; my translation.

understood. Góngora's baroque style exhausts the figurative potential of language, and his readers find that exhausting.

But Góngora seems inexhaustible. In fact, he defends the complexity and difficulty of his poetry in the "Carta en respuesta de la que le escribieron" (1613). When reading his verses, Góngora encourages people "quitar la corteza y descubrir lo misterioso que encubren" (to remove the shell and discover the mystery they hide).³⁹⁴ He believes that the purpose of poetry is to restage the task of every human in the world—to decipher the divine mysteries embedded in the natural confusion of the world. Góngora relishes the obscurity of the world and his poetry. As John Dent-Young explains, Góngora thinks "the objective of the human intellect is to know truth, and the greatest delight will be experienced when, forced to speculate by a difficult literary work, the intellect glimpses through the obscurity 'asimilaciones a su concepto.'"³⁹⁵ But Góngora does not restrict the value of his style to mystical exercises. Young-Dent writes, "Góngora's self-justification included claims that he sought to raise Spanish to the level of perfection of Latin, that he did not write for idiots, and that difficult poetry had the great merit of sharpening the reader's intellect."³⁹⁶ Whatever the impetus of his poetic style may be, Góngora enthusiastically championed the complexity and difficulty of his verses. And "Góngora had many admirers and defenders in his own time and after his death."³⁹⁷ Many of these admirers were English.

³⁹⁴ Luis de Góngora, "Respuesta de don Luis de Góngora," in Vol. 2 of *Obras Completas* (Madrid: Ediciones de la Fundación José Antonio de Castro, 2000), 296.

³⁹⁵ John Dent-Young, "Introduction," in *Selected Poems of Luis de Góngora*, ed. and trans. John Dent-Young (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), xiv.

³⁹⁶ Dent-Young, xiv.

³⁹⁷ Dent-Young, xv.

Literary historians have slowly begun to trace the myriad connections between Góngora and English poets like Donne and Crashaw,³⁹⁸ but little attention has been given to Thomas Stanley (1625-1678)—the only English poet to publish a translation of Góngora before the twentieth century. Stanley was a relative of the poet Richard Lovelace and a close friend of Sir Edward Sherburne, John Hall, and James Shirley.³⁹⁹ Educated at Cambridge, he is best known for his eight-volume *History of Philosophy* (1655-1662), but he published several books of translation and poetry as well.⁴⁰⁰ In the 1651 edition of his *Poems*, Stanley includes a translation of the first 181 lines of Góngora's 1091-line *Soledad primera*. And from the beginning of the translation, it is evident that Stanley struggled to render the Cordoban's Spanish into English. Here is the beginning of Góngora's poem:

Era del año la estación florida,
 en que el mentido robador de Europa
 (media luna las armas du su frente,
 y el Sol todo los rayos de su pelo),
 luciente honor del cielo,
 en campos de zafiro pace estrellas,
 cuando el que ministrar podía la copa
 a Júpiter mejor que el garzón de Ida,
 náufrago, y desdeñado sobre ausente,
 lagrimosas de amor dulces querellas
 da al mar; que condolido,
 fue a las ondas, fue al viento
 el mísero gemido,
 segundo de Arión dulce instrumento.⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁸ In *Richard Crashaw and the Spanish Golden Age* (1972), R.V. Young discovers debts to Góngora in Crashaw's poetry, and Carmen Wheatley assesses the relationship between Donne and Góngora in her dissertation *Donne and Spanish Literature* (Oxford, UK: University of Oxford, 1987). Few others have attempted to understand these important literary connections.

³⁹⁹ See Warren Chernaik, "Thomas Stanley (1625-1678)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last modified September 2004, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26281>.

⁴⁰⁰ Stanley's translations include *A Spiritual Treasure Containing our Obligations to God* by Jean-Hugues Quarré, *Various Histories* by Claudius Aelianus, *Aurora Ismenia and the Prince* by Don Juan Perez de Montalvan, and *Oranta the Cyprian Virgin* by Girolamo Preti, among others. See Chernaik, "Thomas Stanley (1625-1678)."

⁴⁰¹ Luis de Góngora, *Soledades*, ed. John Beverley (Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1979), 75, 1.1-6.

In this dazzling fourteen-line periodic sentence with extreme hyperbaton and several hypotactic clauses that exhibit extended conceits, Latinate syntax, and verb elision, Góngora sets the tone for the rest of his poem. Its style is as complex and difficult as it is spectacular and astonishing. Turning to Stanley's translation, we see an immediate effort to bring clarity to the Spanish verses.

'Twas now the blooming season of the year,
 And in disguise *Europa's* Ravisher
 (His brow arm'd with a Crescent, with such beams
 Encompast, as the Sun unclouded streams
 The sparkling glory of the Zodiak!) led
 His numerous Heard, along the azure mead.
 When he, whose right to beauty might remove
 The Youth of *Ida* from the Cup of *Jove*,
 Shipwrackt, repuls'd, and absent, did complain
 Of his hard Fate and Mistresses disdain.
 With such sad sweetness, that the Winds, and Sea,
 In sighs, and murmurs, kept him company.
 And mov'd with such a charitable care,
 As once *Arion* found, a Plank prepare.⁴⁰²

In an attempt to bring order to the overflowing syntax of the Spanish, Stanley divides Góngora's fourteen-line sentence into four distinct ones, adding verbs where there were none, while

Even this admirable, recent translation of the poem by Dent-Young misses some of the more outlandish elements of the original Spanish:

It was in the season of the year's flowering
 when Europa's masked abductor
 his brow armed with the shape of a half moon,
 the whole sun figured in his stiff hide's sheen,
 Grand Master of the skies,
 comes to the azure pastures grazing stars
 that one more qualified
 than Ida's bright-eyed boy
 to keep Jove's cup supplied
 (shipwrecked, forlorn, and banished from love's presence)
 sang out his grieving to an audience of waves
 and had them on his side
 to win from the storm the same relief that once
 Arion's lyre obtained. (Góngora, *Selected Poems*, 113, 1.1-14)

⁴⁰² Thomas Stanley, *Poems*, in *Poems and Translations*, ed. Galbraith Miller Crump (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1962), 193-94, lines 1-14.

ignoring Góngora's irregular meter and rhyme by transforming the verses into a lockstep rhyming iambic pentameter. This is not to say that Stanley's verses lack complexity. The opening lines are admirable in their fidelity to and embellishment of Góngora's content and style. The essential conceits remain—Jove (*Europa's Ravisher*) *in disguise* (as a bull) and in heaven (as Taurus) whose *brow is a crescent* (moon) and whose *encompast* hair are rays of *the sun* grazes in the *azure mead* of the sky. And Stanley even expands several of Góngora's verses—*The sparkling glory of the Zodiak!*) *led* is not only a more ecstatic line that extends the earlier conceit, but the enjambed *led* also emphasizes the hypotaxis and overflowing syntax of the Spanish. One of the most fantastic lines of the original (*en campos de zafiro pace estrellas*), which extends the stellar conceit with an image of the constellation Taurus grazing on the surrounding stars, becomes even more outlandish in Stanley's English version, where Taurus is leading *his numerous Heard* (the other constellations of the zodiac) *along the azure mead*. The image of all the figures of the zodiac following Taurus along the milky way is as fantastic as it is absurd. And it proves that Stanley not only appreciated the excesses of Góngora's style, but also extended them when he could.

But as the poem continues, exhaustion seems to take hold of Stanley, and the outlandish and enigmatic features of Góngora's verses are increasingly lost. Consider Stanley's translation of this passage, in which the ocean and sun fill and drain the clothes of a shipwrecked man:

Desnudo el joven, cuanto ya el vestido
 Océano ha bebido,
 Restituir le hace a las arenas;
 Y al Sol lo extiende luego,
 Que lamiéndolo apenas
 Su dulce lengua de templado fuego,
 Lento lo embiste, y con suave estilo

La menor onda chupa al menor hilo.⁴⁰³

Disrob'd, his Garments next (from the swoln threads
Wringing the Water) he a drying spreads:
Till all the briny drops they had suckt in
The Suns warm flame lick'd gently off agen.⁴⁰⁴

Stanley's truncation of the original is immediately evident, turning eight lines into four. The English version entirely omits the fantastic image of the garment having drunk the ocean (*Océano ha bebido*). Stanley translates it simply as *swoln threads*. And in place of the marvelous conceit of the sun extending its sweet tongue of temperate fire (*su dulce lengua de templado fuego*) to lick the smallest thread with its smallest wave (*la menor onda chupa al menor hilo*), Stanley renders the last five lines as *Till all the briny drops they had suckt in / The Suns warm flame lick'd gently off agen*. The meaning is there, but the figural excess that Stanley maintained in the first lines of the poem are now lost. And this problem continues. Stanley translates the paradoxical

No bien pues de su luz horizontes,
que hacían desigual, confusamente,
montes de agua y piélagos de montes...⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰³ Góngora, *Soledades*, 77, 1.34-41.

John Dent-Young's translation of the passage:

He strips and makes his clothing
restore to the sands all
the ocean it had drunk,
then spreads it to the sun,
who licking it lightly
with the delicate fire of his sweet tongue,
assaults it gently and, with languid tread,
each last wave sucks from each least thread. (Góngora, *Selected Poems*, 115, 1.35-42)

⁴⁰⁴ Stanley, *Poems*, 194, lines 27-30.

⁴⁰⁵ Góngora, *Soledades*, 77, 1.42-44.

John Dent-Young's translation of the passage:

Hardly of the sun's golden
light had the horizons
(made ragged and confused
by liquid mountains, oceans of peaks). (Góngora, *Selected Poems*, 120, 1.43-46)

into

By this time Night began t'ungild the skies,
Hils from the Sea, Seas from the Hils arise,
Confusedly unequal....⁴⁰⁶

This translation loses the enigmatic features of the original—the *mountains of water and oceans of mountains* become *hils from the sea, seas from the hils arise*. And what was a conceptual paradox (a mountain of water) becomes a trick of perception (the hills and the sea blurring together as the sun sets). In other places, Stanley begins combining Góngora's images to the detriment of their meaning:

No en ti la ambición mora
hidrópica de viento,
ni la que su alimento
el áspid es Gitano.⁴⁰⁷

Ambitious Dropsie shuns thy wholsom air
As she who Vipers makes her onely fair.⁴⁰⁸

While *ambitious dropsie* is an ingenious formulation for the first two Spanish lines, it is difficult to see what Stanley was thinking in the second. Admittedly, these are difficult verses to translate. Even the admirable new translation by Dent-Young struggles to render Góngora's Spanish into English verse.⁴⁰⁹ For Stanley, the Spanish was clearly too complex and difficult to translate in its

⁴⁰⁶ Stanley, *Poems*, 194, lines 27-33.

⁴⁰⁷ Góngora, *Soledades*, 80, l.108-11.

A translation of the passage:

Nor in you does ambition dwell,
The thirst of wind,
Nor that which is its nourishment,
The Egyptian asp. (My translation)

⁴⁰⁸ Stanley, *Poems*, 195, lines 77-78.

⁴⁰⁹ Here is Dent-Young's translation of the passage above:

Swollen ambition
doesn't dwell here, stuffing wind,

entirety. By line 181, apparently exhausted at the prospect of finishing the *Soledad primera* (with another 916 lines to go), Stanley simply concludes “—*difficiles valet nugae*” (—farewell *difficult trifles*).⁴¹⁰

The limits of the baroque lie within us. Authors like Góngora pushed the baroque logic of excess to extraordinary heights—relishing complexities of diction, syntax, and metaphor. And while many English poets admired Góngora for his marvelous style, few ever attempted to translate him before the twentieth century. Stanley’s effort to do so (successful or not) represents a desire to imitate and promote the baroque style in seventeenth-century England. Stanley’s translation of Góngora shows us that the baroque never exhausts itself. It is humans who become exhausted by its logic of excess. And surely this is the source of both the pleasure and difficulty of the style. For those who follow Góngora’s advice “quitar la corteza y descubrir lo misterioso que encubren” (to remove the shell and discover the mystery they hide), even the most difficult baroque literature can lead to wonder.⁴¹¹ But our minds can only take so much. Like Stanley, we all have to step away from the baroque from time to time—*difficiles valet nugae!*

nor does calumny
gorging on poison. (Góngora, *Selected Poems*, 119, 1.110-13)

⁴¹⁰ Stanley, *Poems*, 197; my translation.

It seems Stanley encountered similar difficulties with Góngora’s *La fabula de Polifemo y Galatea*. A manuscript at Cambridge University Library entitled “Poems & Translations, 1646” includes a translation of the first 40 lines of *El Polifemo* (Manuscript 7514). See Stanley, 348-49.

⁴¹¹ Góngora, “Respuesta de don Luis de Góngora,” 296.

Chapter Four

Passion

Whether that which we call *Extasie*, be not dreaming with the Eyes open, I leave to be examined.

- John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*⁴¹²

⁴¹² John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, book 2, chapter 19 (London: Printed for Awnshawm and John Churchill, 1690), 112.

Excess moves the passions, and as the baroque style developed in early modern England, an interest in the passions emerged alongside it. Many authors offered new theories on the subject—Thomas Wright’s *The Passions of the Mind in General* (1604), Nicolas Coeffeteau’s *A Table of Human Passions* (1621), Robert Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), Henry More’s *Pathomachia or the Battle of Affections* (1630), Edward Reynolds’s *Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul of Man* (1640), Marin Cureau de la Chambre’s *The Characters of the Passions* (1649), Jean-Francois Senault’s *The Use of Passions* (1649), and René Descartes’ *The Passions of the Soul* (1650), among others.⁴¹³ Challenging the traditional understandings of Seneca, Galen, and Thomas Aquinas, these works constructed new concepts of the self, the political subject, and the relation between the body and soul. Some scholars have attributed this newfound interest in the passions to political unrest,⁴¹⁴ while others have connected it to the growth of early modern science.⁴¹⁵ Yet few critics have considered how these new approaches to the passions affected the development of early modern literature.

This chapter demonstrates how English authors sought to move the passions with a logic of excess. Focusing on early modern religious literature, I argue that baroque devotional poets used copious and hyperbolic figures in their verses to generate states of extraordinary passion. More specifically, I trace the development of a cross-confessional genre of baroque devotional

⁴¹³ Some of these books appeared in multiple editions, including Wright’s *The Passions of the Mind in General* (1604, 1620, 1621, and 1630), Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621, 1624, 1628, 1632, 1638, etc.), and Reynolds’s *Treatise of the Passions* (1640, 1647, 1650, etc.). This list, of course, does not account for the many other treatises that addressed the passions but not explicitly in their titles, including John Davies of Hereford’s *Microcosmos* (1603). Nor does the list include the many continental treatises on the passions known and cited by English authors, but not translated during the period, including Marin Cureau de la Chambre’s *Les Caracteres des Passions* (1640), Walter Charleton’s *Natural History of the Passions* (1674), Charles Le Brun’s *Traité des Passions* (1649), etc.

⁴¹⁴ See *Politics and the Passions, 1500-1850*, eds. Victoria Kahn, Neil Saccamano, and Daniela Coli (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

⁴¹⁵ See Ofer Gal and Raz Chen-Morris, *Baroque Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

literature on the penitent Mary Magdalene to show how English baroque writers like Joseph Beaumont and Andrew Marvell represented the Magdalene's tears with hyperbolic conceits to inspire similar tears in their readers. Building on recent scholarship by Victoria Kahn, Ofer Gal, and Raz Chen-Morris, I also show how this literary commitment to the production of passion was consistent with early modern epistemological philosophy in which the passions were critical for the discernment of truth. In the end, I reveal how Teresa of Ávila's devotional literature inspired the emergence of an English baroque poetics of ecstasy.

The Poetry of Passion

Richard Crashaw may not have given a title to his first collection of English poems, but *Steps to the Temple* (1646) is altogether fitting.⁴¹⁶ Scholars regularly note its reference to Herbert's celebrated *The Temple*,⁴¹⁷ but the *Steps* before it are rarely mentioned. Their significance, however, was not lost on Crashaw's contemporaries. The 1648 and 1670 editions of the book were published with frontispieces depicting two different images of worshipers climbing the steps of a church (see Appendices 4a and 4b). Among several important differences,⁴¹⁸ the 1670 edition places two verses of Psalm 137 at the bottom of the page: "In conspectu Angelorum psallam tibi et adorabo ad Templum sanctum tuum" (Before the Angels I

⁴¹⁶ Crashaw was abroad during the publication of the book, and it is unknown whether he gave consent for the title. The anonymous preface gives us reason to believe he may not have known the title—"Reader, we style his Sacred Poems, *Steps to the Temple*, and aptly, for in the temple of God, under his wing, he led his life in St. Mary's Church near St. Peter's College. There he lodged under Tertullian's roof of Angels; there he made his nest more gladly than David's Swallow near the house of God: where like a primitive saint, he offered more prayers in the night, than others usually offer in the day; there, he penned these poems, *Steps* for happy souls to climb heaven by" (Anon., "The Preface to the Reader," in *The English Poems of Richard Crashaw*, ed. Richard Rambuss [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013], 6).

⁴¹⁷ See Richard Rambuss, "Richard Crashaw: A Reintroduction," in *The English Poems of Richard Crashaw The English Poems of Richard Crashaw* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), xxii.

⁴¹⁸ Rambuss comments on the differences between the two images. See Rambuss, "Richard Crashaw," xxviii.

will sing to you and I will worship toward your sacred temple).⁴¹⁹ Functioning as an emblem for the book as a whole, the frontispiece draws the viewer's attention to the way in which the poems inside are not only songs to be sung, but also steps to God. "The Preface to the Reader" encourages us, "Take a poem hence, and tune thy soul by it, into a heavenly pitch, and thus refined and borne up upon the wings of meditation, in these Poems thou mayest talk freely of God, and of that other state."⁴²⁰ He claims that each foot of every poem offers a path for the soul to move upward in devotion—"every foot in a high-borne verse might help measure the soul into that better world."⁴²¹ In other words, Crashaw's poems offer steps into the temple of the Lord—"Steps for happy souls to climb heaven by."⁴²²

If Crashaw's verses are indeed steps for the soul to reach God's temple, they are paved with a logic of excess. As discussed in chapter one, the first verses of *Steps to the Temple* make this clear:

Haile Sister Springs,
Parents of Silver-forded rills!

⁴¹⁹ Psalm 137 in the Vulgate is Psalm 138 in the King James Version:

I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.
I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.
In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.
All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth.
Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord.
Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off
Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.
The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands. (*The English Bible, King James Version, The Old Testament*, ed. Herbert Marks [New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2012], 1096, Psalms 138: 1-8).

⁴²⁰ Anon., "The Preface to the Reader," 5.

Rambuss and Elise Elizabeth Duncan-Jones suggest that the anonymous author of the preface may have been Joseph Beaumont. See Rambuss, *English Poems*, 312-13 and Elise Elizabeth Duncan-Jones, "Who Was the Recipient of Crashaw's Leyden Letter?" in *New Perspectives on the Life and Art of Richard Crashaw*, ed. John Roberts (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1990), 174-79.

⁴²¹ Anon., 5.

⁴²² Anon., 6.

Ever bubbling things!
Thawing Christall! Snowy Hills!
Still spending, never spent; I meane
Thy faire Eyes sweet *Magdalene*.⁴²³

This exclamatory apostrophe to Mary Magdalene's weeping eyes, with its heavy use of internal rhyme, alliteration, and trochaic rhythms, gathers a series of natural metaphors into a shower of praise. The mostly trochaic feet of the first five lines gain speed before each line's final accented syllable, dramatizing the ecstatic emotion of each image. And these initial bursts of passion are rendered even more intense as the rhythm abruptly slows through the enjambed "I mean" into the spondaic last line, that not only resolves the poem's tumbling speed, but also its confusion of metaphoric imagery. "Thy fair eyes sweet Magdalene" offers a type of conceptual hyperbaton that surprises the listener in the last line.⁴²⁴ If each foot of poetry in *Steps to the Temple* constitutes a step for our minds, the first steps of Crashaw's book explode with passion.

In his seminal work on early modern religious lyric,⁴²⁵ Louis Martz understands poems like Crashaw's "Weeper" as forms of religious meditation. By resituating the poetic tradition of Donne, Herbert, and Crashaw within the broader religious tradition of meditation, Martz argues that verse composition offered English poets a means to structure "the senses, the emotions, and the intellectual faculties" for devotional practices.⁴²⁶ Quoting D.H. Lawrence, Martz explains that such poetic "meditation was a discipline directed toward creating the 'act of pure attention..."

⁴²³ Richard Crashaw, "The Weeper," in Richard Crashaw, *The Complete Poetry of Richard Crashaw*, ed. and trans. George Walton Williams (New York: New York University Press, 1972), 123, lines 1-6.

⁴²⁴ Crashaw, 123, line 6.

⁴²⁵ See Louis Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation: A Study in English Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954).

⁴²⁶ Martz, 1.

you choose that object to concentrate upon which will best focus your consciousness.”⁴²⁷ And he understands this poetic practice of meditation to be cross-confessional: “The realm of meditation is broad enough to hold Jesuit and Puritan, Donne and Milton, the baroque extravagance of Crashaw and the delicate restraint of Herbert.”⁴²⁸ But over the last half-century, few critics have agreed with Martz on this point. Indeed, most scholarship on seventeenth-century devotional poetry has sought to restrict poetic practice by confessional identity—Barbara Lewalski’s *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (1979) being the most significant response to Martz. But recently, David Marno’s *Death Be Not Proud: The Art of Holy Attention* (2016) has encouraged critics to return to Martz’s original project. Marno writes, “Martz’s *The Poetry of Meditation* could have been a turning point in the scholarship on early modern devotional poetry; it could have led to further thinking about the nature of religious actions and their relationship to doctrine.”⁴²⁹ Instead, scholarship has been bogged down in debates over confessional alliance. “If in Martz’s *Poetry of Meditation* Donne and his contemporaries appear as exercitants of Catholic spiritual meditations, in Lewalski’s *Protestant Poetics* they are often reduced to spokespeople for Protestant doctrine.”⁴³⁰ Marno’s book goes a long way toward dispelling these confessional biases by focusing on the way Donne’s *Holy Sonnets* are poems of undistracted meditation that focus thought and create the conditions for what he calls holy attention. But such ascetic attention was not the only goal of devotional poetry in the seventeenth century. Some poets, including Donne himself, sought to produce excessive

⁴²⁷ Martz, 67, internal quote from Lawrence, D.H. *Etruscan Places* (London: Martin Secker, 1932), 97-99, quoted in William T. Noon, *Poetry and Prayer* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1967), 39.

⁴²⁸ Martz, 3-4.

⁴²⁹ David Marno, *Death Be Not Proud: The Art of Holy Attention* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 30.

⁴³⁰ Marno, 31.

states of passion in their readers. And they did so not by focusing thought, but by expanding it to excess.

The spiritual and artistic uses of passion during the period are most often associated with the Jesuits and their devotional focus on the senses.⁴³¹ Jeffrey Smith writes that “Ignatius was first and foremost a sensualist, in that he clearly recognized that one should utilize all of one’s capabilities when attempting to understand God. This included the five senses.”⁴³² In the famous *compositio loci* of the “*Quantum Exercitum de Inferno*,” Ignatius includes these five *puncta* corresponding to each of the five senses:

Punctum primum est, spectare per imaginationem vasta inferorum incendia, & animas igneis quibusdam corporibus, velut ergastulis, inclusas.

Secundum, audire imaginariè planctus, eiulatus, vociferationes, atque blasphemias in Christum, & Sanctos eius illinc erumpentes.

Tertium, imaginario etiam olfactu sumum, sulphur, & sentinae cuiusdam, seu fecis, atque putredinis gravveolentiam persentire.

Quartum, gustare similiter res amarissimas, ut lachrymas, rancorem, conscientiaeque vermen.

⁴³¹ Of course, the devotional uses of passion are at least as old as the Hebrew scriptures. The Psalms are full of passionate complaints: “O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee” (*English Bible, Old Testament*, 1046, Psalms 88:1). “Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord” (*English Bible, Old Testament*, 1091, Psalms 130:1). “I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land” (*English Bible, Old Testament*, 1100, Psalms 143:6). The Lamentations of Jeremiah are similarly full of sorrow: “She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks” (*English Bible, Old Testament*, 1419, Lamentations of Jeremiah 1:2). “Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger” (*English Bible, Old Testament*, Lamentations of Jeremiah, 1420, 1:12). To be sure, the Hebrew Bible was a major source of passionate imagery from which English devotional poets could draw, and many, including Richard Crashaw, Henry Vaughan, and John Milton, published translations of the Hebrew into English (see Philip Von Rohr Sauer, *English Metrical Psalms from 1600 to 1660: A Study in the Religious and Aesthetic Tendencies of that Period* [Freiburg: Universitätsdruckerei Poppen & Ortmann, 1938]). Passion is also central to the Gospels. The Passion of Christ remains the paramount subject of artistic expression during the early modern period, serving as the quintessential model of devotional passion. In Luke 22:44, Jesus suffers to the point of sweating blood: “his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (*The English Bible, King James Version, The New Testament and the Apocrypha*, eds. Gerald Hammond and Austin Busch [New York: Norton, 2012], 183, Luke 22:44). In Mark 15:34, he offers a passionate complaint to God: “Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (*English Bible, New Testament*, 121, Mark 15:34). In Matthew 27:50, “Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit” (*English Bible, New Testament*, 74, Matthew 27:50). And John 11:35, “Jesus wept” (*English Bible, New Testament*, 219, John 11:35).

⁴³² Jeffrey Smith, *Sensuous Worship: Jesuits and the Art of the Early Catholic Reformation in Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 35.

Quintum, tangere quodammodo ignes illos, quorum tactu animae ipsae amburuntur.⁴³³

[*The First Point* will be to see with the eyes of the imagination the huge fires and, so to speak, the souls within the bodies full of fire.

The Second Point. In my imagination I will hear the wailing, the shrieking, the cries, and the blasphemies against our Lord and all his saints.

The Third Point. By my sense of smell I will perceive the smoke, the sulphur, the filth, and the rotting things.

The Fourth Point. By my sense of taste I will experience the bitter flavors of hell: tears, sadness, and the worm of conscience.

The Fifth Point. By my sense of touch, I will feel how the flames touch the souls and burn them.]⁴³⁴

Building on the meditative programs of remembrance and imagination of Pseudo-Bonaventura, Ludolf of Saxony, Thomas Aquinas, and others, Ignatius sought to establish a method for making meditations on scripture more present to the exercitant by moving the passions—“discurrendum erit per officium intellectus, circa haec pensiculatus, necnon concitandis simul voluntatis affectionibus acius insistendum” (one should roam around these points more thoughtfully through the working of the intellect, and also pursue them more vigorously at the same time by stirring up the passions with the will).⁴³⁵ And while these *puncta* served as the

⁴³³ Saint Ignatius de Loyola, *Exercitia spiritualia, editio quinta* (Rome: Bernardus Morini, 1854), 49.

Smith, Martz, and Warren cite this exercise as an example of the Jesuit focus on the sensuality. See Smith's *Sensuous Worship* (2002), Martz's *The Poetry of Meditation* (1954), and Warren's *Richard Crashaw: A Study in Baroque Sensibility* (1957).

⁴³⁴ Saint Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary*, ed. and trans. George E. Ganss, S.J. (St. Louis, MO: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992), 46-47.

⁴³⁵ Ignatius, *Exercitia*, 42; my translation.

The theological contexts in which Ignatius constructed his meditative program is explained by Smith, *Sensuous Worship*, 36-38.

This preoccupation with the passions often caused anxiety about the potential use for manipulation. As early as 1614, “the famed anti-Jesuit tract *Monita secreta*... showed how the Jesuits used sumptuous chapel decoration to entrap rich widows by appealing to their sensuality.” Such negative ideas led to the nineteenth-century invention of *Jesuitenstil* which “referred to the Jesuits’ excessive use of ornamentation and illusion to manipulate the masses” (Gauvin Alexander Bailey, “‘Le style jésuite n’existe pas’: Jesuit Corporate Culture and the Visual Arts,” in Vol. 1 of *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540-1773*, eds. John O’Malley, Gauvin Alexander Bailey, et al. [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000], 40). The association of the Jesuits with the use of art to manipulate the passions, particularly to overcome reason, pervades nineteenth and twentieth century criticism. Indeed, they are often still understood as central to a counter-reformation program of appealing directly to the senses to attract followers.

official Jesuit method of constructing sensual meditations that moved both the intellect and the affects, art played a central role in the practice from the beginning. Ignatius himself was said to have used pictures for meditation, and he even “ordered [Jerónimo] Nadal to author an illustrated book of gospel meditations.”⁴³⁶ This book—Nadal’s *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia*—contributed to the growing importance of *images* to devotional meditation during the seventeenth century. Walter Melion explains how these images were theologically justified as incarnations of God in art:

As codified by Jerónimo Nadal and other Jesuit theologians, incarnation doctrine celebrates the omnipotence of the *Deus Artifex* who fashioned Christ Jesus, the divinely human *imago Dei*, and thereby translated his incarnate person and Holy Name into *imagines* newly discernible to human senses, hearts, and minds. Construed as an act of divine image-making, the Incarnation licenses the production of further sacred images *ad imitationem Christi*.⁴³⁷

The construction of these images served to motivate the passions for sacred devotion. Whether by imagination or art, the Jesuits inaugurated a meditative tradition in the sixteenth century that aimed at moving all the senses in a devotional practice full of passion, and the English were aware of it.

English Jesuits promoted these practices during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In *The Overthrow of the Protestants Pulpit-Babels* (1612), John Floyd encourages this meditative practice “much used by Iesuites, as doth appeare by their bookes, which is called by them *applicatio sensuum*, an applying of the internall senses of the soule, to the mysteries of Christs life.”⁴³⁸ Floyd explains that when Jesuits use this method of meditation,

⁴³⁶ Smith, *Sensuous Worship*, 40–41.

⁴³⁷ Walter Melion, “Introduction: The Jesuit Engagement with the Status and Functions of the Visual Image,” in *Jesuit Image Theory*, eds. Wietse de Boer, Karl Enenkel, and Walter Melion (Boston: Brill, 2016), 4.

⁴³⁸ John Floyd, *The Overthrow of the Protestants Pulpit-Babels* (St. Omer: English College Press, 1612), 43.

they do imagine themselves to be in Bethleem, or Nazareth, and there behould with the eyes of their mind, that venerable, & amiable child in his Virgin mothers armes, to heare with their eares the words that passe betwixt them, to tast, smell, and feele internally the things that are objects of these senses, as far as they may serve to awake devotion, and stir up a lively apprehension of the mystery in their harts....⁴³⁹

Imagining the presence of Christ in the flesh is critical to loving him: “[F]or how can they lively apprehend love, and imbrace Christ as dying upon the Cross for their cause, if they may not conceive, or apprehend him as a mortall man?”⁴⁴⁰ And although the *application of the senses* originated as a Jesuit devotional practice, similar exercises were quickly adopted by protestants as well.

The influence of Jesuit devotional practices on protestants in early modern England should not be underestimated. Jesuit books like Luis de Granada’s *Of Prayer and Meditation* (1554), Robert Persons’s *A Christian Directorie* (1585), Robert Southwell’s *Saint Peter’s Complaint* (1595), and François de Sales’ *Introduction to a Devout Life* (1609) were among the most printed books in early modern England.⁴⁴¹ Moreover, James Keenan has recently

⁴³⁹ Floyd, 43.

⁴⁴⁰ Floyd, 45.

⁴⁴¹ See Luis de Granada, *Of prayer and meditation* (London: Printed for Thomas Gosson and Iohn Perin, 1592); Luis de Granada, *Of prayer and meditation* (London: Printed for Thomas Gosson and Richard Smith, 1596); Luis de Granada, *Of prayer and meditation* (London: Printed by P. Short for William Wood, 1599); Luis de Granada, *Of prayer and meditation* (London: I.R. for Edward White, 1602); Luis de Granada, *Of prayer and meditation* (London: Printed by W.I. for Edward White, 1611); Luis de Granada, *Granada’s meditations* (London: Printed by Ed. Allyle, 1623); Robert Persons, *The second part of the booke of Christian exercise, Or A Christian directorie* (London: Printed by Iohn Charlewood for Simon Waterson, 1591); Robert Persons, *The second part of the booke of Christian exercise, Or A Christian directorie* (London: Printed by I. Robert for Simon Waterson, 1599); Robert Persons, *The second part of the booke of Christian exercise, Or A Christian directorie* (London: Printed by I. Robert for Simon Waterson, 1601); Robert Persons, *The second part of the booke of Christian exercise, Or A Christian directorie* (London: Printed by W. Iaggard for Simon Waterson, 1619); Robert Persons, *The second part of the booke of Christian exercise, or, A Christian directorie* (London: Printed by A.M. for Simon Waterson, 1631); Robert Persons, *A Christian directorie* (London: 1650); Robert Southwell, *Saint Peters complaint, with other poems* (London, Printed by Iohn Wolfe, 1595); Robert Southwell, *Saint Peters complaynt with other poems* (London: Printed by I.R. for G.C., 1597); Robert Southwell, *Saint Peters complaint with other poems* (London: Printed by I.R. for G.C., 1599); Robert Southwell, *Saint Peters complaint Newlie augmented with other poems* (London: Printed by I.R. for G.C., 1602); Robert Southwell, *Saint Peters complaint newly augmented with other poems* (London: Printed by W. Stansby for William Barret, 1615); François de Sales, *An introduction to a deuout life* (London: Printed by Nicholas Okes for Walter Burre, 1616); and many other editions of these texts. English editions of François de Sales’ book

demonstrated how Catholic devotional treatises influenced the development of English protestant practices focused on moving the affects.⁴⁴² Keenan points to the importance of Persons's treatise in particular, which was "puritanized" by Edmund Bunny and published in "forty-seven editions between 1584 and 1640, and had about twice the sales of either of the two great Puritan classics, Arthur Dent's *The Plaine Man's Pathway to Heaven* and William Perkins's *The Foundation of Christian Religion*."⁴⁴³ The first part of Persons's treatise offers "the opportunity of undergoing the same conversion experience that an exercitant encounters during the First Week of those Ignatian Exercises."⁴⁴⁴ Keenan shows how texts like Persons's translated the meditative program of the Jesuits into protestant England as early as the 1580s. And these methods, including *applicatio sensuum*, only increased in popularity during the first decades of the seventeenth century.

Jesuit influences aside, the passions already played an important role in the development of the reformed tradition itself. Richard Strier argues that the passions were fundamental to Martin Luther and the Reformation, claiming "that both the humanist and the Reformation traditions provided powerful defenses of the validity and even the desirability of ordinary human emotions and passions."⁴⁴⁵ Moreover, the countless translations of the Psalms "with all their passionate complaints to and rebukes of God, were made easily available—in every European

were printed in Paris, Saint-Omer, Rouen, and Dublin and was so controversial in England that the King ordered copies of it burned in 1637—see *By the King. A proclamation for calling in a book, entituled, An introduction to a deuout life; and that the same be publikely burnt* (London: Printed by Robert Barker, 1637).

⁴⁴² See James F. Keenan, S.J., "Jesuit Casuistry or Jesuit Spirituality? The Roots of Seventeenth-Century British Puritan Practical Divinity," in Vol. 1 of *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540-1773*, eds. John O'Malley, Gauvin Alexander Bailey, et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

⁴⁴³ Keenan, 630.

⁴⁴⁴ Keenan, 631.

⁴⁴⁵ Richard Strier, "Against the Rule of Reason: Praise of Passion from Petrarch to Luther to Shakespeare to Herbert," in *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion*, eds. Gail Kern Paster, Katherine Rowe, and Mary Floyd-Wilson (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 32.

vernacular (and in print)—as models of piety.”⁴⁴⁶ Strier points to Calvin in particular as a model for the Reformed tradition’s attack on Neo-Stoicism. Calvin condemns the “new Stoics, who count it depraved not only to groan and weep but also to be sad and care-ridden.”⁴⁴⁷ He continues, “[O]ur Lord and Master has condemned not only by His word, but also by His example. For He groaned and wept over both his own and others misfortunes. And he taught his disciples the same way.”⁴⁴⁸ The Psalms, the Book of Jeremiah, and the Gospels are full of passionate complaints and Calvin presents them as sacred precisely because of their emotional excess. By the late sixteenth century, both Reformed and Catholic worshipers across Europe were committed to moving the passions toward the love of God. Passion was a cross-confessional interest in early modern Europe.

In *Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul of Man* (1640), published in at least five editions between 1640 and 1660, the Presbyterian minister Edward Reynolds offered an entire treatise on the passions. He writes,

Passions are nothing else, but those naturall, perfective, and unstrained motions of the Creatures unto that advancement of their Natures, which they are by the Wisdome, Power, and Providence of their Creator... ordained to receive... by a regular inclination to those objects, whose goodnesse beareth a naturall conveniencie or vertu of satisfaction unto them; or by an antipathie and aversation from those, which bearing a contrarietie to the good they desire, must needs be noxious and destructive, and by consequent, odious to their natures.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁶ Strier, 31.

⁴⁴⁷ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 2.8.10, quoted in Strier, “Against Reason,” 32.

⁴⁴⁸ Calvin, 32.

⁴⁴⁹ Edward Reynolds, *Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul of Man* (London: R. Hearne and John Norton for Robert Bostock, 1640), 31-32.

Reynolds continues, “This being the propertie of all unconstrained selfe motions, it followeth, that the root and ground of all Passions, is principally the good; and secondarily, or by consequent, the evill of things: as one beareth with it rationem convenientiae, a quieting and satisfactorie; the other, rationem disconvenienti, a disturbing and destroying nature” (Reynolds, 32).

Like Descartes and Baruch Spinoza after him, Reynolds places passion at the heart of his ethical program. The passions are the natural and God-given force within souls that move them toward the good and away from the bad. Reynolds claims that “they are the sharpeners... [and] the Whetstone of Vertue, which make it more operative and fruitfull.”⁴⁵⁰ Like Ignatius and the Jesuit authors before him, Reynolds believed in the necessity of finding a method for directing these passions—these sharpeners of virtue—toward the love and service of God.

Just as the Jesuits relied on *applicatio sensuum* in meditation, Reynolds encourages the use of the imagination to direct the passions.⁴⁵¹ He argues that it is much better to move the passions by fancy than by reason: “[T]he first reformers and drawers of men into Civill societie and the practise of Vertue, wrought upon the Will by the ministrie rather of the Fancie, than of rigid Reason.”⁴⁵² In particular, he believed this reformation of the Will by Fancy “was done by those Musicall, Poeticall, and Mythologicall perswasions; whereby men in their discourses... [gave] unto spirituall things Bodies and Beauties, such as might best affect the Imagination.”⁴⁵³ Music, poetry, and myth offer the means to direct the passions to virtue because they have “a kind of delightfull libertie in them, wherewith they refresh and doe as it were open and unbind

⁴⁵⁰ Reynolds, 58.

⁴⁵¹ He argues against the Neo-Stoics who would regulate the passions: “Those imputations therefore which *Tully* and *Seneca*, and other Stoicall Philosophers make against Passions, are but light and emptie, when they call them diseases and perturbations of the Mind; which requireth in all its actions both health and serenitie, a strong and a cleare judgement; both which properties, they say, are impaired by the distempers of Passion: For it is absurd to thinke, that all manner of rest is either healthfull or cleare; or on the other side, all motion diseased and troublesome: for what water more sweet than that of a Spring, or what more thick or lothsome, than that which standeth in a puddle, corrupting it selfe. As in the Wind Seas, (to which two, Passions are commonly compar'd) a middle temper betweene a quiet Calme and a violent Tempest, is most serviceable for the passage betweene Countreyes; so the agitations of Passion, as long as they serve onely to drive forward, but not to drowne Vertue; as long as they keepe their dependance on Reason, and run onely in that Channell wherewith they are thereby bounded, are of excellent service, in all the travaile of mans life, and such as without which, the growth, successe, and dispatch of Vertue would be much impaired” (Reynolds, 59-60).

⁴⁵² Reynolds, 20.

⁴⁵³ Reynolds, 21.

the Thoughts, which otherwise, by a continuall pressure in exacter and more massie reasonings, would easily tyre and despaire.”⁴⁵⁴ To be sure, the Protestant minister Reynolds advocated for imaginatively moving the passions as much as any Jesuit priest did.

Devotional treatises like this one by Reynolds offer us a new way to understand English devotional poetry. Rather than a poetics of meditation that encourages deliberate and attentive reflection, Reynolds promotes a poetry of passion. And he does so because the passions prove far “more operative and fruitfull” than thought and reason alone.⁴⁵⁵ To illustrate the difference between this poetry of passion and what Martz and Marno call the poetry of meditation, compare the first stanza of Donne’s sonnet “This is my Playes last Scene” with a passage from Crashaw’s “Death’s Lecture at the Funeral of a Young Gentleman.” While both poems offer images of death, their styles diverge in critical ways that reveal their devotional methods. Donne’s poem begins,

This is my play’s last scene; here heavens appoint
My pilgrimage’s last mile; and my race,
Idly, yet quickly run, hath this last pace,
My span’s last inch, my minute’s latest point.⁴⁵⁶

The proliferation of metaphors in the first four lines may tempt us to read the poem as an expression of the baroque style. But as Marno correctly claims, the metaphors work to diminish the imaginative potential of the poem.

Donne uses poetic devices to strip attention from all images, from all content, and indeed, by the last line, from all extension, spatial and temporal.... The function of language and poetry here is not to create an internal reference and help the reader imagine it, but to

⁴⁵⁴ Reynolds, 22.

⁴⁵⁵ Reynolds, 58.

⁴⁵⁶ John Donne, *The Holy Sonnets*, in Vol. 7, Part 1 of *Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*, eds. Gary Stringer, Paul Parrish, Ted-Larry Pebworth (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 13, lines 1-4.

systematically manipulate and finally entrap the reader's attention in order to offer a momentary experience of undistractedness.⁴⁵⁷

Marno suggests that what Martz understood to be an Ignatian example of *compositio loci* proves more accurately to be an example of Ignatius' own warning against the privileging of visualization. He claims that Donne "relies on the technique of *compositio loci* only in order to use the technique against itself, as it were... Donne's poem begins as an exercise in imagining death only to move toward thinking the last moment of the self without imposing any images on it."⁴⁵⁸ Donne may use metaphors and conceits in his poems, but they are often used to convey a theological idea in a more comprehensible, undistracted way. Here, Donne is offering a meditation on death, and his principle concern is to offer a better understanding of that final moment—*my minute's latest point*—without distraction, in a state of holy attention.

In Crashaw's "Death's Lecture at the Funeral of a Young Gentleman," we confront a different image of death. The poem begins with an apostrophe to a dead body ("Dear relics of a dislodged soul"), after which the author summons an audience:

Come then youth, beauty, and blood!
All ye soft pow'rs,
Whose silken flatteries swell a few fond hours
Into a false eternity. Come man;
Hyperbolized nothing! know thy span;
Take thine own measure here: down, down, and bow
Before thyself in thy idea; thou
Huge emptiness! contract thyself; and shrink
All thy wild circle to a point. O sink
Lower and lower yet; till thy small size
Call heav'n to look on thee with narrow eyes.
Lesser and lesser yet; till thou begin
To show a face, fit to confess thy kin,
Thy neighborhood to nothing.
Proud looks, and lofty eyelids, here put on
Yourselves in your unfeigned reflection,

⁴⁵⁷ Marno, *Death Be Not Proud*, 115.

⁴⁵⁸ Marno, 116.

Here, gallant ladies! this impartial glass
(Though you be painted) shows you your true face.⁴⁵⁹

While Donne aims for measured understanding with his metaphors of spatial and temporal reduction (*My pilgrimage's last mile, this last pace, My span's last inch, my minute's latest point*), Crashaw's verses fly past the mark to create surprise and passion. The body endlessly shrinks to an infinitesimally small point (*till thy small size / Call heav'n to look on thee with narrow eyes*) at which point the body shrinks even further until it begins *To show a face, fit to confess thy kin, / Thy neighborhood to nothing*. Donne's *point* reduces and concentrates "the last moment of the self without imposing any images on it," while Crashaw's *point* expands and distracts death into a *face* with *proud looks, and lofty eyelids*. How, in the end, should death be imagined? How can it be imagined? How can nothing show a face? Crashaw's point is at once more visual and enigmatic than Donne's. The living body—makeup and all—is always already dead.

If Donne's poem exemplifies a poetry of meditation, Crashaw's poem exemplifies a baroque poetry of passion. The one uses imagery to focus the reader in "a momentary experience of undistracted" or holy attention.⁴⁶⁰ The other uses imagery to surprise the reader in a momentary experience of holy passion. Crashaw's paradoxical conclusion, clothed in elaborate metaphors, distracts rather than focuses the reader's attention. His poetry is intentionally enigmatic because such a departure from reason enhances the potential for passion. Indeed, Crashaw's poem seems entirely antithetical to reason—how could we who live be already dead?

⁴⁵⁹ Richard Crashaw, "Death's Lecture at the Funeral of a Young Gentleman," in *The English Poems of Richard Crashaw*, ed. Richard Rambuss (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 256, lines 7-24.

⁴⁶⁰ Marno, *Death Be Not Proud*, 115.

Crashaw's paradoxes, hyperboles, and exclamations all combine into an excessive evocation of passion. To be sure, baroque excess is ideal for cultivating a passionate response in readers.

Joseph Beaumont's poem "Suspirium" emphasizes the differences between the poetry of holy attention and the poetry of passion. The poem begins with a complaint to God in which the speaker strives to conjure tears:

This weary world can nothing show
To court an Heart, & make it grow
In love with any thing below.

So speaks a generous Soul. But I
Faint as I am, & weak do lie
Striving, alas, to *Think*, & *Crie*.⁴⁶¹

While the speaker's desire to both think and cry may seem paradoxical, the purpose of thought in the Ignatian tradition is to stir the passions. For Beaumont, thinking can help the reader cry. But what kind of thinking? The next stanzas of the poem lament the endless distractions of the mind and how they prevent meaning from forming:

I *think* a thousand thoughts a day,
Yet think not one: each doth betray
It selfe, & halfe-made flyes away.

I *think* of Heav'n, I *think* of Hell,
Of what both heer & there doth dwell:
Yet what I *think* I cannot tell.⁴⁶²

At first, these verses seem to express the desires of a poetics of holy attention, but as the poem progresses, it becomes clear that ascetic focus is not the goal. In the middle of the poem, the speaker expresses a glimpse of hope:

⁴⁶¹ Beaumont, "Suspirium," 1, lines 4-9.

⁴⁶² Beaumont, "Suspirium," 1, lines 10-15.

Me thinks I feele my pregnant eyes
Oft times with full-tide sorrow rise;
But straight ye living fountaine dies.⁴⁶³

In the first half of the poem, although the speaker cannot control his thoughts, he is nonetheless the agent of his thinking. *I think a thousand thoughts a day. I think of Heav'n. I think of Hell.* But now, the speaker thinks in a different way. *Me thinks I feele.* The thinking is now rendered in a passive construction, and the feeling in an active one. Agency belongs to the passions which direct the speaker's thinking. *Me thinks I feele.* The soul feels the passions moving thought and *a full-tide sorrow rises.* Only to die again. But the poem has now changed course in the wake of that rising tide. Those four words—*Me thinks I feel*—are a hinge in the poem that open the door to a long series of stanzas with hyperbolic figures all describing the speaker's unrequited desire to cry:

But if more mire is lodgd in me
Then in ye bottom of ye Sea,
Why flow not I, as well as shee?

Sometimes I feele ye Storme arise
In swelling sighs; yet out it flies,
And drives no Clouds into mine eyes
.....
Marble that cold obdurate stone
Abounds with Teares, whilst I have none,
Though of ye same complexion.⁴⁶⁴

These conceits about the speaker's inability to be moved are, paradoxically, the most moving of the poem. As conceit builds on conceit, the hyperbolic images move the soul to feel and to cry.

These waves of metaphors culminate in a final plea to God:

Broach Thou dear Lord my Springs for me,
That all their streames may run to Thee,
And in thy Bottle treasur'd bee.

⁴⁶³ Beaumont, 2, lines 31-33.

⁴⁶⁴ Beaumont, 2, lines 40-46, 50-2.

For Thee I thirst more then for Them,
But if Thou steer'st me through this stream
To Thee ye easier shall I swimm.⁴⁶⁵

The speaker calls on God with a sigh, a *suspirium*—literally a breath from below—to move his passions to cry. Tears become the means to worship God. For Beaumont, it is not the process of ascetic meditation or the clarity of a theological concept that allows the soul to reach God, but tears—the watery signs of passion. If thought plays any role at the end of the poem, it is in the service of moving the soul to feel such passion. Baroque devotional poetry marshals the full power of figural excess to evoke not thought, but passion—that breath from below.

Mary Magdalene and the Poetics of Tears

The penitent Mary Magdalene was a favorite subject of baroque art and literature, not only because the stories of her life encouraged the hyperbolic representation of passion, but also because her tears offered a sacred model to imitate.⁴⁶⁶ In *Marie Magdalen's Funeral Tears* (1591), a foundational text both for the literature of tears and the English baroque style,⁴⁶⁷ Robert Southwell explains his choice of subject:

⁴⁶⁵ Beaumont, 3, lines 59-64.

⁴⁶⁶ English baroque poems about Mary Magdalene include Robert Southwell, "Mary Magdalen's Blushe" and "Mary Magdalen's Complaint at Christ's Death"; John Donne, "To the Lady Magdalen Herbert: of St. Mary's Magdalen"; Richard Crashaw, *The Weeper*; Joseph Beaumont, "S. Mary Magdalen's Ointment"; Henry Vaughan, "St. Mary Magdalen," Andrew Marvell, "Eyes and Tears"; Eldred Revett, "Marie her ointment"; etc.

Baroque paintings include Caravaggio's *Maddalena in estasi* (1606) and *Repentant Madalene* (ca. 1594-95); Peter Paul Rubens's *Maddalena in estasi* (1619); Artemisia Gentileschi's *S.M. Magdalen* (ca. 1620); Anthony Van Dyck's *Saint Mary Magdalene Mourning* (ca. 1620), *The Penitent Mary Magdalene* (ca. 1620-35), and *Maria Magdalena*; Guido Reni's *La Maddalena penitente* (ca. 1635); Georges de La Tour's *La Madeleine repentante* (ca. 1635-40), *La Madeleine à la veilleuse* (ca. 1640) and *La Madeleine à les deux veilleuses*; Mateo Cerezo's *La Madeleine repentante* (1661); and many others. See Ingrid Maisch, "The Penitent Magdalene: A Symbol of the Baroque Era," in *Mary Magdalene: The Image of a Woman Through the Centuries*, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996).

⁴⁶⁷ Although Southwell is often ostracized from the history of English literature as a Catholic anomaly, his works were some of the most popular publications of the 1590s, and new editions continued to be released throughout the

[A]mong other glorious examples of this Saints life, I haue made choise of her Funeral Tears, in which as shee most vttered the great vehemency of her feruent loue to Christ, so hath shee giuen therein largest scope to dilate vpon the same: a theame pleasing I hope vnto your self, and fittest for this time. For as passion, and especially this of loue, is in these daies the chiefe commaunder of moste mens actions, & the Idol to which both tongues and pennes doe sacrifice their ill bestowed labours: so is there nothing nowe more needefull to bee intreated, then how to direct these humors vnto their due courses, and to draw this floud of affections into the righte chanel.⁴⁶⁸

The penitent Magdalene was both an object of passionate devotion and an example for how to direct the passions toward God. Southwell confesses, “Passions I allow, and loues I approue, onely I would wishe that men would alter their obiect and better their intent.”⁴⁶⁹ For when the object is divine, “the excesse cannot be faultic.”⁴⁷⁰ Indeed, for passions associated with the love of God, excess is not only permitted but encouraged.

One of the goals of Southwell’s book is to offer contemporary English poets a new topos for the production of passionate poetry. He writes, “[S]ith the finest wits are now giuen to write passionat discourses, I would wish them to make choise of such passions, as it neither should be shame to vtter, nor sinne to feelee.”⁴⁷¹ And he hopes that his book on the Magdalene “may wooe some skilfuller pennes from vnworthy labours, eyther to supply in this matter my want of ability,

seventeenth century. According to William Drummond of Hawthornden, even Ben Jonson admired Southwell’s poetry. Jonson was reported to have confessed that though “Southwell was hanged, yet so he had written that piece of his *The Burning Babe* he would have been content to destroy many of his” (Ben Jonson, *Works*, eds. C. H. Herford and P. and E. Simpson, Vol. 1 [Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1925], 137, quoted in Anne R. Sweeney, *Robert Southwell: Snow in Arcadia: Redrawing the English Lyric Landscape, 1586-95* [Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2006], 1). Joseph Gibaldi understands Southwell’s *Marie Magdalen’s Funeral Tears* as part of a broader genre called the “literature of tears” (Joseph Gibaldi, *The Baroque Muse: Mary Magdalene in European Literature, 1500 to 1700*, dissertation [NYU: 1973], 251, 337). For the French context of the genre, see Sheila Bayne’s *Tears and Weeping: An Aspect of Emotional Climate Reflected in Seventeenth-Century French Literature* (Paris: Études littéraires francaises, 1981).

⁴⁶⁸ Robert Southwell, “To the worshipfull and virtuous Gentlewoman, *Mistres D. A.*,” in *Marie Magdalen’s Funeral Tears* (London: J.W. for G.C, 1591), 1-2.

⁴⁶⁹ Southwell, ii.

⁴⁷⁰ Southwell, “To the Reader,” in *Funeral Tears*, xii.

⁴⁷¹ Southwell, “To *Mistres D.A.*,” in *Funeral Tears*, vii.

or in other of like piety, (wherof the scripture is full) to exercise their happier talents.”⁴⁷²

Southwell offers early modern poets a new model of devotional poetry and license to express excessive passion in verse. As if to demonstrate the potential for passionate poetry about the penitent Magdalene, Southwell fills his book with hyperbolic conceits of the saint. He describes the Magdalene’s eyes as “too mighty oratours” and “the Cellers of Angels.”⁴⁷³ He describes her tears as “rather oile then water to her flame,” “a Sea of cares,” “sweetest wines,” and the “dew of deuotion.”⁴⁷⁴ And in the following passage, Southwell anticipates many of the most outlandish metaphors of the English baroque:

Heauen would weepe at the losse of so pretious a water, and earth lament the absence of so fruitfull showers. No no, the Angels must still bathe themselues in the pure streams of thy eies, and thy face shall still bee set with this liquid pearle that as out of thy teares, were stroken the first sparkes of thy Lordes loue, so thy teares may be the oyle, to nourishe and feede his flame. Till death damme vp the springs, they shall never cease running: and then shal thy soule be ferried in them to the harbour of life....⁴⁷⁵

This series of hyperbolic images is one of the first expressions of the English baroque and, as Southwell intended, this passage encouraged future English poets to write in the style.⁴⁷⁶ John Donne, Richard Crashaw, Joseph Beaumont, Andrew Marvell, Eldred Revett, Henry Vaughan,

⁴⁷² Southwell, vii.

⁴⁷³ Southwell, *Funeral Tears*, 55v.

⁴⁷⁴ Southwell, 4r, 4v, 55v, 56r.

⁴⁷⁵ Southwell, 56v.

⁴⁷⁶ William Crashaw—Richard Crashaw’s father—wrote polemical treatises against Southwell and other English Jesuit writers, and critics have suggested that it is likely that the younger Crashaw became familiar with Southwell’s style through his father’s library and writings. See Austin Warren, *Richard Crashaw: A Study in Baroque Sensibility* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1957) and Ruth Wallerstein, *Richard Crashaw: A Study in Style and Poetic Development* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1935).

and many other English poets composed poems on the Magdalene in the decades to follow—poems that passionately praise the saint and her tears with copious hyperbolic figures.⁴⁷⁷

Baroque authors understood hyperbolic figures to be well suited to the poetics of passion, since they amplify the poetic subject and generate wonder in the reader. In *Il cannocchiale aristotelico* (1654), Emanuele Tesauro theorizes the baroque approach to metaphor and highlights hyperbole as particularly important. Indeed, he argues that hyperbole is the best metaphor for achieving *meraviglia* (astonishment or wonder). Grouping hyperbole and hypotyposis together as two forms of *absolute metaphor*, he distinguishes hyperbole as a “Metafora differente assai dalla *Hipotiposi*: percoiche la Hipotiposi fà la sua forza nell’*auuiuar* l’Obietto; & questa nell’*Ingrandirlo*. Quella nel generar chiarezza: & questa, marauiglia” (metaphor is very different from hypotyposis because hypotyposis generates its force by enlivening the object and metaphor does so by aggrandizing it—the one by creating clarity, the other wonder).⁴⁷⁸ Tesauro goes on to offer many examples of how to generate such wonder with simple hyperboles. For example,

Se tu chiami l’Amore vn FVUOCO: volendolo esaggerare, puoi tu per SIMPLICE HIPERBOLE, chiamarlo vna *Fornace portatile*. Vna *Face di Megera*, e non d’Amore. Vn *Fulmine di Cupidine*. Vn’ *Impressione ignita*. Vna *Bomba animata*. Vn *Mongibello del petto*. Vn *Rogo eterno*. Vna *Zona torrida*. Vn’ *altra Sfera del fuoco*. Vn’ *Empireo di doglie*. Vn *Diluio di fiamme*. Vn’ *Inferno viuento*.⁴⁷⁹

[If you are calling love a flame and you want to embellish it, you can do so through simple hyperbole. You can call it a movable furnace, a torch of Megaera, instead of love. Cupid’s lightning bolt, a fiery feeling, a bomb of life, Mount Etna of the chest, an eternal

⁴⁷⁷ See John Donne, “To the Lady Magdalen Herbert: of St. Mary’s Magdalen”; Richard Crashaw, *The Weeper*; Joseph Beaumont, “S. Mary Magdalen’s Ointment”; Henry Vaughan, “St. Mary Magdalen,” Andrew Marvell, “Eyes and Tears”; Eldred Revett, “Marie her ointment”; etc.

⁴⁷⁸ Emanuele Tesauro, *Il cannocchiale aristotelico: o sia, Idea dell’arguta et ingeniosa elocutione che serve à tutta l’arte oratoria, lapidaria, et simbolica* (Savigliano: Artistica piemontese, 2000), 288; my translation.

⁴⁷⁹ Tesauro, 416, quoted in Johnson, *Hyperboles*, 101.

blaze, a torrid zone, another globe of fire, a heaven of pains, a flood of flames, a living hell.]⁴⁸⁰

These hyperboles of love illustrate how baroque poets built on classical and Renaissance tropes with a logic of excess.⁴⁸¹ To be sure, as scholars like Christopher Johnson have noted, hyperbole was an essential technique of the baroque (see chapter three),⁴⁸² and it was especially important in devotional contexts.

Eldred Revett demonstrates how hyperboles could be combined to the point of excess in his poem “Marie her ointment,” printed in *Poems by Eldred Revett* (1657). The poem works as

⁴⁸⁰ My translation.

⁴⁸¹ Louis Martz argues that “the first appearance in English literature of those hyperbolic analogies... [of the baroque] is to be found in Robert Southwell's *Marie Magdalens Funeral Teares* (1591)” (Louis Martz, *Poetry of Meditation* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954], 227). Mirollo agrees that Southwell is foundational for the emergence of a hyperbolic style in English literature, but places more importance on *Saint Peter's Complaint* (1595)—a translation of Luigi Tansillo's *Le Lagrime di San Pietro* (1585). Mirollo suggests that “the poetry of Robert Southwell, whose poem on *Saint Peter* (1595), translated out of Tansillo's *Lacrime di San Pietro* (1585), may be said to mark the arrival in England of the continental neo-Catholic style” (Mirollo, *Poet of the Marvelous*, 251). As many scholars have noted, Southwell's translation is a loose and extravagantly embellished one. Indeed, Southwell's hyperbolic expansion of Tansillo's stanzas amplifies as the poem continues, to the point where the Englishman begins to add excessively hyperbolic stanzas with no analogues in the Italian original:

Ah life, the maze of countlesse straying waies,
Open to erring steps, and strow'd with baits,
To winde weak sences into endlesse strays,
A loofe from vertues rough vnbeaten straights;
A flower, a play, a blast, a shade, a dreame,
A liuing death, a neuer turning streame.

.....

The mother sea from ouerflowing deepes,
Sends forth her issue by diuided vaines:
Yet backe her of-spring to theyr mother creepes,
To pay theyr purest streames with added gaines;
But I that drunke the drops of heauenly flud,
Bemyr'd the gyuer with returning mud. (Robert Southwell, *Satin Peters Complaynt* [London: Printed by I.R. for G.C., 1595], 5, lines 109)

The conceits of these stanzas are so hyperbolic they become difficult to understand. The first stanza begins simply—*life is a maze of countlesse straying waies*—but is expanded copiously into a final list of the maze's distractions—*a flower, a play, a blast, a shade, a dream, a liuing death, a neuer turning streame*—that contribute to a feeling of disorientation. The second stanza, however, begins at the start with a hyperbolic conceit—unlike the sea, which gives and receives water purely, the poetic speaker receives *the drops of heauenly flud*, only to return it with *mud*—and amplifies the conceit with further figuration—the sea spills water *from ouerflowing deepes* and *sends forth her issue by diuided vaines*. Every stanza in Southwell's translation overflows with hyperbolic metaphors that push imagination toward absurd excess.

⁴⁸² See Johnson, “Baroque Theories of Hyperbole,” in Johnson, *Hyperboles*, 95-125.

one long conceit of a single episode in the saint's life—her anointment of Jesus—and begins with a variation of metaphors describing the oil falling down Jesus' skin:⁴⁸³

ANointed God who was before,
Mary anoints her *Saviour*;
Her Alabaster-box doth shed
The liquid *Narde on's* sacred head;
Where when it trickles down upon't
It *sweats* upon his *Marble* Front;
Ore's hair it spreads the unctious flood,
To arm't 'gainst *after-rain* of blood;
As all those little channels pow'r
It seems *dispersed* in a *show'r*;
What fall's on his Necks whiter skin
Is Alabaster'd up again....⁴⁸⁴

Revett presents the dripping oil as sweat on marble, an *unctious flood*, a protective coat 'gainst *after-rain of blood*, and *little channels of pow'r dispersed in a show'r* that turn his skin into the *Alabaster* from which the oil came. As Tesauro wrote in *Il cannocchiale aristotelico*, the function of these hyperboles is surely to generate wonder and astonishment (*meraviglia*) at the sacred scene, and Revett pushes these hyperboles to absurd confusion by the end of his poem. He writes,

She then at's feet her-self doth throw
Descending yet to *Heav'n*, so;
When from her eyes she scatters streams
To *pay* the *custome* of those gems:
The *sparkes* a richer *lustre* meet

⁴⁸³ The episode appears in all four gospels with slight variations. Matthew 26:6-7: "Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat" (*The English Bible, New Testament*, 68, Matthew 26:6-7). Mark 14:3-4: "And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head" (*The English Bible, New Testament*, 115, Mark 14:3). Luke 7:37-38: "And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment" (*The English Bible, New Testament*, Luke 7:37-38). John 12:3: "Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment" (*The English Bible, New Testament*, John 12:3).

⁴⁸⁴ Eldred Revett, "Marie her ointment," in *Poems by Eldred Revett* (London: Printed by E.T. for the Author, 1657), 116-17, lines 1-12.

Set on his white *enameld* feet,
 Which (trembling yet) the torrent bears
 In one continu'd Flood of tears.
 Her hair now from her bended head
A Towel falls *dishevel'd*;
 That's o're those *silver columns* row'd
 Like a well-falling *Curle of Gold*:
 Those *Rayes* upon his feet thus run
 Dry them by *Exhalation*:
 And drink a *Richer dew* from thence,
 Then her *well-powred* forth *expence*.⁴⁸⁵

Revett depicts the Magdalene falling to the feet of Jesus in tears, paradoxically *descending yet to Heav'n so*. Her scattered *streams* of tears are *custome* payments of Jesus' *gem*-like feet. They are *sparkes* that a *richer lustre* meet—*his white enameld feet*. They are a *torrent*. They are *one continu'd Flood* that is wiped away by *Her hair*, now *A Towel, dishevel'd* that rolls *o're those silver columns* of Jesus' legs like a *well-falling Curle of Gold*. Her hair becomes sun *Rayes* that dry his feet *by Exhalation*. And her *Rayes* of hair *drink Richer dew* than *her well-powred forth expence*—the Magdalene's tears. Revett combines hyperboles of Jesus' skin, the Magdalene's hair, and her tears in a logic of excess. His variation of figures leaves the mind disoriented. Her hair is a towel, then gold, then rays of the sun. Her tears are streams, a torrent, a flood, then dew. His feet are a heaven, then gems, then enamel, then columns of silver. And all of these images are woven together in verses that make the imagination spiral toward excess. Revett's poem aims to astonish readers with copious hyperboles and thereby generate a passionate state of wonder at the Magdalene's passion. The poem expresses a baroque logic of excess that cultivates the passions for devotion.

Andrew Marvell extends this literary tradition by articulating a baroque epistemology of passion in his own Magdalene poem, "Eyes and Tears." For Marvell, the Magdalene's tears are

⁴⁸⁵ Revett, 117, lines 17-32.

the corporeal signs of true devotion. The passions provide insight into an object's nature, and tears provide confirmation of the object's value. The poem begins,

How wisely Nature did decree,
With the same eyes to weep and see;
That, having viewed the object vain,
They might be ready to complain!
And, since the self-deluding sight
In a false angle takes each height,
These tears, which better measure all,
Like watery lines and plummets fall.⁴⁸⁶

Like watery lines and plummets, tears measure all. They see the world in a way the eyes cannot.

Tears see the truth behind appearances. If an object moves the passions to weep, there must be a sacred meaning in that object. The poem's speaker confesses that tears

Are the true price of all my joys.
What in the world most fair appears,
Yea, even laughter, turns to tears;
And all the jewels which we prize
Melt in the pendants of the eyes.⁴⁸⁷

To be sure, the things one values most are those that move the passions to tears of joy and sorrow. Tears offer a corporeal and affective assurance of an object's value.⁴⁸⁸ The speaker of Marvell's poem emphasizes the paradox of such an assurance:

Yet happy they whom grief doth bless,
That weep the more, and see the less;
And, to preserve their sight more true,
Bathe still their eyes in their own dew.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁶ Andrew Marvell, "Eyes and Tears," in *Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. G.A. Aitken (London: Routledge Press, 1900), 36, lines 1-8.

⁴⁸⁷ Marvell, 36, lines 12-16.

⁴⁸⁸ See Helmuth Plessner, *Laughing and Crying: A Study of the Limits of Human Behavior*, trans. James Spencer Churchill and Marjorie Grene (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970) for a philosophical investigation into the affects of laughing and crying and the importance of tears for them both.

⁴⁸⁹ Marvell, "Eyes and Tears," in *Poems*, 37, lines 25-28.

Again, the passions and the tears they create offer the body a vision *more true*. And the poem presents the Magdalene as a model of the wisdom of tears: “So Magdalen in tears more wise / Dissolved those captivating eyes.”⁴⁹⁰ To emphasize the point and encourage passion in his readers, Marvell floods the end of his poem with an excessive variation of hyperbolic figures depicting the Magdalene’s tears:

Now, like two clouds dissolving, drop,
And at each tear in distance stop;
Now, like two fountains, trickle down;
Now, like two floods, o’erturn and drown:
Thus let your streams o’erflow your springs,
Till eyes and tears be the same things;
And each the other’s difference bears,
These weeping eyes, those seeing tears.⁴⁹¹

The baroque logic of excess takes hold at the end of Marvell’s poem to generate wonder and passion in readers. The Magdalene’s eyes are *two clouds dissolving*, then *two fountains*, then *two floods*, then *springs* with overflowing *streams*. And Marvell concludes this hyperbolic variation with a marvelous paradox: the Magdalene’s tears flood her eyes *Till eyes and tears be the same things*—*These weeping eyes, those seeing tears*. The excessive variations of these final lines build on one another to the point of confusion—mixing together figures to construct a baroque perspective on eyes and tears. The eyes weep, so their tears can see. In this way, Marvell’s poem articulates an affective sense of truth—an epistemology based on the passions instead of vision.

In *Baroque Science* (2012), Ofer Gal and Raz Chen-Morris confirm the epistemological value of the passions in early modern Europe. They trace the development of new optical technologies during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to show how early modern scientists became increasingly interested in the problem of perspective. In short, scientists realized that the

⁴⁹⁰ Marvell, 37, lines 29-30.

⁴⁹¹ Marvell, 38, lines 49-56.

epistemological value of human sight could no longer be taken for granted. The human mind appeared to create its image of the world based on its own perspective. As Gal and Chen-Morris explain,

Objective knowledge appeared to rely on the mind's creative, "poetic," engagement, or in other words—on the imagination; the faculty of images. But to revert to the mind's images in lieu of real objects was a very dangerous habit: it stirred the passions, leading to confusion, melancholy, and madness. The theories of the passions sprouting from mid-seventeenth century on are an attempt to resolve this dilemma with a paradoxical reversal of the order of knowledge: the assurance that reason, detached from material nature and dependent on the imagination, does not lead us astray, had to be entrusted with the orderly functioning of the passions, which direct the human body through the vicissitudes of nature and are sanctioned by its survival. Requiring "a science of the passions" to control their reason, the new savants embodied these contradictions in their very person.⁴⁹²

The passions became a critical subject for early modern science because they affected the quality of human perception.

Gal and Chen-Morris point to René Descartes as an example of this early modern interest in the epistemology of passion.⁴⁹³ In *Les passions de l'âme* (1649), translated into English by an eager correspondent in 1650,⁴⁹⁴ Descartes presents his theory of the passions. Victoria Kahn explains that the book "insinuates what Alain Viziaire has called 'the existence of an automatism proper to thought,' an automatism that Descartes elsewhere calls a 'passion.' This automatism is both the problem Descartes sets out to analyze in *Les passions de l'âme*, and his proposed solution."⁴⁹⁵ It is the problem because human reason does not directly oversee and control the

⁴⁹² Raz Chen-Morris and Ofer Gal, *Baroque Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 8-9.

⁴⁹³ See chapter seven: "Passions, Imagination, and the Persona of the New Savant" in Chen-Morris and Gal, *Baroque Science*, 233-70.

⁴⁹⁴ See Anon., "The first Letter to *Monsieur des Cartes*" and "A second letter to Mousier des Cartes," in René Descartes, *The Passions of the Soule*, trans. Anonymous (London: for A.C. 1650).

⁴⁹⁵ Victoria Kahn, "Happy Tears: Baroque Politics in Descartes' *Passions de l'âme*," in *Politics and the Passions, 1500-1850*, eds. Victoria Kahn, Neil Saccamano, and Daniela Coli (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 100.

automatism of passions; it is the solution because the automatism of the passions is machinic and thus predictable. Descartes writes,

[T]he body of a living man differs as much from that of a dead one, as a watch or any other AUTOMA [*sic*] (that is any kind of Machine that moves of it self) wound up, having in self the corporeall principle of those motions for which it was instituted, with all things requisite for its action, and the same watch or other engine when it is broken, and the principle of its motion ceases to act.⁴⁹⁶

The passions are the body's automatic responses to sensory perceptions, which then move the body to act. To emphasize this point, Kahn directs readers to a passage in *Traité de l'homme* (1648), in which "Descartes compares the effects of external objects on the senses to strangers entering into the royal gardens and causing—'without thinking' (*sans y penser*)—the mechanical movement of the figures in the grottos and foundations."⁴⁹⁷ And just like royal garden machines, the passions could be reverse engineered and redirected.⁴⁹⁸ The baroque "science of the

⁴⁹⁶ Descartes, *Passions*, 5.

⁴⁹⁷ Kahn, "Happy Tears," 99.

Here is the passage from Descartes quoted by Kahn:

External objects, which by their mere presence stimulate its sense organs and thereby cause them to move in many different ways depending on how the parts of its brain are disposed, are like visitors who enter the grottos of these fountains and unwillingly cause the movements which take place before their eyes. For they cannot enter without stepping on certain tiles which are so arranged that if, for example, they approach a Diana who is bathing they will cause her to hide in the reeds, and if they move forward to pursue her they will cause a Neptune to advance and threaten them with his trident; or if they go in another direction, they will cause a sea-monster to emerge and spew water onto their faces; or other such things according to the whim of the engineers who made the fountains. (René Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch, Vol. 1 (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 100-01, quoted in Kahn, "Happy Tears," 99-100.)

⁴⁹⁸ However, Descartes makes it clear that this process is not easy. Among the means to redirect the passions toward the good, Descartes highlights *premeditation* and *industry*. He writes that these two practices are "remedies, whereby the defects of nature may be corrected, by using to separate the motions of the blood & spirits in onesself, from the thoughts wherewith they use to be joyned" (Descartes, *Passions*, 170). By premeditation and industry, humans can reorganize the relationship between thought and passion, suppressing the negative passions and encouraging the positive ones. But because "these motions excited in the blood, by the objects of Passions, doe so immediately follow the meere impressions in the brain, and the disposition of the organs...[,] no humane wisdom is able to resist them, when one is not enough prepared so" (Descartes, 170). The automatism of the passions make them extremely difficult to alter. But by better understanding the machinic functioning of passions in relation to thought, Descartes believed that we could relate to ourselves poetically. That is, by *premeditation* and *industry*, we could use our imaginations to affect our own passions and thereby recreate ourselves.

passions” aims to diminish negative passions like hate and promote positive passions like love.⁴⁹⁹

And by prioritizing love over reason, baroque authors gave license to the development of excessive passion.⁵⁰⁰

As Southwell writes in *Marie Magdalen's Funeral Tears*, “Loue is not ruled with reason, but with loue. It neither regardeth what can be, nor what shall be done, but onely what it selfe desireth to doe.”⁵⁰¹ And while other “passions of this holy Sainte... were not guides to reason, but attendants vpon it,” they were all “commanded by such a loue as could neuer exceede, because the thing loued was of infinite perfection.”⁵⁰² For many baroque authors and artists, the Magdalene was a model of Christian devotion precisely because of her excessive display of love. In an apostrophe to the Magdalene, Southwell suggests that reason may be a step to achieving love, but a step that should ultimately be abandoned: “But alas why doe I vrge her with reason, whole reason is altered into loue, and that iudgeth it folly to follow such reason, as should any way impair her loue.”⁵⁰³ The Magdalene’s reason has been “altered into love” and now love

⁴⁹⁹ Chen-Morris and Gal, *Baroque Science*, 9.

⁵⁰⁰ Philosophical approaches to the passions during the seventeenth century were often confused and contradictory. Indeed, much of this confusion can be attributed to a conceptual blending of Aristotelian, Neo-Stoic, and Judeo-Christian understandings of the passions. Richard Strier argues that few scholars have acknowledged the consequences of the Peripatetic and Christian traditions on a predominantly Stoic conception of the passions during the period. He claims that these traditions offered many different ways to justify the value of passion:

The Aristotelian tradition, understood as anti-Stoic as well as anti-Socratic, has a place for [excessive passion], since the 'mean' is a conceptual and situational, not arithmetic of fixed conception; the 'right amount' of emotion for a circumstance need not be a moderate amount—though there is much confusion about this point. Even more important, the Judaeo-Christian tradition, insofar as it is biblical, is a tradition that allows for strong, even uncontrolled emotion. The Psalms are an important case in point, as is the behavior of the apostles in the gospels, and the passions of St. Paul in his letters. None of this is sufficiently widely recognized. (Strier, “Against Reason,” 23)

While most treatises on the passions during the period are heavily indebted to Stoic and Neo-Stoic traditions, they often appeal to Aristotelian conceptions of the “mean” and Augustinian conceptions of “love” which are not always consistent with Senecan or Lipsian approaches to the passions.

⁵⁰¹ Southwell, *Funeral Tears*, 52v.

⁵⁰² Southwell, 52v.

⁵⁰³ Southwell, 6v.

itself “iudgeth it folly to follow such reason.”⁵⁰⁴ For Southwell, love is a passion that governs all others and its excess is not only justified but encouraged when directed toward God.

In his poem “S. Mary Magdalen’s Ointment,” Joseph Beaumont celebrates the Magdalene’s excessive love. The poem begins by rejecting the relevance of reason to her devotional passion:

FORBID Her not, nor ask a reason why.
She is in Love
And means to prove
The Sacred Boldnes of *LOVE’S Myserie*.

Who asks a Reason why ye Zealous Fire
Will owne no Rein
Which may restrain
Her venturous Flames, and say, Ascend no higher?⁵⁰⁵

The poem promotes the mystery of love over the limits of reason. While the latter works by restraint, the former *will owne no rein*. The passion of love expands and ascends. The poetic speaker unleashes hyperbolic metaphors to express the excessive state of Mary’s passion:

Marie’s on fire: and such stout Fire as fears
No ocean streams
To check its flames,
Which burnes amidst a Sea of brinie Tears.

These Waters, & those Flames in Her brave Eyes
Both have their Place,
Both have their grace,
And stoutly strive which should the higher rise.⁵⁰⁶

In a paradoxical hyperbole Tesauro would enjoy, the poem depicts Mary’s love as a fire that *burnes amidst a sea of brinie tears*. The waters of her tears and the fires of her love grow *in her*

⁵⁰⁴ Southwell, 6v.

⁵⁰⁵ Joseph Beaumont, “S. Mary Magdalen’s Ointment,” in *The Minor Poems of Joseph Beaumont*, ed. Eloise Robinson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), 250, lines 1-8.

⁵⁰⁶ Beaumont, 250, lines 9-16.

brave eyes ever higher in competition with one another to the point of excess and confusion. The following stanza offers a defense of the Magdalene's excess:

If Shee will be profuse, oh let Her be.
LOVE'S mystic Art
Knows how t'impart
Virtue's true grace of *Prodigalitie*.⁵⁰⁷

The poetic voice not only allows the profuse, but praises prodigality as *Virtue's true grace*.

Baroque devotion unfolds as a logic of excess. The Magdalene's love is excessive and divinely so:

And Courage Lovers: *JESUS* will allow
Your Noble Passion
Immoderation,
Who was excessive in His Love to you.⁵⁰⁸

The noble passion of love should be followed to excess and immoderation. Beaumont's poem encourages us to follow Jesus and the Magdalene and to love beyond reason.

In his *Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul of Man* (1640), Reynolds argues that Divine Truths "may seem sometimes to beare opposition to humane Reason" and as such require a faith that must do without any "Natural Conclusions" or "Natural demonstration."⁵⁰⁹ He explains,

For Reason, and all other powers, have their fixed and determined limits in Nature.... But the Imagination is a Facultie boundlesse, and impatient of any imposed limits, save those which it selfe maketh. And hence it is, that in matter of perswasion and insinuation, Poetrie, Mythologie, and Eloquence (the Arts of rationall Fancie) have ever... beene more forcible than those which have been rigorously grounded on Nature and Reason; it being... the naturall infinitenesse of mans Soule... to disdaine any bounds and confines in her operations.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁷ Beaumont, 250, lines 17-20.

⁵⁰⁸ Beaumont, 252, lines 57-60.

⁵⁰⁹ Reynolds, *Passions*, 24.

⁵¹⁰ Reynolds, 10.

According to Reynolds, this “freedome from bodily restraint” which the imagination possesses allows for “those Raptures and Extasies, which rayse and ravish the Soule, with the sweetnesse of extraordinarie Contemplations.”⁵¹¹ Reynolds further defines this freedom of the imagination in poetic terms. He writes,

The libertie of the Imagination... is three-fold; Creation, as I may so speake, and now making of Objects; Composition, or new mixing them; and Translation, or new placing them: unto some of which three, will be reduced all Poeticall Fictions, fabulous Transmutations, high Metaphors, and Rhetoricall Allegories; things of excellent use, and ornament in speech.⁵¹²

Reynolds models the human imagination on poetics: creation, composition, and translation. And this poetic nature of the imagination allows humans to construct “those Raptures and Extasies, which rayse and ravish the Soule,” through words.⁵¹³ In *The Emotive Image* (1983), Anthony Raspa suggests that early modern authors turned to poetry to augment their devotional practices. “Language, words, rhythm, meter, symbols, imagery, and lines channeled the senses to the correct affection. In the experience of poetry, they performed the role that the preludial image originally accomplished in the [Jesuit] exercitant’s mind.”⁵¹⁴ In other words, poetry offered a means to direct the passions toward God. Not limited by “bodily restraint”⁵¹⁵ and organized with “language, words, rhythm, meter, symbols, imagery, and lines,”⁵¹⁶ the imagination could induce a passionate love of God—a poetics of tears.

⁵¹¹ Reynolds, 10.

⁵¹² Reynolds, 24.

⁵¹³ Reynolds, 10.

⁵¹⁴ Anthony Raspa, *The Emotive Image: Jesuit Poetics in the English Renaissance* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1983), 39.

⁵¹⁵ Reynolds, *Passions*, 10.

⁵¹⁶ Raspa, *Emotive Image*, 39.

The Flaming Heart: Teresa of Ávila and the Poetics of Ecstasy

Beside Mary Magdalene, Teresa of Ávila was among the most important figures of baroque devotion in early modern Europe.⁵¹⁷ Canonized alongside Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier in 1622 by Gregory XV, Teresa's writings were well known across linguistic and confessional boundaries in early modern Europe.⁵¹⁸ Her *Libro de su vida* (1588) was translated into English by the Irish Jesuit William Malone as *The Lyf of the Mother Teresa of Jesus* (1611) and by the Catholic priest Tobie Mathew as *The Flaming Hart* (1642), which included a dedicatory epistle to Queen Henrietta Maria, who, according to the author, had "extraordinary deuotion" for Teresa.⁵¹⁹ R.F. Paul of St. Ubald printed a translation of Teresa's writings on prayer in three parts as *The Soul's Delight* (1654) and an anonymous author published a translation of *The Life of the Holy Mother S. Teresa* (1671 and 1675) in two parts. These texts not only influenced the development of religious thought in England,⁵²⁰ but also inspired several of the most famous poems of the English baroque—Richard Crashaw's "In Memory of the

⁵¹⁷ See Peter Paul Rubens's *Saint Teresa of Ávila's Vision of the Holy Spirit* (ca. 1614), *Saint Teresa of Ávila* (ca. 1614), and *Saint Teresa of Ávila Interceding for Souls in Purgatory* (ca. 1633); Giovanni Lanfranco's *The Vision of Saint Teresa of Ávila* (ca. 1617); Gian Lorenzo Bernini's *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa* (ca. 1652); etc.

⁵¹⁸ Her influence can be found in surprising places, like the philosophy of René Descartes. Christia Mercer has shown the importance of *El Castillo Interior* (1588) to Descartes' *Meditations* (1641). See Christia Mercer, "Descartes' debt to Teresa of Ávila, or why we should work on women in the history of philosophy," *Philosophical Studies* 174, no. 10 (2017): 2539-2555.

⁵¹⁹ Tobie Mathew, "To the Incomparable, Sovraigne Princesse Henrietta-Maria of France, Queen of Great Brittain, France, and Ireland," in Teresa of Ávila, *The Flaming Hart*, trans. Tobie Mathew (Antwerpe: Johannes Meursius, 1642), ii. All translations of Teresa are by Mathew unless otherwise noted.

⁵²⁰ See Kathleen Thornton Spinnenweber, *St. Teresa of Avila in the Anglo-American tradition: Issues and consequences of seventeenth-century English readers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

Virtuous and Learned Madre de Teresa That Sought an Early Martyrdom” (1646), “An Apology for the Precedent Hymn” (1646), and “The Flaming Heart” (1652).⁵²¹

These three poems emphasize how Teresa’s words were a source of devotional inspiration for Crashaw. The first poem of the series includes this description of the Spanish nun’s writing:

Those rare works, where thou shalt leave writ,
Love’s noble history, with wit
Taught thee by none but him, while here
They feed our souls, shall clothe thine there.
Each heavenly word, by whose hid flame
Our hard hearts shall strike fire, the same
Shall flourish on thy brows; and be
Both fire to us, and flame to thee:
Whose light shall live bright, in thy face
By glory, in our hearts by grace.⁵²²

Teresa’s words *strike fire* in the hearts of those who read them. They *feed our souls*. *Each heavenly word* spreads a sacred love *in our hearts by grace*. And Crashaw continues his praise of Teresa’s writing in “An Apology of the Precedent Hymn,” explaining that her words were the source of his poetry:

Thus have I back again to thy bright name,
Fair sea of holy fires, transfused the flame
I took from reading thee. ’Tis to thy wrong
I know that in my weak and worthless song
Thou here art set to shine, where thy full day
Scarce dawns, O pardon, if I dare to say
Thine own dear books are guilty, for from thence
I learned to know that love is eloquence.
That heavenly maxim gave me heart to try

⁵²¹ The first two poems were originally published in *Steps to the Temple* (1646), then edited for *Carmen Deo Nostro* (1652) and retitled “A Hymn to the Name and Honor of the Admirable Saint Teresa” and “An Apology for the Foregoing Hymn.” The third poem, “The Flaming Heart,” was only published in *Carmen Deo Nostro*.

⁵²² Richard Crashaw, “In Memory of the Virtuous and Learned Madre de Teresa That Sought an Early Martyrdom,” in *The English Poems of Richard Crashaw*, ed. Richard Rambuss (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 68.

If what to other tongues is tuned so high,
Thy praise might not speak English too.⁵²³

Crashaw depicts Teresa as a *fair sea of holy fires*, whose books *transfused the flame* into him by reading her words. Indeed, Teresa's use of language inspired Crashaw to compose his own verses of praise in English—*That heavenly maxim gave me heart to try / If what to other tongues is tuned so high, / Thy praise might not speak English too.*⁵²⁴ Crashaw is astonished by the power of Teresa's words to strike his heart with flames of love, and he explicitly tries to translate that power into English.

The goal of Teresa and Crashaw's devotional literature is an ecstatic union with God. In chapters 11-21 of *Libro de su vida*, Teresa distinguishes four degrees of prayer that carry the soul into a loving union with God, and she introduces them all in a single extended conceit. As she explains, the person seeking passionate devotion should approach their soul like a gardener trying "echar flores que den de sí gran olor para dar recreación a este Señor nuestro, y así se venga a deleitar muchas veces a esta huerta" ("to yield Flowers of so excellent odour, as may serve to be of recreate on to this Lord of ours; that so, he may take pleasure, to come often, into

⁵²³ Richard Crashaw, "An Apology for the Precedent Hymn," in *English Poems*, 69, lines 1-11.

⁵²⁴ Crashaw understood the social and religious dangers of praising Teresa—a Spanish, Catholic saint—as a protestant in England. So he includes this defense:

Souls are not Spaniards too, one friendly flood
Of baptism, blends them all into one blood.
.....
What soul soe'er in any language can
Speak heaven like hers, is my soul's countryman.
O 'tis not Spanish, but 'tis heaven she speaks,
'Tis heaven that lies in ambush there, and breaks
From thence into the wond'ring reader's breast,
Who finds his warm heart, hatched into a nest
Of little eagles, and young loves, whose high
Flights scorn the lazy dust, and things that die. (Crashaw, 69, lines 15-16, 21-28.)

this Garden of his, and delight himself”).⁵²⁵ She claims that the soul can cultivate the conditions necessary for God to visit by watering their flowers “como buenos hortelanos” (“like careful Gardners”).⁵²⁶ Teresa writes that there are four ways to water one’s soul:

Paréceme a mí que se puede regar de cuatro maneras:
o con sacar el agua de un pozo, que es a nuestro gran trabajo;
o con noria y arcaduces, que se saca con un torne; yo lo he sacado algunas veces: es a menos trabajo que estrotro y sácase más agua;
o de un río o arroyo: esto se riega muy mejor...;
o con llover mucho, que lo riega el Señor sin trabajo ninguno nuestro y es muy sin comparación mejor que todo lo que queda dicho.⁵²⁷

[These Plants may be watred, by fowre wayes: Either, by drawing water, out of a Well, which wee cannot doe without much labour; or by way of a Wheele, with certaine little Buckets, belonging to it, which is easily turned about, by the hand... Or els, by meanes of letting in, some little Brooke, or River, into the Garden; and, by this meanes, the Garden is watred much better, then by the former... Or els, in fine, when there falls a good Showre of Rayne upon the Garden, for then, the Lord himself waters it, without anie labour at all, of ours; and this is, without comparison, the very farr best way, of all the fowre.]⁵²⁸

These four ways of watering a garden correspond to three categories of prayer. The first she calls Mental Prayer, the second Quiet Prayer, the third and fourth Unitive Prayer. For Teresa, the ultimate goal of these prayers is not only to cultivate feelings of love toward God, but also to achieve a spiritual union with God. She explains that practitioners can begin to experience the feeling of this union during Quiet Prayer—“una centellica que comienze el Señor a encender en el alma del verdadero amor suyo” (“a certaine Sparke of the Fire of that true Love, which our

⁵²⁵ Teresa of Ávila, *Libro de la vida*, ed. Tomás Alvarez (Burgos: Monte Carmelo, 1981), 121; translation in Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 123-24.

⁵²⁶ Teresa, *Libro*, 121; Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 123.

⁵²⁷ Teresa, *Libro*, 121-22.

⁵²⁸ Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 124.

Lord beginnes to kindle in a soule”).⁵²⁹ But that spark of love is a small taste of “el amor celestial” (“the Celestiall kind of Loue”) that comes with Unitive Prayers.⁵³⁰

Teresa recognizes this “Celestiall kind of Love” during Unitive Prayer as a feeling of inebriation. She writes, “Muchas veces estaba así como destainada y embrigada en este amor, y jamás había podido entender cómo era. Bien entendía que era Dios” (“Manie times, I was, as it were, out of my self, and as if I had been even inebriated with this love; and yet I could never understand, how it was. Only I knew very well, that it was God”).⁵³¹ This inebriated passion of love that Teresa reaches during Unitive Prayer is the goal of Teresa’s devotional program, and Crashaw translates this language of inebriation to excess in his poetry about the Spanish saint:

There are enow whose draughts as deep as hell
Drink up all Spain in sack, let my soul swell
With the strong wine of love, let others swim
In puddles, we will pledge this seraphim
Bowls full of richer blood than blush of grape
Was ever guilty of, change we our shape,
My soul, some drink from men to beasts; O then,
Drink we till we prove more, not less than men:
And turn not beasts, but angels. Let the King,
Me ever into these his cellars bring;
Where flows such wine as we can have of none
But him, who trod the winepress all alone:
Wine of youth’s life, and the sweet deaths of love,
Wine of immortal mixture, which can prove
Its tincture from the rosy nectar wine
That can exalt weak earth, and so refine
Our dust, that in one draught, mortality
May drink itself up, and forget to die.⁵³²

⁵²⁹ Teresa, *Libro*, 170; Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 181.

⁵³⁰ Teresa, *Libro*, 204; Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 221.

⁵³¹ Teresa, *Libro*, 183; Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 197.

⁵³² Crashaw, “An Apology for the Precedent Hymn,” in *English Poems*, 70, lines 29-46.

In Crashaw's baroque verses, Teresa's brief descriptions of inebriated love become one long and outlandish conceit. Crashaw wants his soul to *swell with the strong wine of love*. He wants to give a visiting angel *bowls full of richer blood than blush of grape / Was ever guilty of*. He says this inebriation from love is not like an inebriation from wine. Drinkers of the latter turn *from men to beasts*, while the former *turn not beasts, but angels*. He even transforms Jesus into a king with wine cellars and a maker of wine: *Let the King, / Me ever into these his cellars bring: / Where flows such wine as we can have of none / But him, who trod the winepress all alone*. The wine becomes divine blood—*wine of immortal mixture*—that the soul drinks to *exalt weak earth, and so refine / Our dust, that in one draught, mortality / May drink itself up, and forget to die*. Crashaw imagines this inebriated feeling of Teresa's Unitive Prayer as leading to an ecstatic moment of immortality.

Teresa struggles to put this feeling of holy inebriation into words. Consider this passage in which Teresa employs hyperbolic and confused imagery to explain the effects of Unitive Prayer:

Queda el alma de esta oración y union con granísima ternura, de manera que se querría deshacer, no de pena, sino de unas lágrimas gozosas. Hállase bañada de ellas sin sentirlo ni saber cuándo ni cómo aquel ímpetu del fuego con agua que le hace más crecer. Parece esto algarabía, y pasa así.⁵³³

[The Soule doth, in this Prayer, and Vnion, remaine with an excessiue kind of tenderness; in such sort, that she would faine, euen defeat, and dissolue her self; not through paine, or trouble, but by abundance of teares of ioy, wherein she is bathed, without so much, as feeling, or knowing, how, or when she wept them. It giues her a great delight, to find the impetuous force of that fire, appeased, and allayed by Water; which yet makes it encrease so much the more. This language of mine, may seem to be a kind of gibberidge; but yet, thus stands the case.]⁵³⁴

⁵³³ Teresa, *Libro*, 213.

⁵³⁴ Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 230.

Teresa's "gibberidge" reflects her belief that a spiritual union with God is antithetical to human reason and understanding.⁵³⁵ She explains how, in such states, her imagination, "como se ve sola, es para alabar a Dios la Guerra que da y cómo procura desasosegarlo todo" ("when it finds it self thus, all alone, [that is, without being controuled by the Vnderstanding] it would make a bodie wonder extreemly, to see, what a coyle it keeps; and what a warre, it makes; and procures, to put all, out of order").⁵³⁶ Her experiences of Unitive Prayer are beyond understanding. Her imagination coils and wars with itself. Unitive Prayer puts everything "out of order."⁵³⁷

Teresa describes the mental effect of Unitive Prayer as if it were a baroque poem. She writes, "[E]l entendimiento no la ayuda poco ni mucho a lo que [la imaginación] representa, no para en nada, sino de uno en otro, que no parece sino de estas maripositas de las noches, importunes y desasosegadas: así anda de un cabo a otro" ("The Vnderstanding doth not help the Imagination, in that, which it represents, either more, or lesse, it cannot fasten upon anie thing; but skipps, up & downe, from one to another. And it is like those importunate, and vnquiet little Gnatts, which buzze, and whizze by night, heer, and there").⁵³⁸ The human imagination wanders in complicated patterns of variation that can be discerned but never fully understood. The similarities between this description of Unitive Prayer and the effects of the baroque style raise important questions: if the goal of Teresa's Unitive Prayer is to achieve a devotional feeling of inebriation, then what are we to make of an aesthetic style that produces the same effect? Can the experience of the baroque style induce an inebriation of love for God? Can a style help transport the soul into a union with God? David Marno argues that poets used literary techniques to

⁵³⁵ Teresa, 230.

⁵³⁶ Teresa, *Libro*, 194; Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 211.

⁵³⁷ Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 211.

⁵³⁸ Teresa, *Libro*, 195; Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 212.

support their devotional practices. And while these techniques could not guarantee success, they nonetheless encouraged the desired outcome. Marno compares the use of literary techniques for devotional ends to preparing for sleep:

Falling asleep is not, properly speaking, an action, because a person is only ‘asleep’ when sleep itself comes. Yet there is in fact a range of actions that the seeker of sleep can choose from, to prepare and invite sleep. These actions are often mimetic: in trying to fall asleep we imitate our sleeping selves by closing our eyes, assuming the position of the body asleep, breathing the way a sleeping person does.... [A]s Malebranche would say, our actions constitute an ‘occasion’ for the event of sleep to occur.⁵³⁹

Following Marno’s Malebranchian formula, can the baroque style “constitute an ‘occasion’ for the event” of union with God?⁵⁴⁰ Can the baroque logic of excess mimetically carry the mind into an inebriated state of passion? Can we rise in ecstasy like we fall asleep?

For Teresa, Unitive Prayer invites the experience of ecstasy. In the twentieth chapter of *Libro de su vida*, she aims to distinguish the simple feeling “de unión a arrobamiento o elevamiento o vuelo que llaman de espíritu o arrebatamiento. Digo que estos diferentes nombres todo es una cosa, y también se llama éxtasis” (of “Vnion, on the one side; and Rapt, and Flight, [as they are wont to call it] of Spirit, on the other; for, these two latter, doe signifeye, in substance, but one thing; and it is also called Extasis”).⁵⁴¹ She claims that ecstasy is in the end more valuable than earlier stages of Unitive Prayer because its effects are greater: “Es grande la ventaja que hace a la unión. Los efectos muy mayores hace y otras hartas operaciones” (“The advantage is very great, which belongs to Rapt, beyond Vnion; and the effects also, which it produces, are much greater; and it hath also manie other operations”).⁵⁴² Unlike union, ecstasy

⁵³⁹ Marno, *Death Be Not Proud*, 19

⁵⁴⁰ Marno, 19.

⁵⁴¹ Teresa, *Libro*, 227; Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 248.

⁵⁴² Teresa, *Libro*, 227; Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 248.

pulls the soul from its body and from the earth. She explains how “viene un ímpetu tan acelerado y fuerte, que veis y sentís levantarse esta nube o esta águila caudalosa y cogeros con sus alas” (“there grows to be, such a speedie, and strong kind of impetuositie, that you feel, and find this Clowd to raise it self instantly vp; or rather, that this strong Eagle takes you, and carries you quite away, between her wings”).⁵⁴³ Or other times, “[M]e llevaba el alma y aun casi ordinario la cabeza tras ella, sin poderla tener, y algunas todo el cuerpo, hasta levantarle” (“[m]y Soule would be carried absolutly away, and ordinarily, euen my head, as it were, after it; yea & this, sometimes, so far, as that my whole Bodie would be transported so, as to be raised-vp from the ground”).⁵⁴⁴ But once this ecstasy has ended, Teresa laments that it is impossible to comprehend what happened: “Verdad es que lo ordinario es estar embebidas en alabanzas de Dios o en querer comprender y entender lo que ha passado por ellas; y aun para esto no están bien despiertas, sino como una persona que ha mucho dormido y soñado y aún no acaba de despertar” (“True it is, that Soules be ordinarily, in this case, euen drenched, yea and, as it were drowned, in the praises of Almighty God; and in desiring so, to comprehend, and vnderstand that, which hath passed with themselues; and yet, euen for this purpose, they vse not to be very well awake, but rather like someone, who hath slept, and dreamt, and is not yet, come very well againe, to himself”).⁵⁴⁵ In other words, ecstasy is like a dream.

Is baroque poetry any different? Is reading baroque poetry dreaming with open eyes? The baroque style distracts the reader from the self. It drags the self from one outlandish image to the next. And once a poem is finished, the distraction ends, and the self returns. If the poem

⁵⁴³ Teresa, *Libro*, 228; Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 250.

⁵⁴⁴ Teresa, *Libro*, 229; Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 251.

⁵⁴⁵ Teresa, *Libro*, 240; Teresa, *Flaming Hart*, 266-67.

cultivates the passions of devotion, one may wish to read it again—to dream the dream again.

And if the poem is rapturous, one may even wish never to wake. This is how Crashaw felt after reading *The Flaming Heart*. At the end of his poem, Crashaw offers a final plea to Teresa:

O sweet incendiary! show here thy art,
Upon this carcass of a hard, cold, heart;
Let all thy scattered shafts of light, that play
Among the leaves of thy large books of day,
Combined against this breast at once break in
And take away from me my self and sin,
This gracious robbery shall thy bounty be;
And my best fortunes such fair spoils of me.
O thou undaunted daughter of desires!
By all thy dow'r of light and fires;
By all the eagle in thee, all the dove;
By all thy lives and deaths of love;
By thy large draughts of intellectual day,
And by thy thirsts of love more large than they;
By all thy brim-filled bowls of fierce desire;
By thy last morning's draught of liquid fire;
By the full kingdom of that final kiss
That seized thy parting soul, and sealed thee his;
By all the heav'ns thou hast in him
(Fair sister of the seraphim!)
By all of him we have in thee;
Leave nothing of my self in me.
Let me so read thy life, that I
Unto all life of mine may die.⁵⁴⁶

After all the copious figures of praise, Crashaw yearns to read Teresa's life like a poem—one that would cultivate such an excess of love that he would never want it to end. Crashaw tried to write that poem, calling it "The Flaming Heart," and he filled its verses with hyperboles, paradoxes, and copious figures to recreate the inebriated feeling of ecstasy. English baroque poets like Crashaw, Beaumont, Revett, and Marvell wrote devotional poems as if they were literary paths to ecstasy. They used words to construct images in the mind full of light and fire,

⁵⁴⁶ Crashaw, "The Flaming Heart," in *English Poems*, 240-41, lines 85-108.

tears and flames, sorrow and joy. They composed verses built high with figures of excess to lift up the soul. And they did all this with the hope that, amid all the swirling confusion of the baroque, God might call on them from above, and for a mysterious moment, they might dream with open eyes.

Chapter Five

Sublime

Os homini sublime dedit.

- Ovid, *Metamorphoses*⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴⁷ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Frank Justus Miller, rev. G.P. Goold (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1977), 8, 1.85.

Fifty-feet high, upon the ceiling of the Banqueting House at Whitehall, hang nine paintings by the baroque master Peter Paul Rubens (see Appendix 5). Commissioned by Charles I and installed in 1636, these works present a series of allegories. In the corners, four virtues overcome vices—Hercules over Envy, Wisdom over Ignorance, Reason over Intemperance, and Abundance over Avarice. Putti dance with bountiful chariots in canvases stretching the sides of the hall. Together these works form an open frame for the ceiling’s centerpieces—three gigantic allegories of James I. On the south end, the King sits upon the throne of a Solomonic temple surrounded by allegories of peace and prosperity. On the north, he unites the crowns of Scotland and England. But it is the center that draws our attention. In a massive elliptical canvas, James I ascends into heaven upon the wings of Jupiter, ushered skyward by the virtues—Justice, Religion, Piety, Wisdom, and Peace. Amid all the flying-falling putti and waves of clouds and cloth, a sublime event emerges: *The Apotheosis of James I*.⁵⁴⁸

The sublimity of this centerpiece has as much to do with the event depicted as it does with the baroque style of Rubens. Indeed, the *topos* of apotheosis was intimately linked with the rhetoric of the sublime during the 1630s. In a frontispiece for the popular Greek-Latin edition of Longinus’ *Peri hypsous* (*De grandi loquentia sive Sublimi dicendi genere*), printed in Oxford in 1636, William Marshall presents a series of emblematic figures which explicitly connect the concept of the sublime with apotheosis.⁵⁴⁹ At the top of the page, Mercury flies toward the sun and sky, quoting verses from Horace’s *Ars poetica*—“Graiiis dedit ore rotundo Musa loqui” (“To the Greeks [the Muse] gave speech in well-rounded phrase”).⁵⁵⁰ The God of communication’s

⁵⁴⁸ See Appendix 6.

⁵⁴⁹ See Appendix 7.

⁵⁵⁰ William Marshall, frontispiece to Longinus, *Dionysiou Longinou rhētoros Peri hypsous logou biblion Dionysii Longini rhetoris prāstantissimi liber De grandi loquentia sive sublimi dicendi genere* (Oxford, UK: G. Turner for

left hand points up to the heavens, and nearby we see the peering face of Jupiter, sharing words from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: "Os homini sublime" ("he gave to man an uplifted face").⁵⁵¹ To the left of the title, the eagle of Jupiter soars toward the sun, carrying a banderole with the phrase "In sublime feror" (I am carried on high).⁵⁵² Back on the right side, Phaeton falls from his chariot, quoting Virgil's *Aeneid*: "Animos aequabit Olympo" (He will bring souls level with the heavens).⁵⁵³ Together, these figures of the frontispiece present the sublime style as a means for mortals to ascend to heaven—a method of apotheosis.⁵⁵⁴

Guil. Webb, 1636); translation in Horace, *The Art of Poetry (Ars Poetica)*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1926), 323, 477.

This is the relevant passage from Horace's *Ars Poetica*: "Grais ingenium, Grais dedit ore rotundo / Musa loqui, praeter laudem nullius avaris" ("To the Greeks the Muse gave native wit, to the Greeks she gave speech in well-rounded phrase; they craved naught but glory") (Horace, *Art of Poetry*, 323-24, 476-77).

Recent readings of Marshall's frontispiece have misinterpreted or misidentified this quote. See Lydia Hamlett's "The Longinian Sublime, Effect and Affect in 'Baroque' British Visual Culture," in *Translations of the Sublime: The Early Modern Reception and Dissemination of Longinus' Peri Hupsous in Rhetoric, the Visual Arts, Architecture and the Theatre*, eds. Caroline van Eck, Stijn Bussels, Maarten Delbeke and Jürgen Pieters (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 206 and Patrick Cheney, *English Authorship and the Early Modern Sublime: Fictions of Transport in Spenser, Marlowe, Jonson, and Shakespeare* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 27.

⁵⁵¹ Marshall, frontispiece to Longinus, *Peri hypsous*; translation in Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Frank Justus Miller, rev. G.P. Goold (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1977), 9, 1.85.

This is the relevant passage from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, book 1: "Pronaque quum spectent animalia cetera terram, / os homini sublime dedit caelumque videre / iussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus" ("And, though all other animals are prone, and fix their gaze upon the earth, he gave to man an uplifted face and bade him stand erect and turn his eyes to heaven") (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Frank Justus Miller, rev. G.P. Goold, 8-9, 1.84-86).

⁵⁵² Marshall, frontispiece to Longinus, *Peri hypsous*; my translation.

⁵⁵³ Marshall, frontispiece to Longinus, *Peri hypsous*; my translation.

This is the relevant passage from book 6 of the *Aeneid*: "Quin et avo comitem sese Mavortius addet / Romulus, Assaraci quem sanguinis Ilia mater / educet... / en huius, nate, auspiciis illa incluta Roma / imperium terris, animos aequabit Olympo, / septemque una sibi muro circumdabit arces, / felix prole virum" ("Further, a son of Mars shall keep his grandsire company, Romulus, whom his mother Ilia shall bear of Assaracus' stock.... Lo, under his auspices, my son, shall that glorious Rome extend her empire to earth's ends, her ambitions to the skies, and shall embrace seven hills with a single city's wall, blessed in a brood of heroes" (Virgil, *Aeneid, Book 6*, trans. H.R. Fairclough, rev. G.P. Goold [Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1999], 586-89, 6.777-84).

⁵⁵⁴ William Marshall sculpted another notable frontispiece for 1649 printing of *Eikon Basilike*, in which Charles I kneels before an altar worshipping Christ with two beams of light projected from his head into the skies on either side of him. From one side the beam of light reads "Clarior e tenebris," while the other displays a crown at the end of the ray of light with the words "Beatam et Aeternitam" above it (Marshall, frontispiece to Longinus, *Peri hypsous*).

This chapter demonstrates the political uses of the baroque sublime in early modern England. It begins by showing the relevance of the Divine Right of Kings to the display of sublime art at court. As self-proclaimed gods on earth, James I and Charles I appreciated art that expressed their divinity and surrounded themselves with baroque art, literature, and performance. Understood as a sublime union of all the arts, the court masque became central to the presentation of the King's divinity at court. By examining the stage designs of Inigo Jones alongside the poetry of Ben Jonson and William Davenant, I argue that Stuart court masques not only exhibit a baroque style commensurate with the sublimity of the King, but also actively stage the sublime apotheosis of the King and his court. I read the Caroline masque as a uniquely baroque form of politics that seduces opponents through the aesthetics of the sublime. In the end, I turn to John Milton's *A Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle* and *Paradise Lost* to highlight the growing puritan response to the baroque during the seventeenth century and the waning of baroque literature in early modern England.

Longinus and the Baroque Sublime

In *Peri hypsous*, Longinus emphasizes the connection between the sublime and the divine. He calls writers of the sublime style “οἱ ἰσόθεοι” (those equal to God) and explains, “καὶ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα τοὺς χρωμένους ἀνθρώπους ἐλέγχει, τὸ δ' ὕψος ἐγγὺς αἶρει μεγαλοφροσύνης θεοῦ” (While some styles expose their users as merely human, the sublime lifts them close to the magnanimity of God).⁵⁵⁵ Describing the sublime style of Demosthenes, Longinus commends his

Here, the monarch is depicted as having direct access to a divine clarity that would allow him to rise into heaven—to apotheosize. Comparing this later frontispiece with the earlier one for Longinus' *Peri hypsous*, it seems the previous offers the practical means for achieving such an apotheosis, beyond prayer to God.

⁵⁵⁵ Longinus, *On the Sublime (Peri hypsous)*, trans. W. Hamilton Fyfe (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1995), 272, 276, 35.2, 36.2; my translations.

“ὕψηγορίας τόνον, ἔμψυχα πάθη, περιουσίαν ἀγχίνοιαν τάχος... τὴν ἅπασιν ἀπρόσιτον δεινότητα καὶ δύναμιν” (heightened tone, vital emotion, abundance, sagacity, speed... and all his incomparably astonishing grandeur and power). He calls these sublime qualities “θεόπεμπτά” (God-given).⁵⁵⁶ Longinus also claims that “ἢ κεῖται τὸ μὲν ὕψος ἐν διάρματι” (“Sublimity lies in elevation”), and his use of the word διάρμα is significant.⁵⁵⁷ Related to the verb διαίρω, the word signifies a raising or lifting upward. The sublime elevates. But διάρμα also signifies a crossing or a passage. Strabo uses the word to mean the “crossing of a channel” in his *Geographica*, and Polybius uses the word to describe a “passage by sea” in his *Historiae*.⁵⁵⁸ For these authors, τὸ διάρμα denotes the crossing of a barrier between two places. In other words, if the sublime lies “ἐν διάρματι,” then it lies in carrying us up across a threshold. Longinus expresses rhetorically what Marshall’s 1636 frontispiece expresses visually. The sublime is a divine power that carries the human soul toward God. It is a crossing into the divine. To express the sublime is to become *οἰσόθεος*.

This understanding of the sublime is consistent with early modern uses of the word.

While the verb *to sublime* had the alchemical meaning of transforming a solid substance into a

⁵⁵⁶ Longinus, 272, 34.4; my translation.

According to Longinus, Demosthenes’ sublimity is so supernatural, “θᾶπτον ἄν τις κεραυνοῖς φερομένοις ἀντανοῖζαι τὰ ὄμματα δύναιτο ἢ ἀντοφθαλμῆσαι τοῖς ἐπαλλήλοις ἐκείνου πάθειν” (“You could sooner open your eyes to the descent of a thunderbolt than face his repeated outbursts of emotion without blinking”) (Longinus, 272-73, 34.4).

⁵⁵⁷ Longinus, *On the Sublime*, 206-07, 12.2.

⁵⁵⁸ See Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, “δίαρμα,” in *A Greek-English Lexicon, revised and augmented throughout by Sir Henry Stuart Jones* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1940).

Strabo: “Τέτταρα δ’ ἐστὶ διάρματα οἷς χρῶνται συνήθως ἐπὶ τὴν νῆσον ἐκ τῆς ἡπείρου” (“There are only four passages which are habitually used in crossing from the mainland to the island”) (Strabo, *Geography*, trans. Horace Leonard Jones [Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1923], 252-53, 4.5.2).

Polybius: “ἅμα δὲ καὶ διότι πρὸς τὸν ἀπὸ τῆς Λιβύης πλοῦν καὶ πελάγιον διάρμα λίαν εὐφυῶς κεῖται τοῖς Καρχηδονίοις” (“and that it was at the same time very favorably situated for the Carthaginians to make the direct sea crossing from Africa”) (Polybius, *The Histories of Polybius*, trans. W.R. Paton, rev. F.W. Walbank and Christian Habicht [Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 2011], 132-35, 10.8.2-3).

vapor, *to sublime* also meant “to raise up or on high; to cause to ascend” and even “to raise (a person or immaterial *thing*) to an elevated sphere or exalted state” and “to be transformed *into* something higher, nobler, or more refined.”⁵⁵⁹ Milton writes, “... flow’rs and their fruit, / Man’s nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed / To vital spirits aspire...,”⁵⁶⁰ while Philip Massinger has his character Luke proclaim in *City Madam* (1658), “I am sublimed! gross earth / Supports me not; I walk on air!”⁵⁶¹ Returning to Rubens’s centerpiece for the King’s Banqueting House, we can say that *The Apotheosis of James I* depicts the King sublimed.

The conceptual consistency between sublimity, transportation, and apotheosis distinguishes the baroque sublime from subsequent approaches to the concept.⁵⁶² Later ideas of the sublime like those found in Edmund Burke’s *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757) or Immanuel Kant’s *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764) are principally concerned with defining the psychological experience of the sublime—one they associate with limitation. For these eighteenth-century critics, the sublime is best understood in relation to the beautiful, because the former is categorically opposed to the latter. While the beautiful promotes pleasure, delight, and social connection, the sublime engenders

⁵⁵⁹ “Sublime, v.,” *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, accessed in June 2018, Oxford University Press, <https://www-oed-com.ezpprod1.hul.harvard.edu/view/Entry/192766?rskey=ZO5Rti&result=1&isAdvanced=false>.

⁵⁶⁰ John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Gordon Teskey (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2005), 119, 5.482-84 referenced in “Sublime, v.,” *Oxford English Dictionary Online*.

⁵⁶¹ Philip Massinger, *The City Madam*, in Vol. 4 of *The Plays of Philip Massinger*, ed. W. Gifford (London: W. Bulmer and Co. Cleveland-Row, 1813) 68, 3.3.43, referenced in “Sublime, v.,” *Oxford English Dictionary Online*.

⁵⁶² Carolina van Eck, Stijn Bussels, and Maarten Delbeke have commented on the difficulty of writing about the sublime before 1750: “To study the history of the sublime before 1750... raises two problems: on the one hand, its meaning cannot be located in a monodisciplinary way (e.g. as an aesthetic concept, on a par with the beautiful or the ugly); on the other hand, in early modern Europe experiences that after 1750 would be characterized as ‘sublime’ *did* occur, but were labelled differently: as experiences of wonder and amazement, as mystical experiences of rapture, as horror or fear” (Carolina van Eck, Stijn Bussels, and Maarten Delbeke, introduction to *Translations of the Sublime: The Early Modern Reception and Dissemination of Longinus’ Peri Hupsous in Rhetoric, the Visual Arts, Architecture and the Theatre*, eds. Caroline van Eck, Stijn Bussels, Maarten Delbeke and Jürgen Pieters [Leiden: Brill, 2012], 3).

astonishment, fear, and a sense of one's individual limits. But the sublime of the seventeenth century—the baroque sublime—is distinct from this later understanding and more closely follows Longinus's *Peri hypsous*. For Longinus, the beautiful is not opposed to the sublime, and he often speaks of the beautiful and pleasing qualities of the sublime—“ὅλως δὲ καλὰ νόμιζε ὕψη καὶ ἀληθινὰ τὰ διὰ παντὸς ἀρέσκοντα καὶ πᾶσιν” (“To speak generally, you should consider that to be beautifully and truly sublime which pleases all people at all times”).⁵⁶³ But even more importantly, Longinus never associates the sublime with fear, alienation, powerlessness, or limitation. In fact, he lists fear among the emotions entirely empty of sublimity—“γὰρ πάθη τινὰ διεστῶτα ὕψους καὶ ταπεινὰ εὐρίσκεται, καθάπερ οἴκτοι λῦπαι φόβοι” (“For one can find emotions that are mean and devoid of sublimity, for instance feelings of pity, grief, and fear”).⁵⁶⁴ He also claims that “φύσει γὰρ πως ὑπὸ τᾷληθοῦς ὕψους ἐπαίρεται τε ἡμῶν ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ γαῦρόν τι παράστημα λαμβάνουσα πληροῦται χαρᾶς καὶ μεγαλαυχίας, ὥς αὐτὴ γεννήσασα ὅπερ ἤκουσεν” (“For the true sublime naturally elevates us: uplifted with a sense of proud exaltation, we are filled with joy and pride, as if we had ourselves produced the very thing we heard”).⁵⁶⁵ The feelings of fear, alienation, terror, and limitation so essential to the sublime for Burke and Kant are absent from Longinus and the early modern reception of *Peri hypsous*.⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶³ Longinus, *On the Sublime*, 179-81, 7.4.

⁵⁶⁴ Longinus, 182-83, 8.2.

⁵⁶⁵ Longinus, 178-79, 7.3.

⁵⁶⁶ In a contribution to *Culture and Authority in the Baroque* (2005), Lorna Clymer describes a similar opposition between conceptions of the sublime in early eighteenth-century English poetry. Distinguishing between “a physico-theological sublime and a religious sublime of limitation,” Clymer understands the former as baroque in orientation, claiming “there is no terror, only praise” and rather than the feeling of powerlessness that the “religious sublime of limitation” produces, this baroque “physico-theological sublime” produces a sense of exultation (Lorna Clymer, “Philosophical Tours of the Universe in British Poetry, 1700-1729, Or, The Soaring Muse,” in *Culture and Authority in the Baroque*, eds. Massimo Ciavolletta and Patrick Coleman [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005], 54). “Exultation is already possible and is the appropriate response from our viewing [the sublime]. In exultation, the reader can shake off any uneasiness caused by the dizzying multiplicity of things and their parts” (Clymer, 54). This baroque sublime of exultation is one of transgression and transportation. It carries us past any limits into the infinite and divine.

To be sure, eighteenth-century approaches to the sublime have clouded scholarly understandings of the concept in antiquity and the Renaissance. James I. Porter has recently attempted to clarify the pervasive confusion among classicists over Longinus' theory of the sublime, arguing that scholars are misguided to follow D. A. Russell's antiquated understanding of the Longinian sublime as "a special effect, not a special style."⁵⁶⁷ He explains,

The claim, which has become something of a slogan among specialists, is nowhere backed up by a reference to Longinus, who says no such thing. The reason is not far to seek. The language almost certainly derives from Samuel Monk, whose 1935 study on eighteenth-century theories of the sublime was by 1964 a classic (it was reprinted in 1960). For Monk, 'the test of the sublime is in its effect' and not in the areas of 'technique and style.' Accordingly, the sublime can be said to lie 'beyond the reach of rhetoric and her handmaiden, the rules,' all of which it completely 'transcends,' given that it is 'independent' of these.⁵⁶⁸

Porter claims that this dominant critical approach to the concept "remains blind to the fact that the sublime in literature for Longinus *is* a matter of art and rhetoric and not an expression of unalloyed genius. Genius without adequate expression in some material medium cannot even get off the ground; and by adequate expression Longinus understands language that is organized by rhetorical principles."⁵⁶⁹ The sublime for Longinus is a rhetorical art.

As Longinus explains himself, his treatise expounds the art (*techne*) of sublimity and pathos ("ὅψους τις ἢ πάθους τέχνη").⁵⁷⁰ Unlike Enlightenment treatises on the sublime, *Peri hypsous* is explicitly written for use by orators and poets. It is a practical treatise, not a theoretical

⁵⁶⁷ D. A. Russell, 'Longinus,' *On the Sublime* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1964), xxxvii, quoted in James I. Porter, *The Sublime in Antiquity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 9.

⁵⁶⁸ Porter, *The Sublime in Antiquity*, 9.

⁵⁶⁹ Porter, 10.

⁵⁷⁰ Longinus, *On the Sublime*, 164, 2.1.

one. Against his contemporaries who questioned whether such an art was possible, given that the sublime was linked to “Natural Genius” (“τὰ μεγαλοφυῆ”),⁵⁷¹ Longinus writes,

ἐγὼ δὲ ἐλεγχθήσεσθαι τοῦθ' ἐτέρως ἔχον φημί, εἰ επισκέψαιτό τις ὅτι ἡ φύσις, ὥσπερ τὰ πολλὰ ἐν τοῖς παθητικοῖς καὶ διηρμένοις αὐτόνομον, οὕτως οὐκ εἰκαῖόν τι καὶ παντὸς ἀμέθοδον εἶναι φιλεῖ· καὶ ὅτι αὕτη μὲν πρῶτόν τι καὶ ἀρχέτυπον γενέσεως στοιχεῖον ἐπὶ πάντων ὑφέστηκεν, τὰς δὲ ποσότητας καὶ τὸν ἐφ' ἐκάστου καιρὸν ἔτι δὲ τὴν ἀπλανεστάτην ἄσκησιν τε καὶ χρῆσιν ἱκανὴ πορίσαι καὶ συνενεγκεῖν ἡ μέθοδος.⁵⁷²

[For my part I hold that the opposite may be proved, if we consider that while in matters of elevation and emotion Nature for the most part knows no law, yet it is not the way of Nature to work at random and wholly without system. In all production Nature is the first and primary element; but all matters of degree, of the happy moment in each case, and again of the safest rules of practice and use, are adequately provided and contributed by system.]⁵⁷³

By imitating the way nature produces the sublime, Longinus creates a system for the production of the sublime in art. According to him, “Ἐπεὶ δὲ πέντε... πηγαὶ τινὲς εἰσιν αἱ τῆς ὑψηγορίας γονιμώταται” (“There are... some five most productive sources of the sublime in literature”).⁵⁷⁴

The first two are the most important and most reliant on natural genius: “πρῶτον μὲν καὶ κράτιστον τὸ περὶ τὰς νοήσεις ἀδρεπήβολον... δεύτερον δὲ τὸ σφοδρὸν καὶ ἐνθουσιαστικὸν πάθος” (“The first and most powerful is the power of grand conceptions... and the second is the inspiration of vehement emotion”).⁵⁷⁵ However, “αἱ λοιπαὶ δ' ἤδη καὶ διὰ τέχνης” (“the other three come partly from art”).⁵⁷⁶ These sources are “ἡ τε ποιὰ τῶν σχημάτων πλάσις” (“the proper construction of figures”), “ἡ γενναία φράσις” (“nobility of language”), and “ἡ ἐν ἀξιώματι καὶ διάρσει σύνθεσις”

⁵⁷¹ “γεννᾶται γάρ, φησί, τὰ μεγαλοφυῆ καὶ οὐ διδασκὰ παραγίνεται, καὶ μία τέχνη πρὸς αὐτὰ τὸ πεφυκέναι.” (“Genius, it is said, is born and does not come of teaching, and the only art for producing it is nature”) (Longinus, 164-65, 2.1).

⁵⁷² Longinus, 164, 2.2.

⁵⁷³ Longinus, 165, 2.2.

⁵⁷⁴ Longinus, 180-81, 8.1.

⁵⁷⁵ Longinus, 180-81, 8.1.

⁵⁷⁶ Longinus, 180-81, 8.1.

(“dignified and elevated word-arrangement”).⁵⁷⁷ Most of *Peri hypsous* is dedicated to providing examples of these last three sources of the sublime in classical authors and encouraging readers to follow their example.

Early modern authors took Longinus’ treatise to heart.⁵⁷⁸ Not only was the Oxford Latin-Greek edition of *Peri hypsous* (*De sublimitate*) printed three times in the first half of the seventeenth century (1636, 1638, and 1650), but the treatise was also translated into English by John Hall in 1652, offering one of the first vernacular translations of *Peri hypsous* in all of Europe.⁵⁷⁹ Moreover, Milton recommends reading Longinus for developing “a graceful and ornate rhetoric” in *Of Education* (1644),⁵⁸⁰ and Thomas Blount insists that Longinus’ treatise was an “excellent” model “to attain to true excellence... [and was] lately well translated into English.”⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁷ Longinus, 180-81, 8.1.

⁵⁷⁸ Many scholars still insist that the sublime was not a concept of aesthetic concern during the period. For example, *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, Fourth Edition* offers this account of the sublime and Longinus’ *Peri hypsous* in the Renaissance: “In the Ren., [*Peri hypsous*] was first published by Francesco Robortello in 1554, then translated into Lat. In 1572 and into Eng. In 1652 by John Hall. But is made no great impression until the late 17th c. Paradoxically enough, it was Nicolas Boileau, the high priest of Fr. Neoclassicism, who launched the *Peri hypsous* on its great mod. career...” (G.F. Else and T.V.F. Brogan, “Sublime,” mod. F. Ferguson and R. Greene, in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012], 1373). But as Van Eck, Bussels, and Delbeke write, “Manuscript copies [of *Peri hypsous*] began to circulate in Quattrocento Italy and from there spread to France and Britain, but very few have been studied. Neither have the ways the sublime was used, in rhetoric, literature, but also in the arts, architecture and the theatre been studied in any systematic way” (Carolina van Eck, Stijn Bussels, and Maarten Delbeke, introduction to *Translations of the Sublime*, 1-2). One recent exception is Patrick Cheney’s *English Authorship and the Early Modern Sublime* (2018), which forcefully demonstrates the concept’s relevance to early modern England and its distinction from later Romantic and modern approaches. He emphasizes that “we cannot write the history of the sublime now engaging scholars across the disciplines until we have mapped the early modern literary sublime in England” (Patrick Cheney, *English Authorship and the Early Modern Sublime: Spenser: Marlowe, Shakespeare, Jonson* [Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018], 3-4). While Cheney focuses his contributions on the sublime to early modern ideas of authorship in Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, and Ben Jonson, this chapter investigates the uses of the early modern sublime in court masques and royal politics—it examines the development of a baroque sublime.

⁵⁷⁹ William London lists Hall’s translation of Longinus among “the most vendible books in England” (William London, *A catalogue of the most vendible books in England orderly and alphabetically digested* [London: n.p., sold by author, 1657], 80v).

⁵⁸⁰ John Milton, *Of Education*, in *Milton’s Selected Poetry and Prose*, ed. Jason P. Rosenblatt (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011), 329.

⁵⁸¹ Thomas Blount, *The academie of eloquence containing a compleat English rhetorique* (London: Printed by T.N. for Humphrey Moseley, 1654), 36.

Peri hypsous was even applied to the visual arts as early as the 1630s. In *The Painting of the Ancients* (1638), Franciscus Junius cites Longinus over fifteen times as a guide for sublimity in painting, insisting that “his words are worth noting.”⁵⁸² To be sure, the Longinian concept of the sublime was prevalent in England well before the eighteenth century and was especially important during the 1630s with the growing circulation of the Oxford Latin-Greek edition.

But Longinus was not the only source of the baroque sublime in early modern England. James Porter’s *The Sublime in Antiquity* (2016) and Stephen Jaeger’s *Magnificence and the Sublime in Medieval Aesthetics: Art, Architecture, Literature, Music* (2010) demonstrate how discourse on the sublime was already present in Christian literature from antiquity to the Renaissance.⁵⁸³ As Porter argues, “[T]he sublime—not the experience alone but the fully fledged thought the sublime—can occur without the help of Longinus.”⁵⁸⁴ To show this, Porter traces a long tradition of writing on the sublime that includes Augustine, Michael Psellus, and Gregory of Nazianzus, all of whom proved important for the development of the baroque sublime in early modern England.⁵⁸⁵ In this Christian tradition, the sublime is understood to be strictly limited to the works of God—Nature and scripture. Porter detects this Christian approach to the sublime in

⁵⁸² Franciscus Junius, *The Painting of the Ancients in Three Books* (London: Printed by Richard Hodgkinsonne and solde by Daniel Frere, 1638), 250.

This book first appeared in a Latin edition titled *De pictura veterum libri tres*.

⁵⁸³ See Porter, *The Sublime in Antiquity* and Stephen Jaeger, *Magnificence and the Sublime in Medieval Aesthetics: Art, Architecture, Literature, Music* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

⁵⁸⁴ Porter, 23.

⁵⁸⁵ See Porter, 18-25.

But Porter also admits that “the ideas, the phraseology, and above all the vectors of thought and imagery [in these Christian authors] are close to those of Longinus” (Porter, 21). And this makes sense. The sublime was a widespread and vital aesthetic idea throughout antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance, and while the concept should never be entirely separated from Longinus, it should also never be restricted to him alone. Understanding the variances of approaches to the sublime during the period will help us better grasp the position of the sublime in early modern aesthetic thought.

Humphrey Sydenham's sermon *Jehovah Jireh* (1633),⁵⁸⁶ whose "theme is the infinite power of God, but the language used is unmistakably that of sublimity."⁵⁸⁷ Porter points to a section of the following passage as an example of Sydenham's sublime style:

God could not be so wonderfully Great, if man had ability to expresse him: and therefore having none, hee expresses himselfe by himselfe; or at least, himselfe by his Prophets, to whom himselfe hee dictates; who like men infus'd and intranc'd, Speake aloft in sacred Allegories, such as besee me the Majesty and Greatnesse aswell of the Pen-man, as Inspirer. And here, what sublimity both of power and language! He clothes himselfe with light as with a garment, stretcheth out the heavens like a curtaine, and spreadeth them as a tent to dwell in; by his spirit hath he garnished the skie, and fashioned it like a molten looking glasse.... He bindes the sweet influences of the Pleiades, and loses the bonds of Orion, brings forth Mazaroth in his season, and guides Arcturus with his Sons, Heere all humane Eloquence is befool'd; *Non vox hominum sonat: Oh, Dei, certe*. Such an expression of God none could frame, but God himself.⁵⁸⁸

For Porter, Sydenham's sublime rhetoric "illustrates how amenable to sublime imagery the sacred tradition was, and how sublimity could find... a strong foothold in the European Renaissance in the centuries leading up to Boileau."⁵⁸⁹ But Sydenham's use of the sublime is significant for reasons other than the ones Porter notes. Sydenham extends the "sublime imagery" traditionally reserved for God to another group in his sermon—the nobility in his congregation.⁵⁹⁰ Early in his sermon, he says,

I think it not unseasonable, nor besides my errand, to sing of the Power and Mercy of one God in the presence of another. Greatnesse is a kind of Deity; God himselfe affording Rulers & Nobles no lower Title than his owne, of Gods. But Gods by Office or Deputation, not by Essence; and yet so Gods by Office, that they personate that God by Essence. Power they have, a mighty one, and Mercy too, or should have, and both these the people sing of,

⁵⁸⁶ See Humphrey Sydenham, *Jehovah-Jireh: God in His Providence and Omnipotence Discovered*, in *Sermons upon Solemne Occasions Preached in Severall Auditories* (London: Printed by John Beale for Humphrey Robinson, 1637). The subject of Sydenham's sermon is Psalm 59:16, "I will sing of thy Power, and sing aloud of thy Mercy" (Sydenham, 119).

⁵⁸⁷ Porter, *The Sublime in Antiquity*, 42.

⁵⁸⁸ Sydenham, *Jehovah-Jireh*, 136-37, quoted in Porter, *The Sublime in Antiquity*, 42.

⁵⁸⁹ Porter, *The Sublime in Antiquity*, 43.

⁵⁹⁰ Porter, 43.

only mortality puts the distance and divides between civill and sacred (or if you will) sacred and celestiall attributes.⁵⁹¹

Nobles have the same “Greatnesse” and “Power” as God, and therefore, “people sing of” them in a sublime style, too.⁵⁹² According to Sydenham, “[O]nely mortality puts the distance between” the English nobles and God.⁵⁹³ This popular understanding of the semi-divinity of English nobility (and especially royalty) during the early seventeenth century encouraged authors and artists to extend the Christian tradition of sublime rhetoric to some humans.

The baroque sublime emerged in England with the fusion of the Christian and Longinian traditions—Christian insofar as it limited the sublime to God and his mortal counterparts and Longinian insofar as it insisted on the capacity of (genius) authors and artists to express that sublimity. Baroque artworks celebrate sublime divinity—mortal or immortal—as well as the human capacity to express it. And in the English context, this baroque conception of the sublime flourished with the promotion of the Divine Right of Kings.⁵⁹⁴ In 1610, James I gave a speech to Parliament in which he claimed that “the state of monarchy is the supremist thing upon earth. For kings are not only God’s lieutenants upon earth, and sit upon God’s throne, but even by God himself they are called gods.”⁵⁹⁵ This theory of royal divinity expanded in the decades to follow and culminated in the years of personal rule under Charles I from 1629 to 1640. As the King

⁵⁹¹ Sydenham, *Jehovah-Jireh*, 119-20.

He justifies this claim by referring to Psalm 82:6: “*I say yee are Gods, Gods with a Moriemini, mortall Gods, there is a but annexed to the Deitie, But ye shall dye, dye like men, and fall as one of the Princes, Psal. 82.6.*” (Sydenham, 120).

⁵⁹² Sydenham, 120.

⁵⁹³ Sydenham, 120.

⁵⁹⁴ As James I says in a speech to Parliament, “In the Scriptures kings are called gods, and so their power after a certain relation compared to the divine power” (James VI and I, *A Speech to the Lords and Commons of the Parliament at White-Hall [1610]*, in *Divine Right and Democracy: An Anthology of Political Writing in Stuart England*, ed. David Wootton [Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2003], 107).

⁵⁹⁵ James VI and I, 107.

increasingly presented himself as a God, it became all the more important to present himself in the decorum of one. The task of the court artist under the Stuarts was first and foremost to express the divinity of the King, and they did so with a sublime style—the baroque. As the 1636 frontispiece to Longinus’ *Peri hypsous* attests, the baroque sublime is capable of apotheosis.

The Sublime Event

Returning to the Banqueting House at Whitehall, the importance of sublimity for the King becomes clearer. The ceiling not only presents a sublime image but also communicates a sublime message—the King of England rules like a God and will ascend to heaven as one. Charles I, perhaps more than any English monarch before him, valued the political power of art. During his reign, he amassed one of the most prized collections in all of Europe. At its height, the collection contained nearly 1,400 paintings and 400 sculptures,⁵⁹⁶ and Whitehall served as “the principal gallery.”⁵⁹⁷ Charles I began his collection in earnest when he acquired the Gonzaga collection from the Duke of Mantua. In 1629, the King agreed to buy a group of paintings from the Gonzagas, including Andrea Mantegna’s famous *Triumph of Caesar*, Raphael’s *St. George and the Dragon* (*La Perla*), Correggio’s *Education of Cupid*, and Titian’s *Entombment*, for £80,000 (the equivalent of roughly £9,771,936 today or the wages of a “skilled tradesman” for 1,142,857 days).⁵⁹⁸ And the collection kept growing through the 1630s:

Of the Florentine school there were, by Leonardo da Vinci, one; by Andrea del Sarto, three; of the Roman school, by Raphael, thirteen; by Giulio Romano, twenty-seven; by Perino del Vaga, one; by Garofalo, one; of the Lombard school, by Luini, one; by Correggio, nine; by

⁵⁹⁶ See Gustav Friedrich Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain: Being an Account of the Chief Collections of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures, Illuminated MSS., etc.* (London: John Murray, 1854), 9. For a comprehensive study of King Charles I’s art collection, see Francis Haskell, *The King’s Pictures: The Formation and Dispersal of the Collections of Charles I and His Courtiers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

⁵⁹⁷ Waagen, *Treasures of Art*, 9.

⁵⁹⁸ “Currency converter: 1270-2017,” *The National Archives*, accessed in July 2020, <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter>. See Waagen, *Treasures of Art*, 7 for a description of the art collection.

Titian, forty-five; by Pordenone, four; by Sebastian del Piombo, one; by Palma Vecchio, five; by Paul Veronese, four; of the Bolognese school, by Annibale Carracci, two; by Guido Reni, four; of the German school, by Albert Durer, three; by Hans Holbein, eleven; by George Pens, two; by Aldegrever, one; of the Flemish school, by Lucas Van Leyden, seven; by Mabuse, two; by Rubens, six; by Van Dyck, eighteen.⁵⁹⁹

Charles I dedicated an entire salon to paintings by Titian including his *Supper at Emmaeus* and *Venus Disrobing*.⁶⁰⁰ He owned Giambologna's *Samson Slaying the Philistine* and even purchased the famous, now lost *Sleeping Cupid* by Michelangelo. Indeed, the collection held many of the most treasured works of the Italian Renaissance, as well as an impressive number of newer works in the baroque style. It showcased a portrait of Philip IV by Diego Velázquez, and it had a remarkable number of paintings by Rubens, including *Peace and War*, *Landscape with Saint George and the Dragon*, *Triumph of the Duke of Buckingham*, a self-portrait, and a portrait of the King himself (see Appendices 8a and 8b). The King's collection also showcased the works of the court's most important painter during the 1620s and 30s—Anthony Van Dyck (see Appendix 9). Charles I even commissioned a marble bust from Gianlorenzo Bernini, and although the work was lost in a fire, the painting sent to Rome as a model for Bernini survives—a portrait of the King by Van Dyck “in three positions—full frontal, profile, and half-profile” (see Appendix 10).⁶⁰¹ To be sure, Charles I was an avid collector of baroque art, but the most sublime works presented at Whitehall were not made of marble or canvas. They were masques.

Performed at the King's Banqueting House underneath the ceiling where Rubens's paintings now hang, Stuart court masques included massive *trompe l'oeil* paintings, giant works of ephemeral architecture, complex musical compositions, and elaborate poetic recitations. They

⁵⁹⁹ Waagen, *Treasures of Art*, 10.

⁶⁰⁰ See Jerry Brotton, *The Sale of the Late King's Goods: Charles I and His Art Collection* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 225.

⁶⁰¹ Brotton, 165.

included dramatic performances, machines that transported people high above the stage, sophisticated foreign dances, and bountiful feasts. Reubens' ceiling paintings offer a minor monument to their sublimity, since after their installation in 1636, Charles I banned all masques from being performed in the Banqueting House for fear of damaging the canvases. This substitution of court masques for Rubens's paintings is altogether fitting, since the paintings present an emblem of the sublime events regularly held there. Like the nine paintings of virtues and vices, Stuart masques abounded in allegorical displays of virtue overcoming vice. Like the images of jubilant putti parading across the ceiling, masques were full of dancing and singing and marvelous machines of transport. And like the grand allegories of royal unity, peace, and abundance, each masque ended by affirming these very qualities in the King and Queen. Even the most sublime allegory of Reubens' paintings—apotheosis—was central to the events. Stuart court masques were nothing if not performances of the court sublimed.⁶⁰²

The masque reached its most elaborate form under the Stuart monarchs in the early seventeenth century. By this point, the events were masterly crafted works of art. The plots and verses were written by some of the most distinguished poets of the period, including Ben Jonson, George Chapman, and Thomas Carew. The scenery, flying machines, and costumes were designed by Inigo Jones—perhaps the most skilled visual artist in England until the arrival of Van Dyck. The verses were often set to music by William and Henry Lawes, and the choreography was organized by Thomas Giles, Barthélemy de Montagut, and others. As Barbara Ravelhofer writes, “Early modern audiences experienced a masquing night as a complex assault upon their five

⁶⁰² See Appendix 11 for a painting by Gerard van Honthorst and commissioned by George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham as a gift to Charles I. Buckingham was a close ally of the King and an enthusiastic supporter of the King's art collection and masques. This painting, *The Liberal Arts presented to King Charles and Henrietta Maria* (1638), depicts the King, Queen, and Buckingham's family dressed as Gods. The costumes and iconography intentionally imitate the performance of a court masque—Charles I's favorite artform, here representing the sublime unity of the liberal arts.

senses.”⁶⁰³ The audience was always a politically select group, consisting of members of the court and foreign diplomats.⁶⁰⁴ The participants were a mix of professional actors and dancers and members of the court. Indeed, the most important roles of the masque were always performed by nobles, including the King and Queen themselves. They took months to prepare and were extraordinarily expensive (often costing more than £1,500). Sometimes the costs became astronomical. As Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong relate, “The Queen’s silkman’s bill for gold and silver braid along for *Tethys* came to £1,984.8s.2d, a fifth more than that normally spent on an entire Caroline masque.”⁶⁰⁵ And the estimate cost of *The Triumph of Peace* was close to £3,000. The reason for all the cost and craft is clear: the Stuart monarchs needed a way to demonstrate their divinity, and the masque was among the most powerful ways to do so.

In their seminal work on the Stuart masque, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court* (1973), Orgel and Strong emphasize the importance of the Divine Right of Kings for the genre. They write, “The masque is for the monarch and about the monarch, the more directly in the reign of Charles I because the King himself played the leading part in his spectacles. At the centre of the form was not only neoplatonic doctrine but also political philosophy: every Stuart masque is an assertion of the Divine Right of Kings.”⁶⁰⁶ The Stuart masque presents the King and his court as Gods in allegorical stories of virtue overcoming vice. And Inigo Jones, the dominant artist of these performances (and the Surveyor General of His Majesty’s Works), fully

⁶⁰³ Barbara Ravelhofer, *The Early Stuart Masque: Dance, Costume, and Music* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2006), 6.

⁶⁰⁴ As Ravelhofer explains, masques were “regularly performed before a significant number of foreigners (at times, as many as twenty different states might send representatives to Whitehall). Pocahontas saw Ben Jonson’s *The Vision of Delight* in 1617” (Ravelhofer, 3).

⁶⁰⁵ Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 43.

⁶⁰⁶ Orgel and Strong, 50.

ascribed to the divinity of the King. He understood the purpose of the masque to be a demonstration of the King's divinity and virtue. As Orgel and Strong attest, Jones "makes one of the most extreme assertions about the nature of monarchy during the age"⁶⁰⁷ when he writes in *Tempe Restored*, "In Heroic Virtue is figured the King's majesty, who therein transcends as far common men as they are above beasts, he being the only prototype to all the kingdoms under his monarchy of religion, justice, and all the virtues joined together."⁶⁰⁸ If the Stuart Kings were mortal Gods, Jones was their most enthusiastic prophet.

Jones directed his artistic powers toward representing the divinity of the King, and perhaps the most extraordinary way he did so was through works of ephemeral architecture. Orgel and Strong explain that "the most important element in Jones's theatre was the use of the heavens, for cloud machines and flying devices played the crucial role in establishing the reality of the masque's apotheoses."⁶⁰⁹ And while Jones could transport performers in "moving clouds and flying chariots" by 1615, it was not until his invention of the fly gallery in 1631 that "the most extensive aerial spectacles were achieved."⁶¹⁰ With this new feat of engineering, Jones could have "stars follow complex courses in *Tempe Restored*, great clouds break open and reassemble in *Coelum Britannicum*; *Luminalia* includes an aerial ballet; and the clouds in Jones's last masque, *Salmacida Spolia*, supported eight persons representing the spheres and a full musical consort."⁶¹¹ With the fly gallery, Jones could even make "a cloud descend, deposit an enthroned Venus on

⁶⁰⁷ Orgel and Strong, 50.

⁶⁰⁸ Inigo Jones, *Tempe Restored*, in *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 2 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), lines 356-60.

⁶⁰⁹ Orgel and Strong, *Inigo Jones*, 18.

⁶¹⁰ Orgel and Strong, 18.

⁶¹¹ Orgel and Strong, 18.

earth, and reascend without the throne.”⁶¹² Stephen Kogan understands this technical innovation as a watershed in the representation of the court’s divinity on the stage. According to him, the symbolic power of the masque “was given a new dimension once Jones could create elaborate atmospheric effects, reveal masquers in great cloud machines, and bring deities down to earth and raise them back again.”⁶¹³

Kogan understands the invention of these machines as a turning point in the genre, where the stage became an elaborate display of the King’s sublimation. He explains, “[A]lthough we find elegant landscape drawings and cloud descents during the Jacobean period, it is not until *Chloridia* [1631] that we see the possibilities for deifying the court, in which technical mastery of the stage became a metaphor of the king’s absolute power.”⁶¹⁴ The specific use of the fly gallery in *Chloridia* that Kogan references is the climactic ascent of Fame with the four arts—Poesy, History, Architecture, and Sculpture—onto a hill whereupon Fame is lifted into the clouds toward heaven.⁶¹⁵ Jonson, the poet of the masque, describes the scene:

Here, out of the earth ariseth a hill, and on the top of it a globe, on which Fame is seen standing with her trumpet in her hand; and on the hill are seated four persons presenting Poesy, History, Architecture, and Sculpture who, together with the nymphs, floods, and fountains make a full choir; at which, Fame begins to mount, and moving her wings flieth, singing, up to heaven.⁶¹⁶

⁶¹² Orgel and Strong, 18, quoted in Stephen Kogan, *The Hieroglyphic King* (London: Associated University Presses, 1986), 121-22.

⁶¹³ Kogan, *The Hieroglyphic King*, 121.

⁶¹⁴ Kogan, 121.

⁶¹⁵ See Appendix 12.

⁶¹⁶ Ben Jonson, *Chloridia: Rites to Chloris and Her Numphs, Personated in a Masque at Court by the Queen’s Majesty and her Ladies at Shrove-Tide, 1631*, in *Court Masques: Jacobean and Caroline Entertainments, 1605-1640*, ed. David Lindley (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1995), 153.

The fly gallery allowed Jones to show the arts supporting the apotheosis of Fame. But this masque is a watershed event not only in its use of machines, but also in its representation of the relationship between heaven and earth.

Chloridia (1631) is the first masque to reverse the traditional hierarchy between the Gods and the court.⁶¹⁷ While these performances had long associated members of the court with Gods, the relationship was previously predicated on the court's admiration and imitation of the Gods. The King and court served as mortal mirrors of divine ideals, but *Chloridia* upsets this neoplatonic symbolism when Zephyrus opens the masque with these verses:

It is decreed by all the gods
The heaven of earth shall have no odds,
But one shall love another;
Their glories they shall mutual make;
Earth look on heaven, for heaven's sake;
Their honours shall be even;
All emulation cease, and jars;
Jove will have earth to have her stars
And lights, no less than heaven.⁶¹⁸

By Jupiter's order, Heaven is no longer the model or platonic ideal by which the court on earth should orient itself. Instead, the Gods are now orienting themselves around the English King and Queen. The heavens have gathered for a celebration and deification of Chloris, played by Queen Henrietta Maria. No longer will the court *emulate* the heavens. No longer will there be a hierarchy between them—*the heaven of earth shall have no odds*. Indeed, the Gods even request that *Earth look on heaven, for heaven's sake*. Connecting this opening scene with the masque's conclusion, Kogan explains that the final scene's "apotheosis of the arts and letters completes a

⁶¹⁷ See Kogan, *The Hieroglyphic King*, 121. Orgel and Strong explain the traditional neoplatonic approach to their relationship as follows: "Venus and Henrietta Maria are thus placed at the apex of opposite perspectives, like mirror images; the earthly Queen of Love reflects the divine" (Orgel and Strong, *Inigo Jones*, 56). That is, the Queen is the mirror or secondary but equal image of Venus.

⁶¹⁸ Jonson, *Chloridia*, 148, lines 37-45

progression that begins with Jupiter's decree to have Chloris (Henrietta Maria) 'stellified on earth.'"⁶¹⁹ *Chloridia* presents an apotheosis of the Queen with the arts, and the message is clear: through the arts, the King and Queen could achieve apotheosis. Poesy, History, Architecture, and Sculpture could together lift the court to an immortal Fame above the Gods themselves. The masque—by drawing on all the arts—could work wonders.

And the entire court participated in the apotheosis. Each performance allowed the audience to share in the divinity of the King. Orgel and Strong understand these collective performances of divinity in relation to James I's broader theory of kingship. In *Basilikon Doron*, James I explains that "a King is as one set on a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures, all the people gazingly doe behold.... It is not enough to a good King, by the scepter of good Lawes well execute to gouerne.... [He must join] therewith his virtuous life in his owne person, and in the person of his Court and company; by good example alluring his subjects to the love of virtue, and hatred of vice."⁶²⁰ The masque formalizes this role of the King. Each performance invites the court to gaze upon the divine virtues of the King or Queen on the stage. And each masque encourages the court to participate in those divine virtues. Indeed, they seduce the King's subjects to love virtue and hate vice by inviting them to perform in the masque itself. Some members of the court were asked to dress in costumes and perform parts, while everyone was invited to dance with the masquers at the end of the event. "Every masque moved toward the moment when the masquers descended and took partners from the audience, annihilating the barrier between the ideal and the real, and including the court in its miraculous transformations."⁶²¹ Indeed, this sublime moment

⁶¹⁹ Kogan, *The Hieroglyphic King*, 120.

⁶²⁰ James I and VI, *Political Works of James I*, ed. Charles Howard McIlwain (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1918), 3, 29, quoted in Orgel and Strong, *Inigo Jones*, 50.

⁶²¹ Orgel and Strong, *Inigo Jones*, 1.

within each masque entailed a crossing of a literal barrier—a threshold between the stage and the audience.

This threshold was called the proscenium, and it was a fundamental component of Jones's stage designs. As John Peacock explains, the proscenium served multiple purposes for Jones. On the one hand, it was a classicizing gesture modelled on the Teatro Olimpico of Andrea Palladio: "By reintroducing the Roman *frons scenae* not only as an architectural setting for dramatic action but as a frame for modern perspective scenery, Palladio implies that the modern proscenium derives from the central elements of the Roman *frons scenae*, the *porta regia*."⁶²² On the other hand, the proscenium served a more practical function by "helping to conceal the stage machinery and its workings, and to focus the spectators' attention within the defined space of the scenic action."⁶²³ But the proscenium also served other, more aesthetic functions. The proscenium presented the décor of the masque.

Jones's favorite word for the proscenium is "the ornament."⁶²⁴ Peacock explains that this became his standard word for the structure after *Chloridia*, in which Jonson describes the structure as "the ornament which went about the scene."⁶²⁵ But Jones used other words to describe the proscenium, too, including "arch," "border," and "frontispiece."⁶²⁶ The words "arch" and "border"

⁶²² John Peacock, *The Stage Designs of Inigo Jones: The European Contexts* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 209.

⁶²³ Peacock, 209.

⁶²⁴ See Peacock, 208, 235.

⁶²⁵ Jonson, *Chloridia*, 147, quoted in Peacock, *The Stage Designs*, 235.

Peacock explains that "this becomes a formula used with only slight variations by all the writers who came after him. So we have 'the border serving the ornament to the scene' (*Tempe Restored*, 1632), 'the ornament that enclosed the scene' (*Britannia Triumphans*, 1638), and so on. The accompanying descriptions, which after Jonson's dismissal become fuller and fuller under Jones's influence, suggest not lazy writers repeating each other but an *idée fixe* of the designer" (Peacock, *The Stage Designs*, 235).

⁶²⁶ Peacock, 213, 216, 259.

conceive of the proscenium both as a frame and a barrier or threshold separating the audience from the stage.⁶²⁷ The proscenium is an arch to be crossed by the masquers as they descend for their dances and the final revels. But the word “frontispiece” is more complicated. Frontispiece is both an architectural and literary term, so to call the proscenium a frontispiece is to designate it both as an architectural façade and something to be read. Like most frontispieces during the period, the proscenium was an emblem of the work as a whole. Jones’s proscenium presents the title of the masque at the top and adorns the remaining space with allegorical figures relevant to the plot. The proscenium qua frontispiece offers a façade and emblem for the work inside, and its style of ornamentation must fit the decorum of its subject. It must express the sublimity and divinity of the King.

Jones’s ornamentation for Stuart masques exhibits a logic of excess. As Peacock demonstrates, Jones’s notes from 1614 reveal the architect working through his theory of ornamentation, and much of his thinking “turn[s] on Alberti’s concept of ‘compositio’, the building up of parts into a whole.”⁶²⁸ In this note from January of that year, Jones expresses an especially outlandish understanding of architectural ornament:

As in dessigne first on Studdies the partes of the boddy of man as Eeyes noses mouthes Eares and so of the rest to bee practice in the partes sepperat ear on comm to put them togethear to maak a hole figure (And cloath yt) and consequently a hole Storry wth all y^e ornamentes

So in Architecture on must Studdy the Partes as loges Entrances Haales Chambers Staires doures windowes. And then adorne them wth colloms Cornishes sfondati. Stattues. Paintings. Compartimentes. Quadratur. Cartochi tearmi festoni armes. Emprese. Massquati folliami. Vasi. Harpis. Puttini. Safinges Stratsi. Scroules. Bacementes. Balustri Risialti. Lions, or eagls clause, converted in to folliami. Sattires serpentes victories, or angels, antike heads in shells. Cherrubins heads with winges. Heads of beastes. Pedistals.

⁶²⁷ Inigo Jones and William Davenant, *Salmacida Spolia*, in *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 2, eds. Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 730, quoted in Peacock, *The Stage Designs*, 259.

⁶²⁸ Peacock, *The Stage Designs*, 230.

Cornucopias. Baskets of fruites. Trofees. Juels. And agates medalie. Draperies.
Frontispices Broken. And Composed.⁶²⁹

Jones displays the same penchant for excessive figuration in architecture that English baroque authors do in language. He covers his works with a copious variety of ornaments: *colloms*, *Cornishes*, *sfondati*, *Stattues*, *Paintings*, *Compartimentes*, *Quadratures*, *Cortochi*, *Emprese*, *Massquati*, *Vasi*, *Harpis*, *Puttiini*, *Scroules*, *Bacementes*, *Balustri*, *Lions*, *eagls*, *serpentes*, *angels*, *antike heads in shells*, *Baskets of fruites*, *Trofees*, *Juels*, and many other figures. Indeed, it is difficult, if not impossible, to imagine a single work of architecture with all of these ornaments, yet this is what Jones attempts to imagine in his note—the baroque perspective of infinite variation.

Jones calls this style of figuration “capricious ornament” or “composed ornament,”⁶³⁰ and he believes it should be restricted, for the most part, to interior designs. He explains,

[F]or as outwar[d]ly eury wyse ma[n] carrieth a grauity in Publicke Places, whear ther is nothing els looked for, y[e]t inwardly hath his Immaginacy set free, and sometimes liccenciously flying out, as nature hirself dooth often tymes Strauagantly, to delight, amase us sumtimes mouse us to laught, sumtimes to Contemplatio[n] and horror, So in architecture ye outward ornamentes oft to be, Sollid, proporsionable according to the rules, masculine and unaffected.⁶³¹

Jones could be describing the ornamentation of baroque cathedrals—strong and unaffected on the outside, while inside the “Immaginacy [is] set free, and sometimes liccenciously flying out.”⁶³² But he is speaking of his own designs. Indeed, Peacock sees this style at work in Jones’s architecture:

“When Jones built the chapel at St James’s for Prince Charles’s intended Catholic bride, he

⁶²⁹ Inigo Jones, *Roman Sketchbook, facsimile prepared for the Duke of Devonshire* (London, 1832), quoted and transcribed in Peacock, *The Stage Designs*, 230.

⁶³⁰ Jones’s use of “capricious” to describe his ornamentation style is consistent with many eighteenth-century critics understanding of the baroque. For example, Antoine-Joseph Pernety writes, “Baroque qui n’est pas selon les règles des proportions, mais du caprice” (Baroque does not accord with the rules of proportions, but those of caprice) (Antoine-Joseph Pernety, *Dictionnaire Portatif de Peinture, Sculpture, et Gravure* [Paris: Chez Bauche, 1757], 24; my translation).

⁶³¹ Jones, *Roman Sketchbook*, quoted and transcribed in Peacock, *The Stage Designs*, 232; brackets are Peacock’s.

⁶³² Jones, *Roman Sketchbook*, quoted and transcribed in Peacock, *The Stage Designs*, 232.

designed an exterior of doctrinaire neo-antique *gravitas* to contain (and perhaps disguise) the baroque paraphernalia within. And at the Queen's House there was the antithesis between the Palladian exterior, and the fanciful complexity of the interior decoration."⁶³³ But Peacock argues that Jones's "masques are his most ornamented works."⁶³⁴ And the proscenium—"the ornament"—is where Jones expresses his most capricious and sublime style.⁶³⁵

In the text edition of *Salmacida Spolia*, Jones describes the proscenium as "the border that enclosed the scenes and made a frontispiece to all the work."⁶³⁶ And although the design for the structure has been lost, Jones offers a lengthy description of the structure at the beginning of the masque. The description is worth quoting at length because it reveals the excessive figuration Jones uses to achieve the divine decorum of the Stuart masque:

In the border that enclosed the scenes and made a frontispiece to all the work, in a square niche on the right hand stood two figures of women, one of them expressing much majesty in her aspect, appareled in sky colour, with a crown of gold on her head and a bridle in her hand, representing Reason; the other embracing her was in changeable silk with wings at her shoulders, figured for Intellectual Appetite, who while she embraceth Reason, all the actions of men are rightly governed. Above these, in a second order, were winged children, one riding on a furious lion, which he seems to tame with reins and a bit, another bearing an antique ensign, the third hovering above with a branch of palm in his hand, expressing the victory over the perturbations. In a niche on the other side stood two figures joining hands, one a grave old man in a robe of purple, with a heart of gold in a chain about his neck, figured for Counsel; the other a woman in a garment of cloth of gold, in her hand a sword with a serpent winding about the blade, representing Resolution, both these being necessary to the good means of arriving to a virtuous end.

Over these and answering to the other side was a round altar raised high, and on it the bird of Pallas, figured for Prudence. On either side were children with wings, one in act of adoration, another holding a book, and a third flying over their heads with a lighted torch in his hand, representing the Intellectual Light accompanied with Doctrine and Discipline, and alluding to the figures below, as those on the other side.

⁶³³ Peacock, 234.

⁶³⁴ Peacock, 235.

⁶³⁵ For an elaboration of Jones's use of "ornament" in relation to the proscenium, see Peacock, 208, 235.

⁶³⁶ Jones and Davenant, *Salmacida Spolia*, 730, quoted in Peacock, *The Stage Designs*, 259.

Above these ran a large frieze with a cornicement, in the midst whereof was a double compartment rich and full of ornament. On the top of this sat Fame with spread wings in act, sounding a trumpet of gold. Joining to the compartment in various postures lay two figures in their natural colours as big as the life, one holding an anchor representing Safety, the other expressing Riches, with a cornucopia, and about her stood antique vases of gold. The rest of this frieze was composed of children, with significant signs to express their several qualities: Forgetfulness of Injuries, extinguishing a flaming torch on an armour; Commerce, with ears of corn; Felicity, with a basket of lilies; Affection to the Country, holding a grasshopper; Prosperous Success, with the rudder of a ship; Innocence, with a branch of fern; all these expressing the several goods, followers of peace and concord, and forerunner of human felicity; so as the work of this front, consisting of picture qualified with moral philosophy, tempered delight with profit.

In the midst of the aforesaid compartment in an oval table was written SALMACIDA SPOLIA.⁶³⁷

This proscenium is consistent with Jones's conception of capricious ornament and its baroque logic of excess. The structure overflows with allegorical figures emblemizing the work performed inside. But if the proscenium is indeed the frontispiece or façade of the masque, then what should we expect inside? According to Jones, the façade should "carrieth a gravity" and be "solid..., masculine and unaffected,"⁶³⁸ whereas the interior of a work can have the "Immaginacy set free, and sometimes liccenciously flying out, as nature hirself dooth often tymes Strauagantly, to delight [and] amase."⁶³⁹ If the façade of the masque exhibits a capricious style usually restricted to the inside, how does Jones present the interior of such a work? Inside the proscenium, *Salmacida Spolia* depicts a world in discord and confusion transformed into a state of harmony and peace upon the arrival of Concord, Genius, and the King—a typical progression for court masques. And while each individual scene expresses the baroque style in a unique way, it is the cumulative effect of all the scenes and their gradual process of transformation from one to the next that expresses the

⁶³⁷ Jones and Davenant, *Salmacida Spolia*, 730.

⁶³⁸ Jones, *Roman Sketchbook*, quoted and transcribed in Peacock, *The Stage Designs*, 232.

⁶³⁹ Jones, *Roman Sketchbook*, quoted and transcribed in Peacock, *The Stage Designs*, 232.

excessive logic of the baroque sublime most fully. The following pages trace this development scene by scene.

The opening scene of *Salmacida Spolia* presents “A Storm and Tempest” based on Alfonso Parigi’s “Storm Scene” in *La Flora*—an opera composed by Marco da Gagliano and Jacopo Peri in 1628 for the wedding of Margherita de’ Medici and Odoardo Farnese (see Appendices 13a and 13b). According to Jones’s text for the masque, this scene displays

a horrid scene... of storm and tempest. No glimpse of sun was seen, as if darkness, confusion, and deformity had possessed the world and driven light to heaven; the trees bending, as forced by a gust of wind, their branches rent from their trunks, and some torne up by the roots. Afar off was a dark wrought sea, with rolling billows breaking against the rocks, with rain, lightning, and thunder. In the midst was a globe of the earth, which, at an instant falling on fire, was turned into a Fury, her hair upright, mixed with snakes, her body lean, wrinkled, and of a warthy colour. Her breasts hung bagging down to her waist, to which with a knot of serpents was girt red bases, and under it tawny skirts down to her feet. In her hand she brandished a sable torch, and looking askance with hollow envious eyes came down into the room.⁶⁴⁰

The initial verses spoken by this horrendous Fury (see Appendices 14a and 14b), written by William Davenant, are an extravagant embellishment of verses from William Shakespeare’s *King Lear* (1606) and, perhaps, Thomas May’s translation of Lucan’s *Pharsalia* (1627). She sings,

Blow winds! Until you raise the seas so high
That waves may hang like tears in the sun’s eye,
That we, when in vast cataracts they fall,
May think he weeps at nature’s funeral.
Blow winds! And from the troubled womb of earth,
Where you receive your undiscovered birth,
Break out in wild disorders, till you make
Atlas beneath his shaking load to shake.⁶⁴¹

⁶⁴⁰ Jones and Davenant, *Salmacida Spolia*, 731.

⁶⁴¹ Jones and Davenant, 731.

Here are the relevant verses from *King Lear*:

Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drenched our steeples, drowned the cocks!

This antimasque aims to evoke confusion, terror, and astonishment in the audience. Indeed, it expresses a sublime more consistent with eighteenth-century conceptions—a scene of nature overwhelming all reasonable limits of understanding. But the masque immediately responds to this scene with a second scene presenting a different sublime—a baroque sublime of divine transformation.

First, the storm clears and “Zephyrus appeared breathing a gentle gale” when suddenly “there came breaking out of the heavens a silver chariot, in which sat two persons, the one a woman in a watchet garment, her dressing of silver mixed with bulrushes, representing Concord” and “somewhat below her sat the Good Genius of Great Britain, a young man in a carnation garment, embroidered all with flowers, an antique sword hung in a scarf, a garland on his head, and

You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers of oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Strike flat the thick rotundity o’ the world!
Crack Nature’s molds, all germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man! (William Shakespeare, *King Lear [Conflated Text]*, in *The Norton Shakespeare, Based on the Oxford Edition, Second Edition*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt [New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2008], 2528, 3.2.1-9)

And here are the verses from book 5 of May’s *Pharsalia*:

Contented with no limit but the skyes
Then also would those welling seas arise
Upto the starres; had not Iove kept downe
Their waues with cloudes, nor sprung that night alone
From natural causes; the thike aire was growne
Infected with the dampes of Acheron,
And clogg’d with foggy stormes, waues from the maine
Fly to the cloudes, and fall like showres againe.
The lightnings light is lost; it shines not cleare,
But shootes obscurely through nights stormy aire.
The heavens then trembled; the high pole for feare
Resounded, when his hindges moved wer.
Nature then fear’d the old confusion:
The elemental concord seem’d undone. (Lucan, *Lucan’s Pharsalia, or The Civill Warres of Rome, between Pompey the great and Iulius Caesar. The Whole Ten Bookes Englished by Thomas May, esquire*, trans. Thomas May [London: Printed for Thomas Jones and John Makriott, 1627], 135-36).

in his hand a branch of platan mixed with ears of corn.”⁶⁴² The arrival of Concord and Genius brings the final dances of the anti-masque and the resolution of the horrible storm into a scene of pastoral harmony, whereupon the scene dramatically changes and the main masque begins. In other words, the apotheosis of two masquers as divine Concord and Genius bring with them the transformation of the storm into a scene of pastoral harmony. The masquers are sublimed as the scene is sublimed, and the stage is now set for the main masque. A cosmic apotheosis is at hand.

The third scene of *Salmacida Spolia* presents “The Way to the Thone of Honour,” based on another scene design by Parigi from *La Nozze degli Dei* (1637)—an opera performed at the Pitti Palace in Florence in July 1637 (see Appendices 16a and 16b). As Jones describes it,

All the scene was changed into craggy rocks and inaccessible mountains. In the upper parts, where any earth could fasten, were some tress, but of strange forms, such as only grow in remote parts of the Alps and in desolate places; the furthest of these was hollow in the midst and seemed to be cut through by art, as the Pausilipo near Naples, and so high as the top pierced the clouds; all which represented the difficult way which heroes are to pass ere they come to the Throne of Honour.⁶⁴³

The road to fame and honor is treacherous. The “craggy rocks and inaccessible mountains” covered in “strange forms” present another natural image of sublimity. But this image is a path—a way to the Throne of Honour visible on the other side.⁶⁴⁴ And Jones alludes to the means by which the court can arrive there. The allusion is embedded in his description of the final hill upon which the throne sits. Jones explains that it is “hollow in the midst and seemed to be cut through by art, as

⁶⁴² Jones and Davenant, *Salmacida Spolia*, 731.

See Appendices 15a and 15b, for comparison between this scene design and another from Parigi’s *La Flora*.

⁶⁴³ Jones and Davenant, 732.

⁶⁴⁴ Jones and Davenant, 732.

the Pausilipo near Naples.”⁶⁴⁵ This might seem a strange detail for Jones to include, but it is essential to his understanding of this scene and the ultimate purpose of the masque.

The referenced grotto near Naples called Posillipo was famous for its association with Virgil. During the Middle Ages and Renaissance, the grotto was believed to be the Tomb of Virgil, and, according to one legend, Virgil was the person who “excavat[ed] the tunnel through the mountains,” completing “the work in one night.”⁶⁴⁶ Jones places his Throne of Honour on top of a hyperbolic image of Posillipo, “so high as the top pierced the clouds,” in order to connect the Throne with the classical arts. Like Posillipo, the path to the Thone of Honour—and the divinity it symbolizes—is only possible if the way “be cut through by art.”⁶⁴⁷ To be sure, art not only cuts the way, but offers the foundation upon which the Throne of Honour sits. Again, Jones is demonstrating to his audience that the only means to achieve Fame, Honour, and Divinity is through the arts—more specifically, the masque, because it alone can combine all of the arts into one. The masque sublimates the arts in order to sublime the King and his court.

Then the apotheosis begins. A song is sung, a curtain lifted, and the court is displayed upon the Throne of Honour. As John Harris, Orgel, and Strong explain, “the backdrop rose forty-seven feet from the stage. The King and Queen, seated, were to arrive on the scene from the skies and their thrones were drawn by pulleys along a groove some twenty feet above the level of the stage.”⁶⁴⁸ First, the King and his courtiers descend as Gods from the clouds. As Jones describes,

The further part of the scene disappeared, and the King’s majesty and the rest of the masquers were discovered sitting in the Throne of Honour, his majesty highest in a seat of

⁶⁴⁵ Jones and Davenant, 732.

⁶⁴⁶ Joseph Salathiel Tunison, *Master Virgil: The Author of the Aeneid as He Seemed in the Middle Ages* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1888), 197.

⁶⁴⁷ Jones and Davenant, *Salmacida Spolia*, 732.

⁶⁴⁸ Michael Leapman, *Inigo: The Troubled Life of Inigo Jones, Architect of the English Renaissance* (Polmont, UK: Headline Book Publishing, 2003), 327.

gold and the rest of the lords about him. This throne was adorned with palm trees, between which stood statues of the ancient heroes. In the under parts on each side lay captive bound, in several postures, lying on trophies of armours, shields, and antique weapons, all his throne being feigned of goldsmith's work. The habit of his majesty and the masquers was of watchet, richly embroidered with silver; long stockings set up of white; their caps silver with scrolls of gold and plumes of white feathers.⁶⁴⁹

The King appears on stage with a song in his honor, and then the Queen descends from even higher, accompanied by her ladies, in a giant cloud machine that opens to reveal them—"there came softly from the upper part of the heavens a huge cloud of various colours...; which, descending to the midst of the scene, opened, and within it was a transparent brightness of thin exhalations, such as the gods are feigned to descend in."⁶⁵⁰ The Queen and her "martial ladies" descend as Gods upon the Throne while they are illuminated with "lightsome rays" and "many streaks of thin vapours."⁶⁵¹ With the divinity of the King and Queen established, they descend through the proscenium onto the dancing floor. The Gods have arrived at court.

Or were they already there? Orgel and Strong emphasize the importance of understanding the masque as a collective performance of divinity. They explain that each spectator "plays an active role in the masque... through the audience's inclusion in the apotheosis. For it is the transformation of both masquer and spectator, of the whole court, that the masque as a form undertakes."⁶⁵² And while this is undoubtedly true, the final scene of *Salmacida Spolia* presents an even grander apotheosis. Indeed, it displays "magnificent buildings composed of several selected pieces of architecture. In the furthest part was a bridge over a river, where many people, coaches,

⁶⁴⁹ Jones and Davenant, *Salmacida Spolia*, 733.

⁶⁵⁰ Jones and Davenant, 733.

⁶⁵¹ Jones and Davenant, 733.

Jones further relates that they were all dressed "in Amazonian habits of carnation, embroidered with silver, with plumed helms, baldrics with antique swords hanging by their sides, all as rich as might be; but the strangeness of the habits was most admired" (Jones and Davenant, 733). See Appendix 17.

⁶⁵² Orgel and Strong, *Inigo Jones*, 11.

horses, and such like, were seen to pass to and fro. Beyond this on the shore were buildings in perspective, which shooting far from the eye showed as the suburbs of a great city” (see Appendix 18).⁶⁵³ This great city is not Oxford or Cambridge, Westminster or London. It is the image of a city sublimed. It is an ideal city—an English city to come. And as the audience gazes at this sublime sight,

From the highest part of the heavens came forth a cloud far in the scene, in which were eight persons richly attired representing the spheres. This joining with two other clouds which appeared at that instant full of music, covered all the upper part of the scene; and at that instant, beyond all these, a heaven opened full of deities; which celestial prospect, with the chorus below, filled all the whole scene with apparitions and harmony.⁶⁵⁴

From the extant designs of the scene (see Appendix 19), dozens if not hundreds of deities appear in the clouds above the city. In this final apocalyptic vision of an English city—half mortal, half divine—the masquers straddle the barrier between heaven and earth as they sing their final song to the King and Queen.

Live still, the pleasure of our sight,
Both our examples and delight;

So long, until you find the good success
Of all your virtues in one happiness;

Till we so kind, so wise, and careful be,
In the behalf of our posterity,

That we may wish your scepters ruling here,
Loved even by those who should your justice fear,
When we are gone, when to our last remove
We are dispatched, to sing your praise above.⁶⁵⁵

But are they not already singing their praise above? How are we to make sense of these masquers dressed as Gods in the heavens referring to a future when they will do this again? They are

⁶⁵³ Jones and Davenant, *Salmacida Spolia*, 734.

⁶⁵⁴ Jones and Davenant, 734.

⁶⁵⁵ Jones and Davenant, 734.

performing the future for which they dream. In this sense, their song oscillates in a conditional mood between the present and the future, the real and the divine. And like the city, the masquers appear to be somewhere between heaven and earth. This dance between the earthly and the divine is what the masque performs. The masque is a liminal art—an art of the threshold. It combines the arts of music and dance, architecture and sculpture, painting and poetry in an attempt to evoke the sublimity of a King and a God. And the court gathered round in hope that they might feel the sublime and find themselves sublimed.

Baroque Politics: The Art of Seduction

Not everyone in early modern England appreciated the sublimity of the masque as much as Jones and the King. In fact, some of the masquers in *Salmacida Spolia* were already plotting against Charles I. As Martin Butler explains, “[A]lmost two-thirds of the male masquers were either moderate critics or future opponents of the king.”⁶⁵⁶ Two masquers at the event, Lord Russell and Lord Herbert, fought on the Parliamentary side of the Civil War, and the latter was “a future member of Cromwell’s Council of State.”⁶⁵⁷ Lord Herbert’s sister Lady Anne Sophia Herbert, Countess of Carnarvon, (another masquer in *Salmacida Spolia*) even threatened to derail the entire performance when Charles I scheduled the dancing on a Sunday.⁶⁵⁸ With all these critics in the room, *Salmacida Spolia* appears more like a political event. And the title of the masque confirms the political intentions of the King. Jones explains the title in his text to the performance:

⁶⁵⁶ Martin Butler, “Politics and the Masque: *Salmacida Spolia*,” in *Literature and the English Civil War*, eds. Thomas Healy and Jonathan Sawday (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 66.

⁶⁵⁷ Butler, “Politics and the Masque,” 66.

⁶⁵⁸ See Butler, 66. The father of both Lord Herbert and the Countess of Carnarvon was Philip Herbert, 4th Earl of Pembroke, who disagreed vehemently with the king on religious issues and ultimately sided with Parliament in the war. As Butler explains, the Countess “married a zealous king’s man, but her scruples about dancing on Sundays may indicate that her outlook was coloured by her father’s sympathies. See Collins, *Letter and Memorials*, II, p. 621” (Butler, 74).

“The ancient adages are these: *Salmacida spolia sine sanguine sine sudore, potius quam Cadmia Victoria, ubi ispos victors pernicies opprimit*” (“Salmacian spoils, achieved without bloodshed or sweat, rather than a Cadmian victory when destruction falls upon victors themselves”).⁶⁵⁹ Jones elaborates that the adage comes from two histories, the first of which expresses the political purposes of the masque:

For the first: Melas and Arevanias of Argos and Troezen conducted a common colony to Halicarnassus in Asia, and there drove out the barbarous Carie and Lelagi, who fled up to the mountains; from whence they made many incursions, robbing and cruelly spoiling the Grecian inhabitants, which could by no means be prevented.

On the top of the right horn of *the hill which surrounds Halicarnassus in form of a theatre is a famous fountain of most clear water and exquisite taste called Salmacis*. It happened that near to this fountain one of the colony, to make gain by the goodness of the water, set up a tavern and furnished it with all necessities; to which the barbarians resorting (*enticed by the delicious taste of this water, at first some few, and after many together in troops*) of fierce and cruel natures were reduced of their own accord to the sweetness of the Grecian customs.⁶⁶⁰

The allegorical import of this history would have been obvious to everyone present. The masque is the *fountain of most clear water and exquisite taste called Salmacis* that is found in a place resembling the *form of a theatre*. And the masquers who participate in the performance will be *enticed by the delicious taste of this water and reduced of their own accord to the sweetness of the Grecian customs*. The alternative—the other history to which the adage refers—is the fate of the Cadmians, whose “victory was gotten with great damage and slaughter [of themselves]..., for few of them returned alive into their city.”⁶⁶¹ In other words, *Salmacida Spolia* invites the masquers to stop resisting and enjoy the spectacle.

⁶⁵⁹ Jones, *Salmacida Spolia*, 730; translation by David Lindley in *Court Masques: Jacobean and Caroline Entertainments, 1605-1640*, ed. David Lindley (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1995), 270.

⁶⁶⁰ Jones, 730; my emphasis.

⁶⁶¹ Jones, 730.

If the masque is a political artform, it does not work by persuasion but by seduction. Orgel and Strong distinguish between “plays [that] are rhetorical structures and imitations of actions” and masques that “are, as Jones says in *Tempe Restored*, analogies: Ideas made apprehensible, visible, real.”⁶⁶² The idea of *Salmacida Spolia* is simple: forget any past injuries the King may have caused you and rejoice in the prosperity of England. The proscenium of the masque emphasizes this idea by depicting allegorical figures on either side of the title: “Forgetfulness of Injuries, extinguishing a flaming torch on an armour;... Felicity, with a basket of lilies; affection to the Country, holding a grasshopper; [and] Prosperous Success, with the rudder of a ship.”⁶⁶³ And while the idea of the masque is clear from the outset, the plot communicates this idea in a unique way. The masque does not attempt to persuade the audience with rhetorical arguments, but to seduce them with rhetorical figures of baroque sublimity. In this sense, as Orgel and Strong continually stress, the Caroline masque is “not less but more rhetorical than plays” of the period.⁶⁶⁴ Stuart masques overflow with rhetorical figures to generate a sense of wonder around the political ideas they express. The masque functions politically by presenting royal propaganda in a sublime style, and this function is consistent with Longinus’ own understanding of how the sublime works. For him, the sublime is uniquely effective because it appeals directly to the passions. As Katrin Ettenhuber explains,

Longinus eschews modes of persuasion that are based on *logos* (argument) and *ethos* (character), and instead appeals exclusively to the emotions of his audience: ‘For the effect of genius is not to persuade the audience but rather to transport them out of themselves. Invariably what inspires wonder, with its power of amazing us, always prevails over what is merely convincing and pleasing....’⁶⁶⁵

⁶⁶² Orgel and Strong, *Inigo Jones*, 9.

⁶⁶³ Jones, *Salmacida Spolia*, 730. Two of these allegories are referenced in Butler, “Politics and the Masque,” 66-67.

⁶⁶⁴ Orgel and Strong, *Inigo Jones*, 10.

⁶⁶⁵ Katrin Ettenhuber, “Hyperbole: Exceeding Similitude,” in *Renaissance Figures of Speech*, eds. Sylvia Adamson, Gavin Alexander, and Katrin Ettenhuber (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 205.

To express a political idea in the form of a masque is a baroque political strategy. Rather than persuading people with reason, baroque politics works by seducing people with wonder and amazement. Masques like *Salmacida Spolia* enact a baroque politics of seduction.

It is easy to understand such a strategy as cynical. Many critics continue to read masques as Machiavellian attempts to trick the court. However, in *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance* (1975), Orgel insists that it is “a mistake to think that there was deception in this vision, or cynicism in the king’s satisfaction with it.”⁶⁶⁶ He argues that Jones and Charles I approached the masque as Prospero approaches his art in *The Tempest*. What Jones calls “Immaginacy” in his 1614 note on ornamentation is a veritable power to move emotions, change minds, and recreate the world. “Imagination here is real power: to rule, to control and order the world, to change or subdue other men, to create; and the source of the power is imagination, the ability to make images, to project the workings of the mind outward in a physical, active form, to actualize ideas, to conceive actions.”⁶⁶⁷ And such an understanding of the imagination is entirely consistent with broader approaches to the subject during the seventeenth century. Ofer Gal and Raz Chen-Morris explain that even practitioners of the New Science believed in the extraordinary powers of the imagination:

Fundamentally mediated and brazenly manmade, the knowledge provided by the New Science, with all its marvelous success, could no longer lay claim to direct acquaintance with the objects of nature. In their stead, the mind produced its own objects: through instruments, experiments, and mathematical manipulations it brought about stars and sunspots; infinitesimal magnitudes and imaginary curves; the spring of air and the isochrony of spring. Objective knowledge appeared to rely on the mind’s creative, “poetic,” engagement, or in other words—on the imagination; the faculty of images.⁶⁶⁸

⁶⁶⁶ Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1975), 88.

⁶⁶⁷ Orgel, 47.

⁶⁶⁸ Ofer Gal and Raz Chen-Morris, *Baroque Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 8.

Early modern science relied on products of the imagination—telescopes, microscopes, mathematical formula, etc.—to reveal truths hidden to the naked eye. What appeared through the lens of a microscope was just as true, if not truer, than what appeared at first glance. Philosophers, artists, and scientists across early modern England trusted fabricated images to present the truth.

Returning to Jones and the illusions of the court masque, we can better understand what Orgel means when he writes that “the truth of the royal productions was the truth of appearances.”⁶⁶⁹ Baroque art, like early modern science, was rooted in the understanding that a fabricated image could not only reveal the truth but also be the truth. As Gilles Deleuze explains, “[T]he Baroque entails neither falling into nor emerging from illusion but rather *realizing* something in illusion itself.... The Baroque artists know well that hallucination does not feign presence, but that presence is hallucinatory.”⁶⁷⁰ This double movement between the illusion of reality and the reality of illusion is a hallmark of baroque aesthetics, and it is most clearly expressed in Jones’s masques through his use of *trompe l’oeil* scenery. Jean Baudrillard understands the pivotal importance that baroque *trompe l’oeil* had on people’s perception of reality and art. “The *trompe l’œil* does not seek to confuse itself with the real.”⁶⁷¹ Everyone knows they are looking at a work of art. But “by mimicking the third dimension, it questions the reality of this dimension, and by mimicking and exceeding the effects of the real, it radically questions the reality principle.”⁶⁷² In the end, the masque is not an illusion of power. The illusion is the power.

⁶⁶⁹ Orgel, *The Illusion of Power*, 88.

⁶⁷⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 125.

⁶⁷¹ Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 63.

⁶⁷² Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 63.

This disturbed some people. As Orgel explains, the fact that the seductive strategies of the masque may “now seem to us at best obscure, at worst insincere, says much for the success of the Puritan revolution.”⁶⁷³ To be sure, puritan sensibilities were most upset by the masque. William Prynne was especially disgruntled by the lavish performances and by the fact that women were allowed to participate. In 1633, he published *Histriomastix: The Player’s Scourge, or, Actor’s Tragedie*, a verbose and vitriolic attack on all theatrical performances, in which he called “Women-actors, notorious whores.”⁶⁷⁴ As Dawn Lewcock writes, “The king was persuaded by Archbishop Laud that [Prynne] was referring to the queen, and Prynne was sent to the Tower and had his ear cropped for his pains.”⁶⁷⁵ But Prynne was not alone in his distaste for masques. Critics have argued that Milton’s *A Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle* (1634) was a “a thoroughgoing critique of the Caroline masque.”⁶⁷⁶ And Orgel and Strong point to *Eikonoclastes*—Milton’s response to *Eikon Basilike*, the posthumous royal apology—as an even more direct attack on the masque. In it, Milton calls the royal defense a “conceited portraiture... drawn out to the full measure of a masking scene, and set there to catch fools and silly gazers”⁶⁷⁷ He argues that the “quaint emblems and devices” of the book “begged from the old pageantry of some Twelfthnight’s entertainment at Whitehall, will do but ill to make a saint or martyr” of the King.⁶⁷⁸ In other words, Milton was not seduced by the King’s masques, emblems, or devices. He did not appreciate the illusions.

⁶⁷³ Orgel, *Illusion of Power*, 88.

⁶⁷⁴ William Prynne, *Histriomastix: The Player’s Scourge, or, Actor’s Tragedie* (London: Printed by E.A. and W.I. for Michael Sparke, 1633), quoted in Dawn Lewcock, *Sir William Davenant, the Court Masque, and the English Seventeenth-Century Scenic Stage, c1605-c1700* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2008), 37.

⁶⁷⁵ Lewcock, *Davenant, the Court Masque*, 37.

⁶⁷⁶ Kogan, *The Hieroglyphic King*, 229.

⁶⁷⁷ John Milton, *Ikonoklastes*, in *Complete Poems and Selected Prose*, ed. M.Y. Hughes (New York: Odyssey Press, 1957), 784, quoted in Orgel and Strong, *Inigo Jones*, 14.

⁶⁷⁸ Milton, *Ikonoclastes*, 784, quoted in Orgel and Strong, *Inigo Jones*, 14.

Milton was nonetheless interested in the art of seduction. *A Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle* (1634) marks the beginning of an aesthetic commitment to representing seductive rhetoric alongside the means for resisting it. Consider this speech in which Comus attempts to seduce the Lady:

O foolishness of men! That lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence.
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odors, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious taste?
.....
 ... If all the world
Should in a pet of temperance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
Th' All-giver would be unthanked, would be unpraised.
.....
List, lady, be not coy, and be not cozened
With that same vaunted name Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded
But must be current, and the good thereof
Consist in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavory in th' enjoyment of itself.⁶⁷⁹

Milton knows his enemies well, and he understands the language of seduction. Indeed, Milton may be critical of the baroque style of the King and his masques, but he is fully capable of reproducing it. Comus is a master of baroque seduction. His speech overflows with excessive rhetorical figures—accumulatio, apostrophe, erotema, hyperbaton, hyperbole, metonymy, etc.—all of which serve to hide the faulty logic. Comus does not try to convince with reason, but with a logic of

⁶⁷⁹ John Milton, *A Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle [Comus]*, in *Milton's Selected Poetry and Prose*, ed. Jason P. Rosenblatt (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2011), 59-60, lines 706-14, 720-23, 737-42.

excess that produces sublime feelings of wonder and awe. Milton's virtuous characters see through all this. In *A Masque*, the Lady simply replies,

I had not thought to have unlocked my lips
In this unhallowed air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules pranked in reason's garb.⁶⁸⁰

This dramatic struggle that Milton presents between Comus and the Lady exemplifies a growing concern during the period over the seductiveness of art and rhetoric. In the same year that Milton published *Paradise Lost* (1667), Thomas Sprat's *The History of the Royal Society* (1667) went to press. And in an extended explanation of England's "manner of discourse," Sprat warns his readers of the dangers that the contemporary rhetorical style poses for society. He explains,

At first, no doubt, [rhetoric was] an admirable Instrument in the hands of Wise Men; when they were onely employ'd to describe Goodness, Honesty, Obedience; in larger, fairer, and more moving Images: to represent Truth, cloth'd with Bodies; and to bring Knowledg back again to our very senses, from whence it was at first deriv'd to our understandings. But now they are generally chang'd to worse uses: They make the Fancy disgust the best things, if they come sound, and unadorn'd: they are in open defiance against Reason; professing, not to hold much correspondence with that; but with its Slaves, the Passions: they give the mind a motion too changeable, and bewitching, to consist with right practice. Who can behold, without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties, these specious Tropes and Figures have brought on our Knowledg?⁶⁸¹

Milton shares Sprat's concern over the potential effects of excessive rhetorical tropes and figures.

It is no mistake that Milton compares Satan in *Paradise Lost* to a classical orator:

As when of old some orator renowned
In Athens or free Rome where eloquence
Flourished (since mute) to some great cause addressed
Stood in himself collected while each part,
Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue,
Sometimes in heighth began as no delay
Of preface brooking through his zeal of right

⁶⁸⁰ Milton, 60, lines 756-59.

⁶⁸¹ Thomas Sprat, *The History of the Royal Society* (London: Printed by T.R. for I. Martyn, 1667), 111-2, quoted in William H. Gass, "Excerpt from Baroque Prose," *LitMag* 1, no. 1 (2017), 156-57.

So standing, moving, or to heighth upgrown
The Tempter all impassioned thus began.⁶⁸²

But Milton's anxiety about the dangers of rhetorical ingenuity stretches to all the arts. Milton depicts not only Satan's rhetoric as baroque but also the architecture of Hell itself. Consider his description of Mammon creating the "wondrous art" of Pandemonium:

As in an organ from one blast of wind
To many a row of pipes the soundboard breathes.
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a temple where pilasters round
Were set and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave, nor did there want
Cornice or frieze with body sculptures grav'n.
The roof was fretted gold....
.....
... Th' ascending pile
Stood fixed her stately heighth, and straight the doors,
Op'ning their brazen folds, discover wide
Within her ample spaces o'er the smooth
And level pavement. From the arched roof
Pendent by subtle magic many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets fed
With naphtha and asphaltus yielded light
As from a sky....⁶⁸³

Mammon's architectural style exemplifies Jones's theory of capricious ornamentation. To be sure, the architecture of Hell in *Paradise Lost* expresses the same logic of excess that Jones's masques do. Moreover, as if Mammon were simply playing an organ, the building *rose like an exhalation with the sound of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet*. This sublime image may not be as outlandish as it seems. Marvelous buildings were regularly raised with symphonious music during

⁶⁸² John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Gordon Teskey (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2005), 215, 9.670-78.

⁶⁸³ Milton, 23-24, 1.708-17, 722-30.

court masques. With the simple raising of a curtain or drawing of a pully, Jones, like Mammon, also made architecture appear with the sound of music.

If Milton is alluding to contemporary architecture and performance in his description of Pandemonium, he does so to warn readers of their seductive effects.⁶⁸⁴ He prefaces his description of Mammon's "wondrous art" by forewarning his audience:

... Let none admire
That riches grow in Hell: that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane! And here let those
Who boast in mortal things and wond'ring tell
Of Babel and the works of Memphian kings
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame
And strength and art are easily outdone
By spirits reprobate....⁶⁸⁵

The baroque sublime of Satan and Hell are not to be admired. When Milton imagines Eden—our human paradise—he imagines it without the trappings of court art, architecture, and performance. He explicitly describes their home in the garden as full of

... Revels, not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,
Casual fruition, *nor in court amours,*
Mixed dance or wanton masque or midnight ball
Or serenade which the starved lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.⁶⁸⁶

There are no masques in Eden. The paradisial home is imbued with the beauty of "nightingales" and a "flow'ry roof" of "show' red roses."⁶⁸⁷ There is no capricious ornamentation or wonderous

⁶⁸⁴ The argument for reading *Paradise Lost* as a test or moral training for the reader is famously set forth in Stanley Fish, *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost*, second edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998). The pages that follow expand his argument by showing how the seductive rhetoric of Satan and Comus are quintessential models of the baroque style, and it is the style that worries Milton.

⁶⁸⁵ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 23, 1.690-97.

⁶⁸⁶ Milton, 98-99, 4.765-70; my italics.

⁶⁸⁷ Milton, 99, 4.771-73.

architecture. The baroque sublime is reserved for Hell and Satan. The aesthetic divide is stark. For Milton, style is a moral matter as much as an aesthetic one.

Milton may have developed this moral approach to style from reading Longinus. According to Gordon Teskey, Longinus was as foundational a figure to Milton as Aristotle. Indeed, he goes so far as to claim that “Milton would outgrow Aristotle’s *Poetics*, regarding it as elementary, ... but he would grow into *The Sublime*.”⁶⁸⁸ If this is true, then Milton likely found a ready-made critique of the baroque in *Peri hypsous*, where Longinus warns against vain expressions of the sublime:

Εἰδέναι χρή, φίλτατε, διότι, καθάπερ κὰν τῷ κοινῷ βίῳ οὐδέν ὑπάρχει μέγα, οὐ τὸ καταφρονεῖν ἐστὶν μέγα, οἷον πλοῦτοι τιμαὶ δόξαι τυραννίδες καὶ ὅσα δὴ ἄλλα ἔχει πολὺ τὸ ἔξωθεν προστραγωδούμενον οὐδ’ ἴσ’ ἂν τῷ γε φρονίμῳ δόξειεν ἀγαθὰ ὑπερβάλλοντα, ὧν αὐτὸ τὸ περιφρονεῖν ἀγαθὸν οὐ μέτριον—... τῇδὲ που καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν διηρμένων ἐν ποιήμασι καὶ λόγοις ἐπισκεπτέον, μή τινα μεγέθους φαντασίαν ἔχῃ τοιαύτην ἣ πολὺ πρόσκειται τὸ εἰκῇ προσαναπλαττόμενον, ἀναπτυσσόμενα δὲ ἄλλως εὐρίσκοιτο χαῦνα, ὧν τοῦ θαυμάζειν τὸ περιφρονεῖν εὐγενέστερον.⁶⁸⁹

[We must realize, dear friend, that as in our everyday life nothing is really great which it is a mark of greatness to despise, I mean, for instance, wealth, position, reputation, sovereignty, and all the other things which possess a very grand exterior, nor would a wise man think things supremely good, contempt for which is itself eminently good—... well, so it is with the lofty style in poetry and prose. We must consider whether some of these passages have merely some such outward show of grandeur with a rich layer of casual accretions, and whether, if all this is peeled off, they may not turn out to be empty bombast which it is more noble to despise than to admire.]⁶⁹⁰

For Longinus, there are moral stakes in the production of the sublime. Artists and authors of the sublime must ask themselves: for whom and for what is the sublime being expressed? And is that subject truly worthy of admiration and wonder? Milton poses these questions to his readers, and he

⁶⁸⁸ Gordon Teskey, *The Poetry of John Milton* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 411.

⁶⁸⁹ Longinus, *On the Sublime*, 178.

⁶⁹⁰ Longinus, 179; translation by Fyfe.

makes the questions easier to answer by associating the baroque sublime with figures like Comus and Satan and places like Hell.

Milton's response to the seduction of the baroque sublime is rooted in reason. Recall the virtuous Lady's response to Comus:

I had not thought to have unlocked my lips
In this unhallowed air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules pranked in reason's garb.⁶⁹¹

Milton's Lady can see that Comus is a mere *juggler* of tropes and figures and that his style is full of *obtruding false rules pranked in reason's garb*. Her reason sees through his fancy, and in this way, the Lady models to her audience the actions of what Milton calls a "true warfaring Christian."⁶⁹² As he writes in *Areopagitica*, "He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true warfaring Christian."⁶⁹³ Milton dresses Comus with all the *baits and seeming pleasures* of the baroque style in order to seduce the Lady.⁶⁹⁴ Something similar happens in *Paradise Lost*, though the end is tragic. After Satan visits Eve in a dream one night, conjuring fanciful images and a speech full of rhetorical ingenuity, Adam gives her this advice:

... Know that in the soul
Are many lesser faculties that serve
Reason as chief. Among these Fancy next
Her office holds. Of all external things
Which the five watchful senses represent
She forms imaginations, airy shapes

⁶⁹¹ Milton, *A Masque*, 60, lines 756-59.

⁶⁹² John Milton, *Areopagitica*, in *Milton's Selected Poetry and Prose*, ed. Jason P. Rosenblatt (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2011), 349.

⁶⁹³ Milton, 349.

⁶⁹⁴ As Stanley Fish argues in the context of *Paradise Lost*, "Milton consciously wants to worry his reader, to force him to doubt the correctness of his responses, and to bring him to the realization that his inability to read the poem with any confidence in his own perception is its focus" (Fish, *Surprised by Sin*, 4).

Which Reason joining or disjoining frames
 All what we affirm or what deny and call
 Our knowledge or opinion, then retires
 Into her private cell when nature rests.
 Oft in her absence mimic Fancy wakes
 To imitate her but misjoining shapes
 Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
 Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.
 Some such resemblances methinks I find
 Of our last evening's talk in this thy dream
 But with addition strange....⁶⁹⁵

The work of Fancy without Reason creates *misjoining shapes* and *wild work* with *ill matching words*. It creates far-fetched and outlandish figures difficult to understand. This is how Adam describes the dreamwork of Satan, *but with addition strange*. Adam and Eve were seduced by a logic of excess.

Milton's Satan is the quintessential figure of the baroque sublime. He is the arch-seducer. "Him by fraud I have seduced."⁶⁹⁶ He is the arch-overreacher. "To set himself in glory 'bove his peers / He trusted to have equaled the Most High."⁶⁹⁷ He is the breaker of thresholds. "At one slight bound high overleaped all bound."⁶⁹⁸ Already divine, he seeks a higher apotheosis. But Milton's Christian morality and republican politics pervade all these images. Satan is always already the arch-enemy. By expressing the baroque in the character of Satan and the place of Hell, Milton marks the style as fallen. To be sure, Milton's puritan distaste for the baroque saturates *Paradise Lost* and anticipates Enlightenment critiques of the aesthetic as capricious and manipulative. But in this negative way, Milton preserves the English baroque in all its sublime seduction. In a creation by negation, Milton writes one of the final and most extraordinary

⁶⁹⁵ Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 108-09, 5.100-08; my emphasis.

⁶⁹⁶ Milton, 242, 10.485-87.

⁶⁹⁷ Milton, 4, 1.39-40.

⁶⁹⁸ Milton, 83, 4.181-82.

expressions of the baroque in early modern English literature. He guides our minds into a world full of confusion and complexity, ruin and melancholy, hubris and excess, and asks us to resist.

Conclusion

Excess

The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom.

- William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*⁶⁹⁹

⁶⁹⁹ William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (Boston: J.W. Luce and Company, 1906), 13.

In the May 14, 2018, issue of *The New Yorker*, Emily Nussbaum profiles the acclaimed screenwriter of *American Horror Story*, Ryan Murphy. She begins with a note on Murphy's style: "Ryan Murphy hates the word 'camp.' He sees it as a lazy catchall that gets thrown at gay artists in order to marginalize their ambitions, to frame their work as niche.... Murphy prefers a different label: 'baroque.'" ⁷⁰⁰ Murphy explains, "Baroque is a sensibility I can get behind.... Baroque is a maximalist approach to storytelling that I've always liked. Baroque is a *choice*." ⁷⁰¹

Murphy is not the only person *choosing* the baroque today. A growing number of authors are associating themselves with the style. Geoffrey Hill published a series of poems on the baroque, ⁷⁰² and William Gass was writing a book on baroque prose when he passed away in 2017. ⁷⁰³ David Lloyd has called the recent poetry of Trevor Joyce baroque, ⁷⁰⁴ and Stephanie Burt recently gave the label "nearly Baroque" to a wide variety of contemporary poets—Angie Estes, Lucie Brock-Broido, Nada Gordon, Hailey Leithauser, Ange Mlinko, Geoffrey Nutter, Kiki Petrosino, Marsha Pomerantz, and Robyn Schiff. ⁷⁰⁵ For Burt, these "twenty-first-century poets of the nearly Baroque want art that puts excess, invention, and ornament first. It is art that cannot be

⁷⁰⁰ Emily Nussbaum, "How Ryan Murphy Became the Most Powerful Man in TV," *The New Yorker*, May 14, 2018 Issue, accessed in June 2020, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/05/14/how-ryan-murphy-became-the-most-powerful-man-in-tv>.

⁷⁰¹ Nussbaum, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/05/14/how-ryan-murphy-became-the-most-powerful-man-in-tv>.

⁷⁰² "Three Baroque Meditations" of *King Log* (1968), "V" of *The Orchards of Syon* (2002), and *Speech! Speech!* (2000) explicitly reference the baroque, but the style is foundational to most of his poetry. For example, Pedro Calderón de la Barca's baroque play *La Vida es sueño* (1635) is mentioned throughout *The Orchards of Syon* and he published an adaptation of John Milton's *A Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle* (1634) titled *Scenes from Comus* (2005).

⁷⁰³ A section of this book was recently published in William H. Gass, "Excerpt from Baroque Prose," *LitMag* 1, no. 1 (2017): 139-69.

⁷⁰⁴ See David Lloyd, "Rome's Wreck: Joyce's Baroque," in *Essays on the Poetry of Trevor Joyce*, ed. Niamh O'Mahony, 170-94 (Bristol, UK: Shearsman Books, 1998).

⁷⁰⁵ Stephanie Burt, "Nearly Baroque," *Boston Review: A Political and Literary Forum*, updated April 21, 2014, <http://bostonreview.net/poetry/stephen-burt-nearly-baroque>.

reduced to its own explanation, that shows off its material textures, its artificiality, its descent from prior art, its location in history. These poets want an art that can always give, or could always show, more.”⁷⁰⁶ As the baroque re-emerges in English literature today, we might stop to wonder: why now?

On the one hand, Evonne Levy gives us reason to worry about the recent resurgence of the English baroque. In *Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque* (2004) and *Baroque and the Political Language of Formalism* (2015), Levy catalogs the long, sinister history of the authoritarian uses of baroque art from the Jesuits to the Third Reich. For example, the Nazi art historian Hans Sedlmayr encouraged the Nazis to resurrect the baroque as its official style.⁷⁰⁷ He believed that, just as the Holy Roman Emperor Joseph I had developed an imperial baroque style (or *Reichsstil*) in early modern Austria, Adolf Hitler could support a revival of the baroque as the imperial style of the twentieth century. As Levy summarizes, “Austria’s *Reichsstil* was the foundation of the Third Reich.”⁷⁰⁸ To be sure, Levy’s research into the history of baroque propaganda makes it clear that the style is unusually amenable to authoritarianism and the politics of seduction.

On the other hand, Caribbean and Latin American authors have long promoted the uses of the baroque for postcolonial and democratic ends. Instead of a reactionary baroque of the

⁷⁰⁶ Burt, <http://bostonreview.net/poetry/stephen-burt-nearly-baroque>.

She calls them “nearly Baroque, not neo-Baroque, in part because they can get closer to rococo, and in part because ‘neo-Baroque’ has a stack of liens on it: Latin American poets and fiction writers (Severo Sarduy, Jose Lezama Lima) have claimed it for themselves” (Burt, <http://bostonreview.net/poetry/stephen-burt-nearly-baroque>).

⁷⁰⁷ In “Die politische Bedeutung des deutschen Barocks” (1938), Sedlmayr explains that the Austrian baroque emerged at a unique moment in the country’s history, when the architect Johann Bernhard Fischer van Erlach, “a pupil of the courtly Bernini,” was “called in 1690 as Joseph I’s instructor in architecture. The *Gesmtaufgabe* (overarching mission) of the new political order created new tasks for architecture, from which a new architecture arose..., a *Reichs-*, or a *Kaiserstil*” (Evonne Levy, *Baroque and the Political Language of Formalism (1845-1945): Burckhardt, Wölfflin, Gurlitt, Brinckmann, Sedlmayr* [Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 2015], 337).

⁷⁰⁸ Levy, 337.

counterreformation, José Lezama Lima explains “that for us the Baroque was an art of counterconquest.”⁷⁰⁹ These Latin American writers mobilized the baroque’s decentralizing logic of excess against the centralizing forces of authoritarianism and colonialism. Severo Sarduy calls this use of the style the “Baroque of the Revolution.”⁷¹⁰ It is a style of democratic participation and emancipation, of hybridity and transcultural expression. Alejo Carpentier went so far as to champion the baroque as the official style of Latin American literature: “Let us not fear the Baroque in our style, in our vision of contexts, in our vision of a human figure entwined in the word and the world.... The legitimate style of the contemporary Latin American novelist is Baroque.”⁷¹¹ For these authors, the baroque is revolutionary and essentially anti-authoritarian.

Turning back to contemporary English literature, we can see how many authors are applying this Latin American approach to the baroque to new contexts. Geoffrey Hill understands styles of complexity and difficulty like the baroque as democratic. He even suggests that literary excess is capable of resisting authoritarian propaganda like that used by the Third Reich:

[T]yranny requires simplification.... I think immediately of the German classicist and Kierkegaardian scholar Theodor Haecker, who went into what was called “inner exile” in the Nazi period, and kept a very fine notebook throughout that period, which miraculously survived, though his house was destroyed by Allied bombing. Haecker argues, with specific reference to the Nazis, that one of the things the tyrant most cunningly engineers is the gross oversimplification of language, because propaganda requires that the minds of the collective respond primitively to slogans of incitement. And any complexity of language, any ambiguity, any ambivalence implies intelligence.

⁷⁰⁹ José Lezama Lima, “Baroque Curiosity,” trans. María Pérez and Anke Birkenmaier, in *Baroque New Worlds: Representation, Transculturation, Counterconquest*, eds. Lois Parkinson Zamora and Monika Kaup, 212-40 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 213.

⁷¹⁰ Severo Sarduy, “The Baroque and the Neobaroque,” trans. Christopher Winks, in *Baroque New Worlds: Representation, Transculturation, Counterconquest*, eds. Lois Parkinson Zamora and Monika Kaup, 270-91 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 290.

⁷¹¹ Alejo Carpentier, “Questions Concerning the Contemporary Latin American Novel,” trans. Michael Schuessler, in *Baroque New Worlds: Representation, Transculturation, Counterconquest*, eds. Lois Parkinson Zamora and Monika Kaup, 259-64 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 262.

Maybe an intelligence under threat, maybe an intelligence that is afraid of consequences, but nonetheless an intelligence working in qualifications and revelations... resisting, therefore, tyrannical simplification.⁷¹²

Like the Cuban authors cited above, Hill defends literary excess as an art of freedom. By resisting the reduction and simplification of language and celebrating its complexity and difficulty, the baroque affirms the inherent worth and dignity of human life. As Hill explains,

We are difficult. Human beings are difficult. We're difficult to ourselves, we're difficult to each other. And we are mysteries to ourselves, we are mysteries to each other. One encounters in any ordinary day far more real difficulty than one confronts in the most "intellectual" piece of work. Why is it believed that poetry, prose, painting, music should be less than we are? Why does music, why does poetry have to address us in simplified terms, when if such simplification were applied to a description of our own inner selves we would find it demeaning?⁷¹³

Angie Estes, another contemporary English baroque poet, agrees with Hill that life is essentially excessive, and she denounces its reduction or simplification in art. Consider the first verses of her poem "Sans Serif":

It's the opposite of
Baroque, so I want
none of it—clean
and spare, like Cassius
it has that lean
and hungry look, Mercury's
clipped heels, the rag
of the body without
breath....⁷¹⁴

The opposite of Baroque is an assault on life. *The opposite of Baroque* merely expresses *the rag / of the body without / breath*. To be sure, contemporary English baroque authors mistrust the

⁷¹² Geoffrey Hill, "Geoffrey Hill, The Art of Poetry No. 80," interviewed by Carl Phillips, *The Paris Review* 154 (Spring 2000), accessed in June 2020, <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/730/the-art-of-poetry-no-80-geoffrey-hill>.

⁷¹³ Hill, <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/730/the-art-of-poetry-no-80-geoffrey-hill>.

⁷¹⁴ Angie Estes, "Sans Serif," *Chez Nous* (Oberlin, OH: Oberlin College Press, 2005), 28, lines 1-9.

clean and spare style of *tyrannical simplification*. The baroque, in contrast, offers them a way to celebrate the logic of excess at the heart of life.

A survey of contemporary English baroque literature has yet to be written, but future scholars would do well to situate their work within the historical contexts of the early modern baroque. This dissertation has shown how authors have used the baroque in myriad ways—to celebrate and mourn the infinite variety of nature, to participate in a global community of style, to swoon in devotional ecstasy, to apotheosize in art, and to seduce with spectacle. But in every case, the baroque carries the human subject beyond itself. The logic of excess leads to the sublime—the threshold between this world and another.

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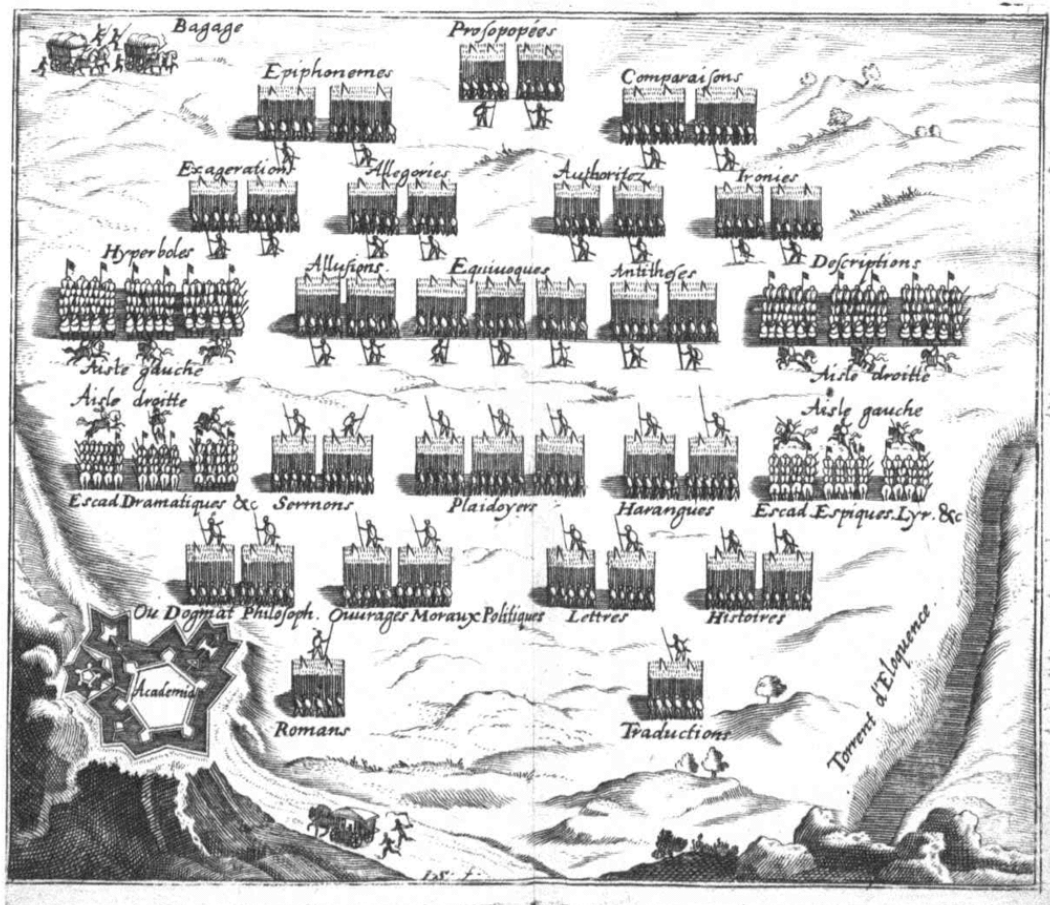
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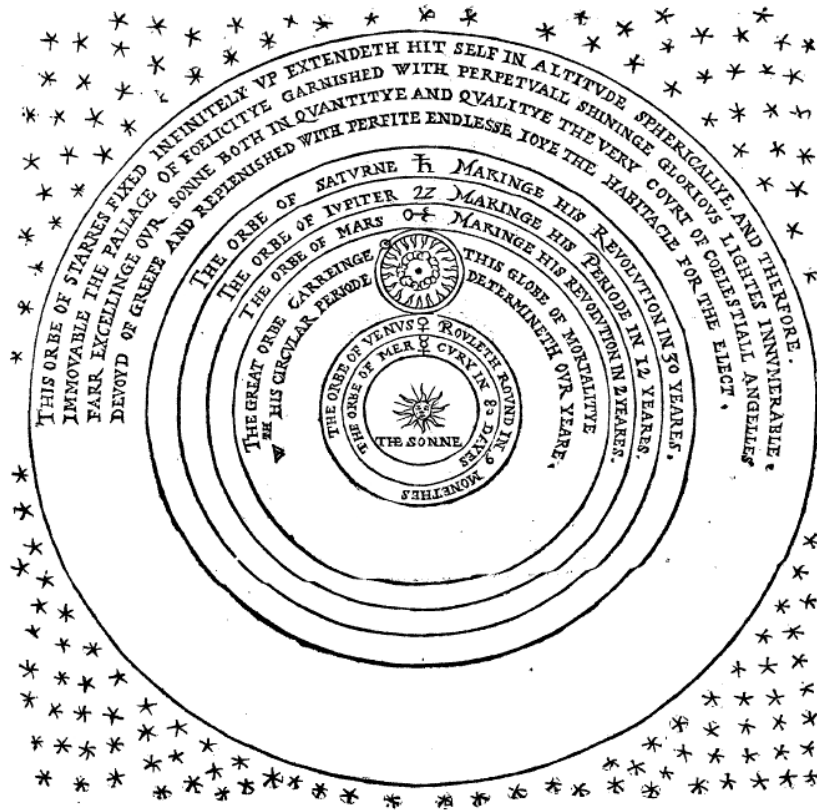
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Appendices



Appendix 1. Antoine Furetière, *Nouvelle Allegorique ou Histoire des dernieres trouble arrive au Royaume d'Eloquence* (Paris: Guillaume de Luyne, 1658), frontispiece illustration. Accessed on September 10, 2018. https://als.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammatik#/media/File:Allegory_of_Grammar.gif.

☞ A perfit description of the Caelestiall Orbes,
according to the most auncient doctrine of the
Pythagoreans. &c.



M. J.

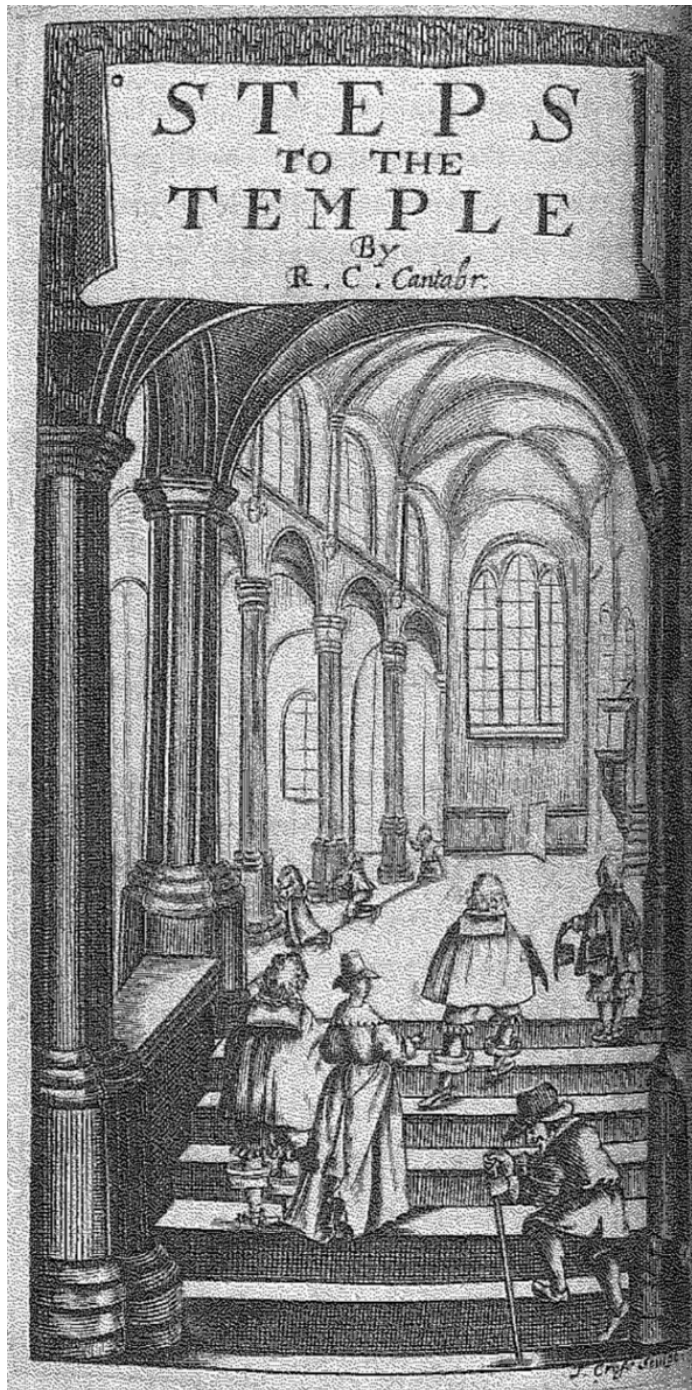
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Appendix 2. Thomas Digges, "A perfit description of the Caelestiall Orbes," in Leonard Digges, *A prognostication euerlastinge of right good effecte* (London: Printed by Thomas Marsh, 1576), 43.

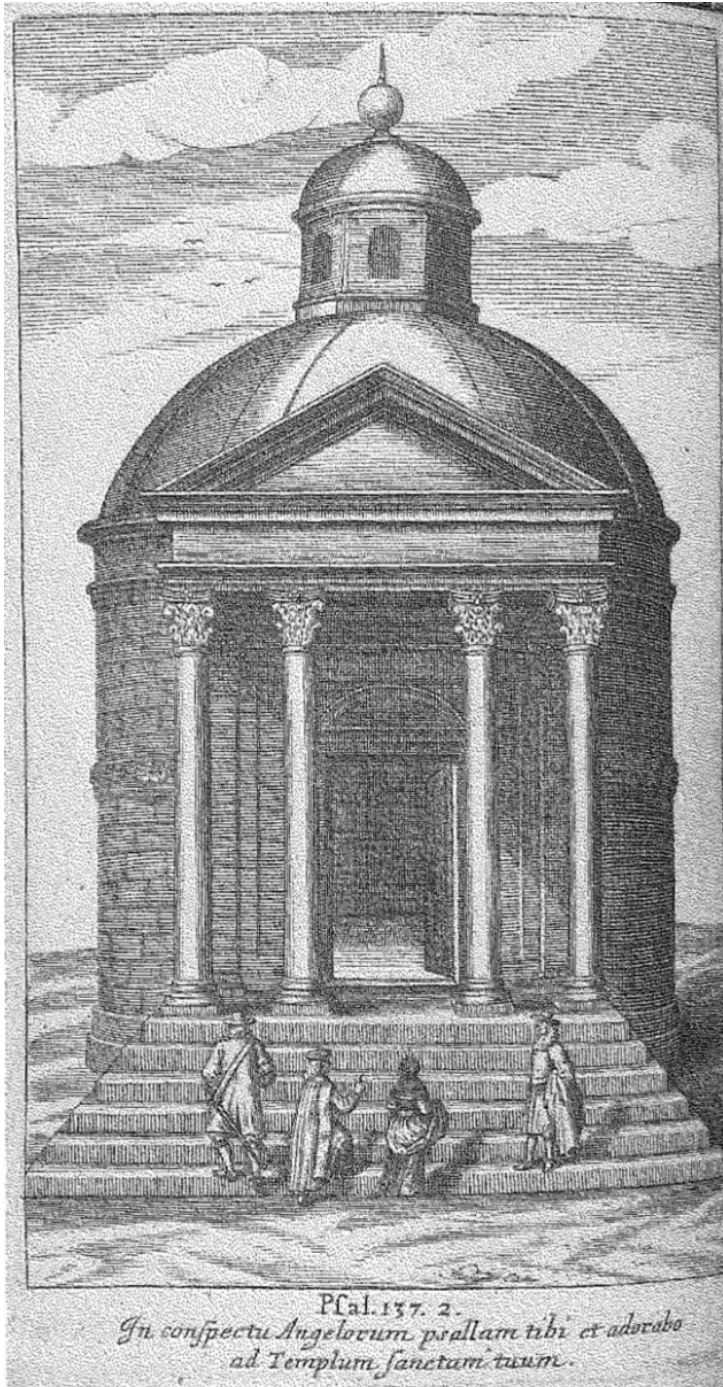


EGREGIO INSPERSOS REPREHENDIT CORPORE NÆVOS H^{ic}
D. Pisola inv. G. Tassi sculp. Tur.

Appendix 3. Emanuele Tesauro, *Il cannocchiale aristotelico*.
Faksimile-Neudruck der Ausgabe von Turin, 1670, ed. August
 Buck (Berlin: Verlag Gehlen, 1968), 25.



Appendix 4a. Frontispiece to Crashaw, *Steps to the Temple* (London: Printed for Humphrey Moseley, 1648), in Richard Rambuss, “Richard Crashaw: A Reintroduction,” in *The English Poems of Richard Crashaw*, ed. Richard Rambuss (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), xxvii.



Appendix 4b. Frontispiece to Crashaw, *Steps to the Temple* (London: Printed for John Hayes, 1670), in Richard Rambuss, “Richard Crashaw: A Reintroduction,” in *The English Poems of Richard Crashaw*, ed. Richard Rambuss (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), xxvi.



Appendix 5. Peter Paul Rubens. Banqueting House, Whitehall Palace, London, UK. Taken on October 26, 2019. My photograph.



Appendix 6. Peter Paul Rubens. *The Apotheosis of James I.* Banqueting House, Whitehall Palace, London, UK. Taken on October 26, 2019. My photograph.



Appendix 7. William Marshall, Frontispiece in Longinus, *Dionysiou Longinou rhētoros Peri hypsous logou biblion*. (Oxford, UK: G.T. for Guil. Webb, 1636). Accessed on July 11, 2020. <http://search.proquest.com.ezpprod1.hul.harvard.edu/docview/2240894003?accountid=11311>.



Appendix 8a. Peter Paul Rubens, *Peace and War*, 1629. Accessed on September 10, 2018. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Peter_Paul_Rubens_\(1577-1640\)_Peace_and_War_\(1629\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Peter_Paul_Rubens_(1577-1640)_Peace_and_War_(1629).jpg).



Appendix 8b. Peter Paul Rubens, *Landscape with Saint George and the Dragon*, 1630-5. Accessed on July 11, 2020. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Peter_Paul_Rubens__Landscape_with_Saint_George_and_the_Dragon_-_WGA20401.jpg.



Appendix 9. Anthony Van Dyck, *Samson and Delilah*, 1630. Accessed on July 11, 2020. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samson_and_Delilah_\(van_Dyck,_Vienna\)#/media/File:Anton_van_Dyck_-_Samson_and_Delilah_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samson_and_Delilah_(van_Dyck,_Vienna)#/media/File:Anton_van_Dyck_-_Samson_and_Delilah_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg).



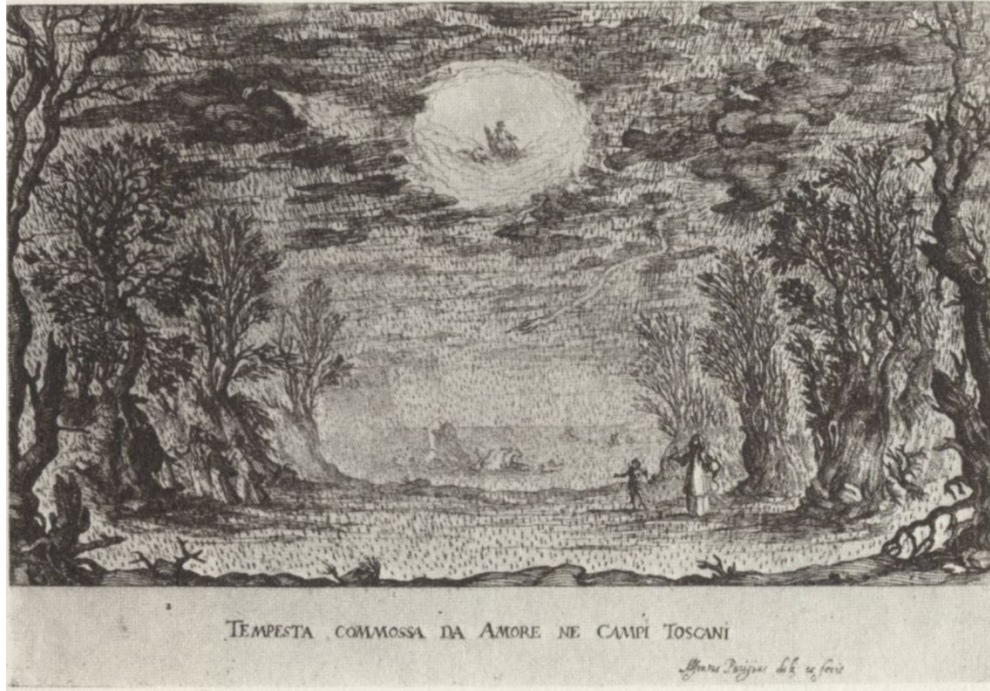
Appendix 10. Anthony Van Dyck, *Charles I in Three Positions*, 1635/6. Accessed on September 10, 2018. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_I_in_Three_Positions#/media/File:Sir_Anthony_Van_Dyck_-_Charles_I_\(1600-49\)_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_I_in_Three_Positions#/media/File:Sir_Anthony_Van_Dyck_-_Charles_I_(1600-49)_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg).



Appendix 11. Gerald van Honthorst, *The Liberal Arts Presented to King Charles and Henrietta Maria*, 1638. Accessed on September 10, 2018. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Liberal_Arts_presented_to_King_Charles_and_Henrietta_Maria.jpg.



Appendix 12. Inigo Jones, *Fame: Final Design, Chloridia, 1631*, in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 451.



Appendix 13a. Alfonso Parigi, *Storm Scene in 'La Flora'*, Florence, 1628, in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 742.



Appendix 13b. Inigo Jones, *Scene 1: A Storm and Tempest, Salmacida Spolia*, 1640, in Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment: The Politics of Literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 201.



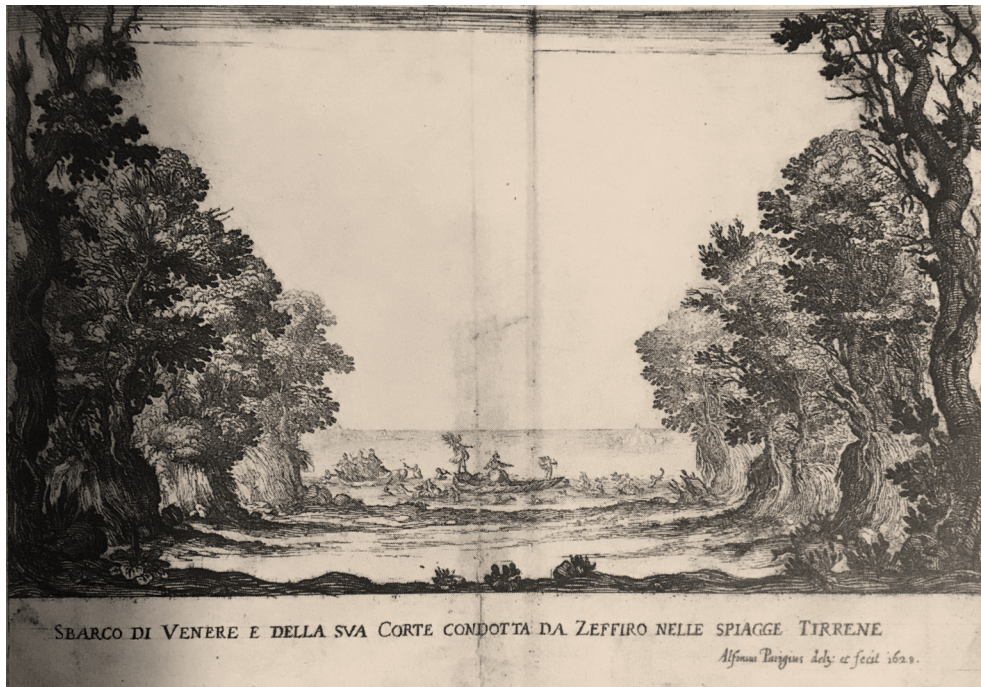
Appendix 14a. Inigo Jones, *Headdress for a Fury*, *Salmacida Spolia*, 1640, in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 417.



Appendix 14b. Inigo Jones, *Furies*, *Salmacida Spolia*, 1640, in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 763.



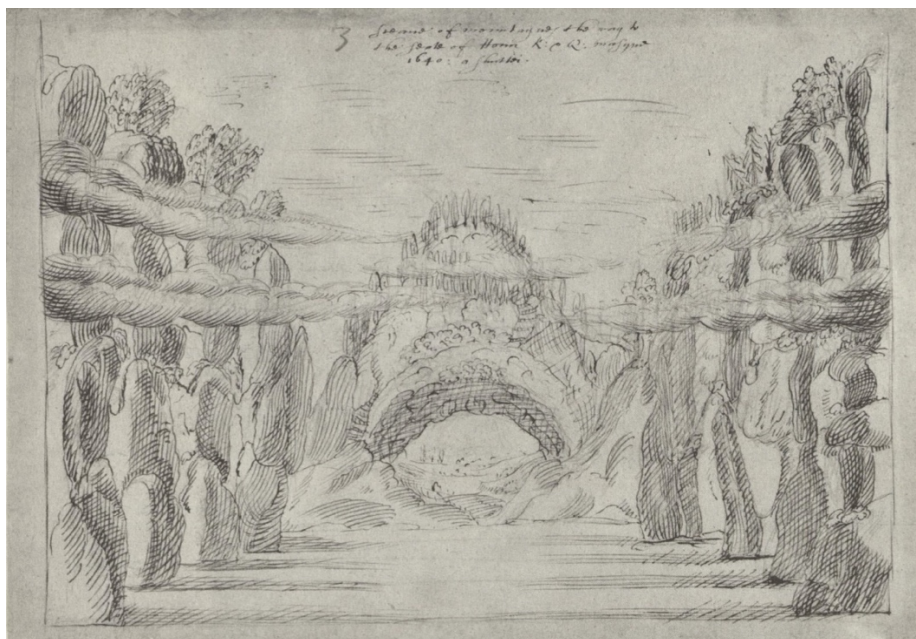
Appendix 15a. Inigo Jones, *Scene 1: A Peaceful Country, Salmacida Spolia*, 1640, in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 744-45.



Appendix 15b. Alfonso Parigi, *Sbarco di Vener, La Flora*, 1628, in John Peacock, *The Stage Designs of Inigo Jones: The European Contexts* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 195.



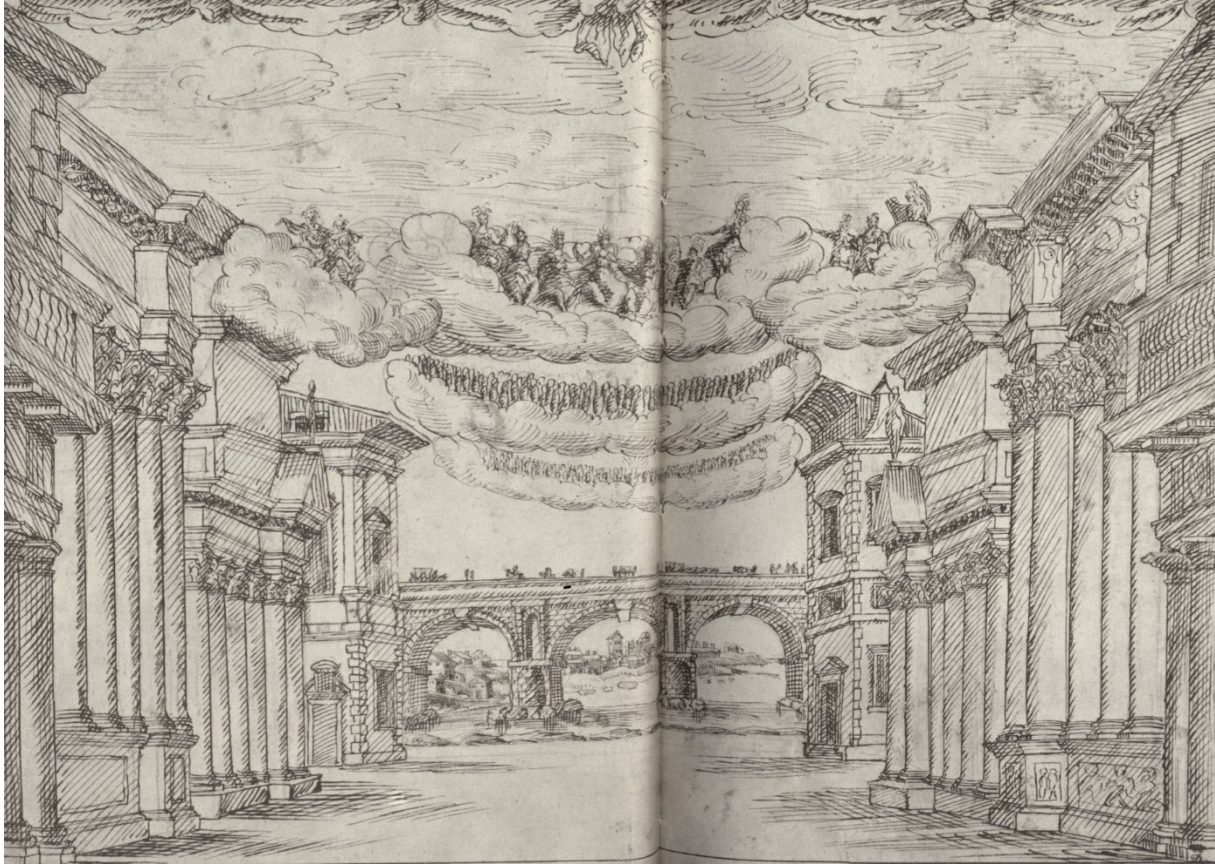
Appendix 16a. Stefano della Bella after Alfonso Parigi, *Vulcan's Cave* in *Le Nozze degli Dei*, Florence, 1637, in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 747.



Appendix 16b. John Webb after Inigo Jones, *The Way to the Throne of Honour*, *Salmacida Spolia*, 1640, in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 748.



Appendix 17. Inigo Jones, *Lady Masquer in Amazonian Dress*, *Salmacida Spolia*, 1640, in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 735.



Appendix 18. John Webb after Inigo Jones, *Scene 4: The Suburbs of a Great City, Salmacida Spolia*, 1640, in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 752-53.



Appendix 19a. Inigo Jones, *Scene 4: Designs for Upper Stage Cloud Scenery, Salmacida Spolia*, 1640, in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 760-61.



Appendix 19b. Inigo Jones, *Scene 4: Design for Upper Stage Cloud Scenery, Salmacida Spolia*, 1640, in Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*, Vol. 1 (Totowa, NJ: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 758-59.