OCCULT INVENTION: THE REBIRTH OF RHETORICAL HEURESIS

IN EARLY MODERN BRITISH LITERATURE

FROM CHAPMAN TO SWIFT

by

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A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Comparative Literature Program
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

September 2011

DISSERTATION APPROVAL PAGE

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Title: Occult Invention: The Rebirth of Rhetorical Heuresis in Early Modern British Literature from Chapman to Swift

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Degree awarded September 2011.

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Doctor of Philosophy

Comparative Literature Program

September 2011

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The twentieth-century project of American rhetorician Kenneth Burke, grounded in a magic-based theory of language, reveals a path to the origins of what I am going to call *occult invention*. The occult, which I define as a symbol set of natural terms derived from supernatural terms, employs a method of heuresis based on a metaphor-like process I call analogic extension. Traditional invention fell from use shortly after the Liberal Arts reforms of Peter Ramus, around 1550. Occult invention emerged nearly simultaneously, when Early Modern British authors began using occult symbols as tropes in what I refer to as the *Occult Mode*. I use six of these authors—George Chapman, William Shakespeare, John Donne, Abraham Cowley, John Dryden, and Jonathan Swift—as examples of how occult invention arises. In appropriating occult symbolism, authors in the Occult Mode began using the invention methods of the occult arts of magic, alchemy, astrology, and cabala to derive new meanings, transform language, develop characters and plots, and reorient social perspectives. As we learn in tracking Burke's project, occult

invention combines the principles of Aristotle's rhetoric and metaphysics with the techniques and principles of the occult arts. Occult invention fell from use around the end of the eighteenth century, but its rhetorical influence reemerged through the work of Burke. In this study I seek to contextualize and explicate some of the literary sources and rhetorical implications of occult invention as an emergent field for further research.

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McCann, Michael C. "Theory Redouble: Poe's 'The Purloined Letter' as a Precursor to Psychoanalytic Criticism," *Nomad*, Vol. 4 (Eugene, OR: University of Oregon Program in Comparative Literature, 2005).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE DEMISE OF TRADITIONAL HEURESIS AND THE

EMERGENCE OF OCCULT INVENTION

A. Early Modern Pedagogy and Rhetorical Invention

Few Early Modern pedagogical shifts altered the course of European history more radically than the sweeping Liberal Arts reforms of Peter Ramus (1515-1572), a French logician and rhetorician operating under the protection of French Cardinal Charles of Lorraine (1524-1574). With the publication of his *Institutiones Oratoriae* in 1544, Ramus dismantled rhetoric, reassigning the canons of invention (or heuresis) and memory to logic—a move tantamount to reassigning poetry to mathematics. In one stroke, Ramus precipitated the so-called Plain Language Movement to replace tropes with more precise terms, paving the way for natural philosophy, marginalizing poetry, devaluing oration, and eviscerating the occult arts.

Left with only the orphaned and flowery canons of style and delivery to rebuild its reputation, rhetoric floundered for the next four centuries, a dead discipline without a focus. Contrary to the claims of some rhetoric historians, however, rhetorical heuresis did not disappear entirely or fall completely from use. Rather, as I demonstrate in this study, invention retained an auxiliary "underground" home within the primary occult arts— magic, alchemy, astrology, and cabala—which subsequently reconfigured heuresis according to their respective methodologies. With the appearance of the Occult Mode of British literature around the sixteenth century, authors began reabsorbing these reconfigured methods into their works in the process of incorporating occult symbolism, resulting in what I call *occult invention*. I use the term *Occult Mode* to designate British

1

authors between 1550-1750 whose works make substantial use of occult symbolism and occult invention, as defined below.

B. Magic, the Occult, and Analogic Extension

1. Magic and the Occult as Used in this Study

As Kathleen Malone O'Connor notes in her essay on magic in *Folklore: An Encyclopedia*, "Magic has often been associated, in scholarship and in popular awareness, with the supernatural and identified with the *occult*" (521, italics hers). I maintain this convention, using the terms *magic* and the *occult* more or less interchangeably; however, when referring specifically to the *practice of magic*, I employ the term *ritual magic.* (Where appropriate, I distinguish between specific types of ritual magic, e.g., ceremonial magic, sympathetic magic, high magic, low magic—defining each on first reference. In any case, I define *ritual* simply as the deliberate use of a carefully chosen symbol set to promote a desired outcome—or, in terms of rhetoric, an *argument*.) More specifically, O'Connor defines magic and the occult as "an esoteric, veiled, and transcendent reality, mediated by intuitive inspiration, understanding, and knowledge and interpreted by methods of study, experimental investigation, and disciplinary practice" (521). While representative of most scholarly definitions of magic and the occult, her description differs from mine in two respects.

First, in combining mystical terms such as "transcendent reality" and "intuitive inspiration" with pragmatic terms such as "experimental investigation" and "disciplinary practice," O'Connor seems to position the occult arts as pseudo or "soft" sciences. Second, she makes no mention of the role of language and rhetoric. Historically, my study begins at the point where science and the occult begin to separate as distinct, albeit still similar,

disciplines. I argue that the demise of traditional invention prompted the emergence of occult invention and the Occult Mode of English Literature. More importantly, I examine the occult arts primarily through the lens of rhetoric as symbolic languages, and therefore do not concern myself with the existence or validity of a "transcendent reality," except insofar as it functions as a topic, defined below in the section on traditional invention.

O'Conner comes much nearer to my approach when she notes the perceived relationship between things natural and *supernatural*, which *Folklore: An Encyclopedia* defines as "all those phenomena that are not explained through natural causes or events" (374). Magic and the occult, O'Connor notes, posit "a universal 'sympathy' between all existent things, natural and supernatural, creating a web of meaningful association" (519). *Topoi*, the rhetorical topics employed in invention, are born out of such webs of association. In *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Michel Foucault aptly describes the epistemological function of such *topoi* in the sixteenth-century: "The world is covered with signs that must be deciphered, and those signs, which reveal resemblances and affinities, are themselves no more than forms of similitude" (32). To a rhetorician, it makes no difference whether a sign designates something natural or supernatural. As American rhetorician Kenneth Burke (1897-1993) notes in *The Rhetoric of Religion*, "Whether or not there is a realm of the 'supernatural,' there are *words* for it" (7, italics his). In short, although references to the supernatural denote non-empirical objects, processes, or entities, they still function rhetorically as natural terms.

Burke argues that "in this state of linguistic affairs [involving the use of natural terms to designate the supernatural] there is a paradox" (Ibid) The paradox is not only that we are attempting to speak and write about the supernatural, which Burke calls "the realm

of the ineffable" (15), but also, as Joshua Gunn notes in *Modern Occult Rhetoric*, that "there is much to say about the ineffable" (37). This is possible, Burke asserts, because we "borrow" terms from one realm to speak of another. For Burke, all word significations can be divided into four realms. The *first realm*, "words for the natural," denotes "things, material operations, physiological conditions, animality, and the like" (*Religion*, 14). The *second realm* includes "words for the socio-political," and comprise "all the words for social relations, laws, right, wrong, rule, and the like." The *third realm* designates "words about words," those of "dictionaries, grammar, etymology, philology, literary criticism, rhetoric," and comprise the tools and subjects Burke rolls into a special study he calls "logology" (15). Finally, the *fourth realm* encompasses "words for the supernatural," which exist even if one "does not believe in the supernatural" (Ibid).

As Burke observes, the "words for the discussion of this [fourth] realm are necessarily borrowed by analogy from our words for the other three orders," i.e., from words "for the sorts of things we can talk about literally" in "the world of everyday experience" (Ibid). For instance, Burke notes that most of our words for God "must be used analogically—as were we to speak of God's 'powerful arm' (a physical analogy), or of God as 'lord' or 'father' (a socio-political analogy), or of God as the 'Word' (a linguistic analogy)" (15n). Such borrowing occurs bidirectionally, for supernatural terms can also be "borrowed back," to connote empirical objects, processes, and entities symbolically. For example, the term *spirit*, "having moved analogically away from its natural meaning, as 'breath,' to connotations that flowered in its usage as a term for the supernatural, […] could then be borrowed back as a secular term for temper, temperament, and the like" (8).

My use of the terms *magic* and *occult* relies upon a further distinction between Burke's concept of "borrowing" and the Neoplatonic concept of "correspondence." The Neoplatonic concept of correspondence derives primarily from two sources, *The Enneads* and the *Corpus Hermeticum*. In *The Enneads*, Plotinus writes that everything "teems with symbol; the wise man is the man who in any one thing can read another" through "the quality of signifying" which "enables us to reason from member to member" (80-81). This echos O'Connor's description of magic, wherein everything is connected through "a universal 'sympathy' between all existent things, natural and supernatural, creating a web of meaningful association" (519). The *Corpus Hermeticum*, a compilation of Greek texts commonly attributed to the mythical Hermes Trismegistos, but likely written by several scholars in Alexandria between the second and third century CE (Copenhaver l), asserts a correspondence between natural entities and words as mental symbols, noting that "the physical world is reflected in the mental, and the mental in the physical" (Salaman 78).

Burke's borrowing is purely rhetorical, in that it does not posit or imply any literal correspondence between the natural entity signified by the borrowed natural word and the supernatural entity it signifies. For instance, if the natural word "tree" signifies a god in a particular religion, that signification denotes a correspondence between the word and the god, but *not* between the god and the actual tree:

> Whatever *correspondence* there is between a *word* and the
> *thing* it names, the word is *not* the thing. The *word* "tree" is
> *not* a tree. And just as effects that can be got with the thing
> can't be got with the word, so effects that can be got with the
> word can't be got with the thing. (*Religion* 18, italics his).

However, as the English philosopher Alfred North Whitehead (1887-1974) notes in *Symbolism: Its Meaning and Effect*, the correlation between a word and the object it

signifies can be reversed: "Both the word itself and trees themselves enter into our experience on equal terms; and it would be just as sensible, viewing the question abstractedly, for trees to symbolize the word 'tree' as for the word to symbolize the trees" (11-12). Nonetheless, as Whitehead observes in *Process and Reality*, our tendency to use the word for the object and not the other way around "arises from the most useful aspect of symbolism, [for] we can say the word 'forest' whenever we like; but only under certain conditions can we directly experience an extent forest" (277). In short, the standard use of a word as a signifier to denote its most typical, pragmatic signification represents but one of *three* possible uses, for a word can also be used as the signification itself, or as the sign.

By contrast, the Neoplatonic concept of "correspondence" posits a real connection not only between the borrowed natural word and the supernatural entity it signifies, but also between the supernatural entity and the natural entity the word ordinarily signifies. For instance, if a magician uses the natural word "Mars" to signify a god, that signification denotes a literal correspondence between the word and the planet ordinarily signified by the word, *as well as* between the word and the god. Insofar as the magician does not distinguish between a natural word and the natural entity it signifies, the natural entity signifies the supernatural entity just as well as, if not better than, the natural word. Rather than borrowing terms between two Burkean word realms, the magician conflates the *abstract* realm of natural words with the *actual* realm of the physical world they signify. Moreover, as Burke suggests, insofar as "these realms coincide so usefully at certain points, we tend to overlook the areas where they radically diverge [and] gravitate spontaneously towards naïve verbal realism" or magic (Ibid).

Based on the above, I define *magic* and the *occult* synonymously as *the rhetorical selection and use of natural terms as a structured symbol set derived from supernatural terms through analogic extension, for the purpose of producing desired outcomes*.

2. Analogic Extension

Occult invention combines Burke's borrowing and Neoplatonic correspondence in a process I call *analogic extension*. Such extension entails both the borrowing of terms between the natural and supernatural realms, *and* a sympathetic correspondence between and among the natural word, the natural entity it signifies, and the supernatural entity signified by both. By way of example, consider the Roman mythological correspondence between the planet Mars and its namesake god of war, and their analogical connection with the color red. War leads to bloodshed, which results in red battlefields, and the planet Mars appears red in the sky. Therefore, the Romans called Mars the god of war. Consequently, according to Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535), a German Renaissance Occultist, and author of the most authoritative compilation of occult correspondences, the association between war and blood prompted magicians to associate all "sharp things" (1993 89), such as knives and swords, with Mars as well. Insofar as sharp things are capable of drawing blood, magicians could use either the natural word *knife* or an actual knife in a ritual involving blood or the color red, by way of analogic extension.

The magical use of a natural word to produce supernatural outcomes constitutes what Burke calls a "logological transformation" (*Religion* 8). Logological transformations convert "terms from their 'supernatural' reference into their possible use in a realm so wholly 'natural' as that of *language* considered as a purely empirical phenomenon" (Ibid, italics his). As an example of how such "words 'transcend' non-verbal nature" Burke notes

7

the difference between *non-verbal* and *verbal* operations in terms of "the kind of operations we might perform with a *tree* and the kind of operations we might perform with the *word* 'tree'" (8-9, italics his):

> Verbally, we can make "one tree" into "five thousand trees" by merely revising our text, whereas a wholly different set of procedures would be required to get the corresponding result in nature. Verbally, we can say, "To keep warm, cut down the tree and burn it" and we can say this even if there is no tree. (9)

Natural words designating natural entities become symbolic in a magical sense when they "'stand for' ideas over and above their description as concepts—as some particular house might be *conceptually* described in terms of the architect's drawings, but it might 'stand for' an *idea* of parental security, or of confinement, or of a human body" (Ibid, italics his). Burke's example of a house standing for, or symbolizing, the human body, parallels Neoplatonic symbolism of the body as the home of the soul, which, through analogic extension, could then be compartmentalized into various sections. Renaissance philosophers such as Francis Bacon described the soul as being comprised of memory, imagination, and intellect. So, for instance, the basement, or storage area, might represent the *memory* aspect of the soul, with the living quarters corresponding to the *imagination*, and an upstairs study symbolizing the *intellect*.

Analogic extension differs from traditional analogy and metaphor in that a magician chooses the *vehicle* and *tenor* of a natural word with the expectation of producing supernatural outcomes, rather than choosing a word to allude to or signify supernatural entities. When a poet uses "Mars" to symbolize "war," the vehicle term "Mars" *transfers* the meaning of violence, blood, etc., through the tenor term "war." By contrast, when an occultist evokes the symbolism of Mars in a ritual, the tenor term transfers the productively

8

suasive magical correspondences connoted by the vehicle, in addition to its natural

meanings. Efficacious or not, occult terms used in this manner constitute what Burke calls

"symbolic action." And to the extent that humans perceive reality through symbols, Burke

affirms the suasive reality of magical terms, even while debunking their misguided use. As

Burke explains in *Language as Symbolic Action*, a thin veil of *symbolic reality* separates

humans, as "the symbol-using animal" (55), from their *physical reality* of immediate

experience:

> Our 'Reality' could not exist for us, were it not for our
> profound and inveterate involvement in symbol systems. Our
> presence in a room is immediate, but the room's relation to
> our country as a nation, and beyond that, to international
> relations and cosmic relations, dissolves into a web of ideas
> and images that reach through our senses only insofar as the
> symbol systems that report on them are heard or seen. To
> mistake this vast tangle of ideas for immediate experience is
> much more fallacious than to accept a dream as immediate
> experience (48).

Burke characterizes reality as "necessarily inspirited with the quality of the Symbol,

the Word, the Logos, through which he conceives it" (55). Therefore, humans cannot be

absolutely certain where to draw the lines between the *actual motion* of physical reality and

the *symbolic action* of intellectual reality: "Man's involvement in the natural order makes

him in many respects analyzable in terms of sheer motion; but his powers of symbolicity

give rise to kinds of symbolic action that, by the same token, make him susceptible to

corresponding kinds of servitude" (60). In short, the natural-symbolic dichotomy of human

existence deceives the magician into believing he or she can use words supernaturally to

alter natural reality. In reality, nature is "alien to purely linguistic orders of motivation"

(Ibid), and therefore stands unsusceptible to the persuasive use of words:

9

the magical use of symbolism to affect natural processes by rituals and incantations was a mistaken transference of a proper linguistic function to an area for which it was not fit. The realistic use of addressed language to *induce action in people* became the magical use of addressed language to *induce motion in things* (42, italics his).

Nonetheless, Burke argues, whenever we use words to *describe* reality, we also use them magically to *define* reality, through what he calls "terministic screens." A terministic screen, as a set of terms selected to frame an individual or collective perspective, defines reality through a triparte process of reflection, selection, and deflection. Insofar as "any given terminology is a *reflection* of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a *selection* of reality; and to this extent it must function as a *deflection* of reality" (45, italics his). A magician's selection of the most suasive terms for a ritual demonstrates the process well. The term "Mars" *reflects* the reality of blood spilled on a battlefield through its visual correspondence with the color red; this reflection represents a *selection* of red over, say, green, which might reflect the reality of a plant; accordingly, such a selection also *deflects*, or excludes, green and all other colors and their corresponding reflections as terms in the context of a ritual's "argument," in which a magician attempts to use the term *red* supernaturally. Whereas arguments made through writing and speaking extend natural terms through traditional invention, arguments made through occult symbolism extend supernatural terms analogically through occult invention.

C. Traditional Invention

In his fourth-century BCE handbook, *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle establishes invention as the discipline's defining canon, stating that rhetoric's "function is not to persuade but to see the available means of persuasion" (1355b). Aristotle presents rhetoric as an adjunct to thinking and communication, rather than as a guarantor of truth and desired results. A

rhetor, as a practitioner of rhetoric, may use the art to persuade through trickery or to prove

through logic, but the discipline's defining activity is to invent, understand, and ascertain

the *available means* of doing either (Ibid). Aristotle calls this inventive function *heuresis*,

and names the "available means" used to "see" the means of persuasion *pisteis*, or *proofs*.

His selection of the word "see" rather than "find" proves propitious to the work of Burke,

who reformulates the discipline in terms of *perspectives*, situations, and motives.

 Aristotle identifies two types of *pisteis*: atechnic ("non-artistic"), and entechnic

("artistic"). *Atechnic* proofs consist of *discoverable* preexisting evidence such as

"witnesses, testimony from torture, contracts, and such like" (1.2.2). *Entechnic* proofs

comprise "whatever can be prepared by method" (1.2.2). *Rhetoricians*, who study what

rhetors do, consider non-artistic proofs self-evident, insofar as they generally defy

challenge, or speak for themselves. By contrast, artistic proofs, comprised of evidence

neither readily apparent nor openly acknowledged, require the special contextual reframing

achieved through *invention*. Consequently, invention occurs *before* communication and

expression, and thus aligns itself more with the development of ideas than with their

ultimate viability, employment, or expression.

 As Richard Young and Alton Becker observe, "The strength and worth of rhetoric

[is] tied to the art of invention; rhetoric tends to become a superficial and marginal concern

when it is separated from systematic methods of inquiry and problems of content" (127).

Historically, invention encompasses a wide range of mental processes, including, as Janice

Lauer notes, "strategic acts that provide the discourser with direction, multiple ideas,

subject matter, insights or probably judgments, and understanding of the rhetorical

situation" (2). Unlike scientific invention, which results in new technologies, methods, or

treatments, heuresis produces new *forms* of knowledge and new *modes* of expression.

Invention might also be described as organized brainstorming, the process of mentally

searching figurative *topoi*, (Greek both for "places" and "topics") to generate arguments

and ideas. While scholars debate the precise role of topics, e.g., whether they function

epistemologically, reflecting "the natural ways the mind thinks" (Grimaldi 130), or simply

provide specialized strategies that "enable the aurguer to connect reasons with conclusions"

(Ochs 25), topics serve as commonplaces for generating ideas and talking points. Topics

also constitute the starting point for each of Aristotle's four heuristic forms—paradigm,

maxim, enthymeme, and the fallacious enthymeme—which serve as the cornerstones of

traditional invention, and cannot be understood outside his theory of argumentation.

1. Aristotle's Theory of Argumentation

Aristotle's four heuristic forms derive from what he identifies as the most basic

structure of reason—the *argument*—consisting of three integrated parts: *conclusions* based

on *propositions* supported by *reasons*. *Conclusions* convey judgments about ideas or

objects ("Robert is Human"); *propositions*, or major premises, denote classifications

("thinking animals are humans"); whereas *reasons*, or minor premises, provide connective

explanations ("Robert is a thinking animal"). Either propositions or reasons, or both, may

be left unstated, as being implicitly assumed or accepted; reasons may also be replaced

with examples. When all three parts are stated they constitute a *syllogism.* However,

syllogisms leave no term open to invention. Moreover, as Aristotle notes, syllogisms are

"not easy to follow because of the length [and complexity of the argument]" (1357a).

Omitting the proposition and replacing the reasons with examples (implicit proposition,

stated examples, stated conclusion) results in a *paradigm*. Omitting the proposition

(implicit proposition, stated reason, stated conclusion) produces an *enthymeme*, and omitting both the proposition and the reason (implicit proposition, implicit reason, stated conclusion) forms a *maxim*. Thus, all arguments necessarily derive from a combination of stated and unstated propositions, reasons (or examples), and conclusions.

Fallacies exist because an argument containing a proposition and a reason—whether stated or unstated—does not necessarily contain a truthful or valid conclusion. Truth and validity are separate and unrelated attributes: an argument may be valid (adhering to correct logical form) without being factually true, and vice-versa. Hence, we distinguish between *false* and *fallacious* conclusions, the former being *factually untrue* and the latter being *logically invalid*. To be clear, there are four possible types of conclusions: true-and-valid, true-and-fallacious, false-and-valid, and false-and-fallacious. As a discipline, rhetoric does not concern itself with the truth or validity of an argument; it distinguishes between valid and fallacious arguments merely for the purpose of classification, leaving judgments concerning truth claims to the argument's audience. This conforms with rhetoric's unique role as the "art of arts," or the art of applying forms to thoughts through invention, rather than evaluating a thought's truth, validity, or utility. In light of this distinction, fallacious arguments—and by this, I mean those intentionally formulated for facetious purposes, such as satire—represent a *fourth type* of rhetorical structure, along with the paradigm, enthymeme, and maxim.

2. Aristotle's Heuristic Forms: Paradigm, Enthymeme, Maxim, and Fallacy

Aristotle calls a *paradigm* an induction, or "reasoning neither from part to whole or from whole to part but from part to part, like to like, when two things fall under the same genus but one is better known than the other" (1358a). Such reasoning, he tells us, relies on

examples drawn from history and past experience, or made up as "fables," for use as "comparisons" (1393). The paradigmatic method of invention consists of stating a conclusion supported by one or more examples as proof. For instance, one could conclude that "Dionyisus [the tyrant of Heraclea Pontica during the fourth century BCE] is plotting tyranny [and] seeks a guard" based on the fact that "Peisistratus also, when plotting earlier sought bodyguard and after receiving it made himself a tyrant, and Theagenes [did the same] in Megara" (Ibid). Paradigms posit presumed correlations between occurrences at one time with those of another as indications that "future events will generally be like those of the past" (1394a). Sympathetic magic posits similar correspondences between time periods, and between words, objects, people, motives, and situations, in rituals designed to alter future conditions and events.

An *enthymeme* derives specific conclusions from generally accepted, unstated, propositions. Some view the enthymeme, sometimes called a "rhetorical syllogism," as a streamlined syllogism; others consider the enthymeme to be a flawed syllogism insofar as enthymemes omit a syllogism's middle term, which "proves" the conclusion. To understand the difference between an enthymeme and a syllogism, consider the famous syllogism, "Socrates is a man; all men are mortal; therefore Socrates is mortal." By removing the middle term ("all men are mortal"), and subordinating the premise with the proposition "because," we create the enthymeme, "Socrates is mortal because he is a man." The inventive value of an enthymeme lies in this omission, which allows a writer or speaker to explain and define the unstated proposition as needed to strengthen the argument. As modes of reasoning, enthymemes uphold sources of potential artistic proofs;

as heuristic tools, they allow rhetors to categorize and apply commonplace topics to different subjects for different purposes.

When rhetors choose not to explicate the omitted proposition of an enthymeme, they do so knowing the proposition will be supplied by the intended audience. The word enthymeme (from the Greek *enthymema*) literally means "something in the mind," and that *something* is most often a commonly held opinion (*endoxa*). Aristotle aptly illustrates the function of an enthymeme by noting that, "[to indicate] that Dorieus has won a contest with a crown it is enough to have said that he has won the Olympic games, and there is no need to add that the Olympic games have a [medal] as the prize; for everybody knows that [Olympic champions win a medal]" (1357b). Moreover, an enthymeme bases its reasons and conclusion on probabilities (*eikota*) rather than certainties. The symbolic language of astrology, deemed intelligible by its practitioners and abstruse by its critics, employs enthymemes in its predictive and descriptive claims.

Aristotle describes *maxims* as "the conclusions of enthymemes [without] the premises" (1394b), i.e., conclusions without a proposition or a reason, or both. Typically, a maxim states an assertion, though not "one about particulars, such as what kind of person Iphicrates is, but of a general sort" (Ibid). Maxims convey "wisdom" in a minimum of words; thus, according to Aristotle,

> Speaking in maxims is appropriate to those older in years
> and on subjects with which one is experienced, since to
> speak maxims is unseemly for one too young, as is
> storytelling; and on matters in which one is inexperienced it
> is silly and shows a lack of education. (1395a).

Maxims encapsulate universal truths as concisely and succinctly as possible, in a memorable phrase worthy of recall and meditation. A maxim is not designed to convey

knowledge directly, but to provoke thought, often as an exhortation or warning. Aristotle

identifies a maxim as "an assertion […] about things that involve actions and are to be

chosen or avoided in regard to action" (1349b). A well-worded maxim might take hundreds

or even thousands of words to explicate; however, such an explication would ultimately

prove less valuable to its hearer or reader than the maxim itself, whose primary role is to

transform the thinking, and influence the actions, of the individual through contemplation.

The same can be said of the cryptic language of alchemy, comprehensible only by those

willing to devote countless hours researching and deciphering its symbolic meanings.

A *fallacy* is the misuse of language to frame an argument in invalid terms, often in

an ironic or satirical context. Fallacies may also be used to encode a secondary message

within a primary message. In *On Sophistical Refutations*, Aristotle identifies six "ways of

producing the false appearance of an argument which depend on language" (Hansen 4),

namely: ambiguity, amphiboly, combination, division of words, accent, and the form of an

expression. These "false appearances," which include homophones (words that sound the

same but have different meaning) and homographs (semantically different words that are

spelled the same), can all be categorized as *ambiguous language*, insofar as they result in

double, uncertain, or multiple meanings through their forms, grammar, or meanings.

Ambiguous language constitutes an especially insidious type of fallacy, insofar as it often

adheres to valid argumentative forms of logic, making its deception difficult to spot.

Language-based fallacies provide their users enough "wiggle room," either through the use

of vague terms or an open-ended style, to encompass distinctly different meanings.

Jonathan Swift employs ambiguity masterfully in his use of the cabala.

D. Occult Invention

In the simplest terms, *occult invention* denotes the application of Aristotle's four heuristic forms to the symbolic terms of the four primary occult arts: magic, alchemy, astrology, and cabala. The occult arts employ a structured set of symbolic terms derived from supernatural terms through analogical extension, so the application of Aristotle's heuristic forms to an occult art entails the combining of two processes—traditional invention, and the analogical extension of occult terms. From traditional invention, occult invention adopts the generation of persuasive resources, the "means" of traditional rhetoric; from the occult arts, it adopts the particular method used to analogically extend natural terms symbolically. Authors in the Occult Mode use occult invention in the manner of magicians, but with a significant twist. Rather than inventing natural terms designed to alter situations and events supernaturally, Occult Mode authors invent natural terms designed to alter situations and events linguistically. The specific methods I explicate include the encoding of obscure or double meaning through occult symbolism and speculative etymologies in the manner of magical correspondences; textual transformation through *discordia concors* in the manner of alchemy; the development of characters, plots, and themes through symbolic translation in the manner of astrology; and the reorientation of social perspectives through fallacious ambiguity in the manner of cabala. Burke provides a useful model for how such analogic extensions operate in literature through a process he calls "magical charting."

1. Burke's Magical Charting

In *The Philosophy of Literary Form*, Burke describes the use of poetic terms as idealized deployments of "magic decrees," implicit in all language. He insists that "an

attempt to *eliminate* magic [from language] would involve us in the elimination of

vocabulary itself as a way of sizing up reality" (4, italics his). To the Modern mind, the

type of phrase Burke has in mind when speaking of "magic decrees" does not seem

magical, nor does it appear to decree anything:

> It may annoy some persons that I take the realistic chart to
> possess "magical" ingredients. That is, if you size up a
> situation in the name of regimentation you *decree* it a
> different essence than if you sized it up in the name of
> planned economy. [However], the choice here is not a
> choice between magic and no magic, but a choice between
> magics that vary in their degree of approximation to the
> truth (Ibid, italics his).

Based on our definition of magic as *the use of natural terms in a symbol set derived

from supernatural terms through analogic extension*, we would not immediately classify

the phrase "planned economy" as magical. However, once we recognize the incongruity of

its terms, we understand the significance and implication of its "magical decree." The word

"economy" connotes a relatively unpredictable process in Burkes *second realm* of the

"socio-political." Its coupling with the word *planned* constitutes a "borrowing" from a

similar phrase in Burke's *first realm* of "material operations" implying a connection to a

more predictable process, such as a "planned meal." The joining of the words *planned* and

economy implies that a government or some other group could plan and control the

unpredictable interplay of buyers and sellers in a marketplace in the same way one plans

and controls the interplay of ingredients in a home-cooked casserole.

Therefore, by selecting the word *planned* in connection with the word *economy*, the

rhetor *decrees* it to be a possibility. However, the phrase "planned economy" posits a state

of affairs not yet known to be possible, so it cannot be deemed completely "accurate,"

insofar as the details of its operation amount to speculation. As Burke observes, "Only a

completely accurate chart [of significations and implications] would dissolve magic, making the structure of names identical to the structure of the named" (7, italics his). In other words, if we could describe the workings of a "planned economy" as accurately as we can describe the cooking of a casserole, it would no longer be a "magical" term. This literal example assists us in recognizing the magical decrees of occult phrases, which posit far less probable possibilities.

Consider, for example, a magician's use of the occult word *eidolon*, defined as *a purposefully created thought-form*, in lieu of the mundane word *economy*. The analogically extended significations of "planned" in relation to "eidolon" presents a different type of incongruity. Not only must we now contemplate the idea of planning the outcome of something beyond our reasonable control, the workings of which we do not fully understand, we must also envision the planning of something completely hypothetical and unverifiable. In other words, whereas the symbolism of the phrase "planned economy" refers to a socio-political possibility analogically extended through a term borrowed from material operations, the symbolism of the phrase "planned eidolon" refers to a supernatural (*fourth realm*) possibility analogically extended through a term borrowed from material operations. Consequently, the coupling of the word "planned" with the word "eidolon" entails not only analogic extension, but also *logological transformation*. As noted above, Burke defines logological transformation as the conversion of "terms from their 'supernatural' reference into their possible use in a real […] wholly natural" sense (*Religion* 8). However, rather than attempt to reform or eliminate such decrees as absurdities, Burke suggests, we "chart" them as symbolic motives, through "the realistic sizing-up of situations" (6).

19

In *The Philosophy of Literary Form*, Burke defines *magic* as "that in which our assertions (or verbal decrees) as to the nature of the situation come closest to a correct gauging of that situation as it actually is" (4). A *chart* consists of a compilation, or table, of "the periodicity of the recurrence" of certain terms "*in relation to one another*" (74, italics his), and a *decree* is simply an "approximate chart." Rehearsing Burke's method of magical charting will clarify the process and assist us in understanding how Occult Mode authors translate occult terms, as natural terms in symbolic symbol sets derived from supernatural terms, into their correspondent natural meanings. In the next few paragraphs I detail the process implicit in the charting used in the remainder of this study.

Burke begins by designating the correlations between symbols (words, images, and meanings) as "the *functioning* of a structure" (Ibid, italics his). This structure becomes more apparent, he argues, when one depicts the relationships between such symbols visually, i.e., via an equals sign ("=") and/or arrows ("←" or "→"). Taking Samuel Taylor Coleridge's (1772-1834) text, *The Ancient Mariner* as a representative example, Burke observes that "in a jotting like 'the sunny mist, the luminous gloom of Plato,' I should have 'sunny mist' = 'luminous gloom' = (i.e., is in the same cluster with) 'Plato'" (75). Such "jottings" constitute an initial trial, which must then be tested "by inquiring how it might serve in discussing the turn from Sun to Moon" in the same work, and how "our application here might fit with [Coleridge's] equations for Sun and Moon elsewhere" (Ibid). The correlations operate "progressively" such that the order of terms from *sunny mist*-to-*luminous* precedes the terms *gloom*-to-*Plato* in a succession that "verges on the matter of [a forward-pointing] arrow, [i.e., →]" (Ibid). Such linear presentations of the terms "cause us to collapse into a single chord a series of events that, by the nature of the

20

literary medium, must be strung out in arpeggio" (Ibid). In actuality, however, all the correlations of a progression hold simultaneously like the words of a sentence, increasing the value of rereading, which allows one to retain and bring to mind the images and meaning of the sequentially-read words simultaneously.

Not all literary structures chart out as simply or as clearly as the above example, however, for terms often serve as antonyms and synonyms of each other. Moreover, terms may appear regressively, as well as progressively, as in flashbacks, foreshadowings, and other ambiguous constructions. This requires another dimension "for noting an ambiguous dialectical operation whereby one event calls forth another event, not similar in quality, but compensatory" (75). For this purpose, Burke suggests a backward-pointing arrow (←) be used. Alternatively, in charting such symbols in this study, I use a table, with the horizontal rows representing the progressive (analogically logical) and regressive (analogically dialectical) movements, and the vertical columns depicting the equalities. To illustrate the charting process, and show how effectively a table can be used in mapping and extending the symbolisms of such a chart, I compile and extend visually the terms Burke depicts textually in the following passage:

> If we met a sequence, for instance, "murder to night to a vision of peace," here "murder" and "night" might be consistent in quality ("murder = night") while a third event might be of opposite, or compensatory quality (which would require "night→peace"). Thus, pain and weeping are consistent in quality; pain and medicine are compensatory, the one being involved "dialectically" in the other (75-76).

In charting Burke's terms according to his specifications in Table 1, I also fill in some of the analogical "spaces" Burke left "blank," i.e., inserting some additional possibilities implied in Burke's terms in relation to their progressions, regressions, and

equalities. In other words, by expanding the chart both horizontally and vertically by means of analogic extension, I suggest additional logical and dialectical correlates, creating six sets of ratios among the symbols.

Table 1. Burke's symbolic terms as he maps them in a textual example, using rows and columns rather than arrows and equals signs, with my additions in brackets.

Murder	[Trial]	[justice]
Night	Peace	[Day]
Pain	Medicine	[Health]
Weeping	[reflection]	[laughter]
[ice]	[heat]	[water]
[Black]	[gray]	[white]

For example, analogically extending the terms "murder" and "pain" *logically* (i.e., horizontally along the rows of a table) creates the ratio:

murder:trial:justice::pain:medicine:health

Expressed as a complete analogical sentence, one could say that "murder" prompts a "trial" that results in "justice" just as "pain" prompts "medicine" that results in "health." By adding an entirely new row consisting of the terms "black," "gray," and "white," we see how the initial meanings may be extended *dialectically* (or vertically along the columns of the same table):

black:murder::black:pain
gray:trial::gray:medicine
white:justice::white:health

Again, expressing these analogical ratios narratively, one might state that "murder" and "pain" represent "black" moments in an individual's life, which lead to indefinite "gray" areas of uncertain mediation through a "trial" or "medicine," but that the attainment of "justice" or "health" ultimately "white" out such "black" moments.

Charting the symbols of logologically transformed text in a table not only provides visual clarity of related meanings as the basis of metaphors and tropes, it also indicates the polyvalence of the terms in a parallel context. Once the key symbolic terms of an occult text have been charted, the "magic" of its "decrees" results in other, previously unsuspected correlations. As Burke affirms, by charting a text's analogical extensions, "You can contrast the versification of it with that of any other poem [or occult text] known to man. [In other words,] you can compare its hero [or any other symbol] with the hero [or corresponding symbol] of some work three centuries ago" (74). The same type of charting allows a magician to correlate natural terms (for natural objects, processes, and entities) to magical symbols. According to Agrippa, if one where to trace (or in Burke's terminology, *chart)* all magical terms back to their original source, one would arrive at the Ancient four elements—Earth, Air, Water, and Fire—as the *Ur* symbols of occultism. Historically, the first mention of such elements appears in Babylonian mythology, from which Ancient Greek philosophers (most notably Empedocles, Plato, and Aristotle) adopted them as the original *topoi* of the process we know as rhetorical invention.

2. The Elemental Basis of Occult Invention

In attributing the concept of the four elements to Babylonian mythology, scholars interpolated the terms *Air*, *Fire*, *Water*, and *Earth* from the more natural terms *wind*, *sky*, *sea*, and *earth* (Rochberg 2002). *Wind*, logically enough, corresponds to *Air*; *sky* symbolizes *Fire,* in reference to the heat and brightness of the sun and other stars; *sea* correlates naturally to *Water*; and *Earth* stands perfectly self-referential. The first mention of Air, Fire, Water, and Earth as "elements" (στοιχεῖον or stoicheion), representing "the smallest division," appears in Plato's *Timaeus* (31b-32c). Plato credits the earlier Greek

philosopher Empedocles (c. 490-430 BCE), with identifying the four elements as the

"roots" (ῥιζώματα, rhizōmata) of all being. Accordingly, occult symbolism, as an offshoot

of the metaphysics developed by Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus, grows out of Aristotle's

correlation of the four elements with their respective qualities (hot, cold, wet, dry) in Part

Two of his *On Generation and Corrruption*, as explained in the following passage and

depicted in Table 2:

> The elementary qualities […] have attached themselves to
> the apparently 'simple' bodies (Fire, Air, Water, and Earth) in
> a manner consonant with theory. For Fire is hot and dry,
> whereas Air is hot and moist (Air being a sort of aqueous
> vapor); and Water is cold and moist, while Earth is cold and
> dry (H.H. Joachim 2009).

Table 2. Relations between the four Ancient elements and their primary and secondary
qualities as established by Aristotle.

Element	Primary Quality	Secondary Quality
Earth	Dry	Cold
Air	Wet	Hot
Water	Cold	Wet
Fire	Hot	Dry

Aristotle's method of analogically extending the elements, as terms for the

supernatural "roots" of the universe, constitutes the first use of *topoi* and prefigures Burke's

magical charting. In assigning each of the four elements two qualities, Aristotle determines

relations, or ratios, between the elements by virtue of shared qualities. For example, Earth

shares "cold," its primary quality, with Water, for which "cold" is a secondary quality. This

commonality results in points of overlap, or cycles of interaction, which Aristotle calls

generation and *corruption.* The interactions produce unstable hybrid states recognizable in

the symbolism of nature; for instance, Fire combined with Water produces steam, a hybrid,

unstable state composed of Air and Water. Collectively, the elements comprise what Aristotle calls *chaos* (χάος), a formless, abysmal state characteristic, cosmologically, of the beginnings of the universe (Liddell 2007). To the original four elements, Aristotle adds a fifth, the *Quintessence* or "fifth essence." Later Greek philosophers also referred to the Quintessence as *æther*, an invisible, incorruptible substance thought to permeate the universe (Lloyd 133-139).

From his analysis of changes wrought through interaction of the four elements in his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle analogically derives his concept of the four causes from which everything comprised of the elements can be traced (1013a): a *material cause* (an object's material source); a *formal cause* (its form); an *efficient cause,* (its source); and the *final cause* (its purpose). The analogical progression thus runs from the elements, to their qualities, which allow them to interact, to the causes of their interactions. In *De Anima*, Aristotle explores the means by which humans recognize and comprehend such causes, concluding that "these distinct [causes as] elements [of nature] must likewise be found within the soul." He proceeds to derive the parts of the soul as: the *senses* (which perceive the material cause); the *imagination* (which envisions the efficient cause); the *mind* (which understands the formal cause); and the *appetite* (which wills the final cause). The analogic extension of the elements to humans, and what we now recognize as the cognitive faculties, leads Hippocrates (c. 460 BC-370 BCE) to formulate a primitive theory of medicine.

Aelius Galenus (c.129-217 CE), a second-century Greek physician, describes in his writings how Hippocrates correlated the original four elements with the body (Grant 14-18), aligning the four elements with the four humors (Blood, Yellow Bile, Black Bile, and Phlegm), and the four temperaments (Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholic, and Phlegmatic).

Based on these associations, Hippocrates devised a elaborate system of treatment grounded in the fourfold division of herbs as medicine. For instance, "hot" foods such as onions, radishes, and garlic were likened to Fire, Yellow Bile, and the Choleric temperament. More importantly, Hippocrates' analogic extensions initiated a long series of similar correspondences in other fields. I sometimes refer to such extension based on the elements and humors as *occult correspondences*. Prior to the seventeenth century, this symbolic body of knowledge based on occult correspondence was not deemed occult, but authoritative. Only when proto-scientists such as Francis Bacon (1561-1626) began favoring evidence based on observation did reasoning derived from correspondence and analogy become known as "occult." Predictably, traditional invention and the use of *topoi,* upon which analogical thinking is based, disappeared from rhetoric nearly simultaneously with the appearance of proto-scientific thinking.

3. The Pentad, Elemental Symbolism, and Occult Invention

Burke arrived at his method of magical charting through a process nearly opposite that which Aristotle and Hippocrates used in their analogical extensions of the elements and humors. By analyzing patterns of symbolic terms in literary texts, Burke was able to deconstruct the underlying patterns of philosophy and language, identifying various categories, and noting their points of intercept. Eventually he reduced the number of categories to five, and discovered a parallel between the five categories and the dramatic elements of a story. He began using these dramatic terms to schematize motives and situations in much the same way that Aristotle and Hippocrates used the elements to schematize metaphysics and medicine. We see the process germinating in Burke's first major work, *Counter-Statement,* before he presents the Pentad as a formal heuristic method

in *A Grammar of Motives*. There, Burke sets forth his cumulative thinking regarding

various correlations between its terms and those of alchemy, magic, and a wide spectrum of

philosophical and literary theories, ranging from Aristotle's causes (228) to classical drama

(230), Medieval topical questions (228), and the fundamental "schools" of thought.

Applying Burke's charting methodology to his own text results in the dramatistic "magical

decrees" shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The terms of Burke's Pentad in relation to Aristotle's causes, dramatic elements, the four primary philosophical schools plus mysticism, in addition to the Medieval topical questions.

Pentad	Scene	Agent	Act	Agency	Purpose
Causes	Material	Efficient	Formal	Instrumental	Final
Drama	Spectacle	Character	Plot	Melody & Diction	Mimesis
Schools	Materialism	Idealism	Realism	Pragmatism	Mysticism
Questions	Where & When	Who	What	How &With What	Why

Much of my thinking about occult invention in relation to Burke stems from adding

another row to this table, analogically extending it via the four Ancient elements and their

quintessence, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Correlations between Burke's Pentad, the four Ancient elements, and the quintessence.

Pentad	Scene	Agent	Act	Agency	Purpose
Elements	Earth	Air	Water	Fire	Quintessence

The rows of this table correspond to the examples Burke uses to explain the terms of

the Pentad. For example, he ties SCENE closely to materialism (131), a correlative of the

element Earth in occult parlance; likewise, he links AGENT to idealism, the most

abstract and immaterial philosophy, which relies on unseen realities, in the manner of

27

Air; and aligns AGENCY to pragmatism, a philosophy of "means," which evokes the utility of Fire. Burke's term PURPOSE incorporates various theories of *telos*, such as those found in religion, mysticism, and the occult arts. The term also designates what Burke calls "transcendent purpose" (288), a fitting analogue of Aristotle's Quintessence, which likewise subsumes the original four elements, and provides a transcendent basis for Ancient culture and thought. As the most all-encompassing term of the Pentad, Burke does not associate PURPOSE with a specific philosophical school, but rather, describes it as incorporating the preceding four schools (plus rationalism and nominalism) as a comprehensive totality.

Given the parallels between Burke's Pentad and the Ancient elements, we can gain insight into the relations between analogic extension and occult invention by examining the operations of Burke's five dramatic terms. Heuristically, the terms of the Pentad glance upon each other interchangeably, providing numerous multidimensional, polyvalent perspectives through the totality of their dialectical relations, producing what Burke calls a "perspective of perspectives" (*Grammar* 503-519). Burke dubs these binary relations "ratios," and they function similarly to those of the qualities Aristotle assigned to the elements. Later, after working extensively with the five terms, Burke added a sixth term, ATTITUDE, thereby "hexing" (as he puts it) the original Pentad into a Hexad. However, as Burke admits, Attitude ultimately pertains more to one's subjective approach than to the situations and motives signified by the other five terms, and therefore lacks an elemental correlative.

As a complete and self-contained symbolic language, equivalent in conception to Aristotle's interaction of the Ancient elements, the dramatistic method of invention

creates what Burke calls "panoramic" views, highlighting the implications of situations in a way that less-structured reasoning tends to overlook (*Dramatism* 23). In constructing ratios from the Pentad, "certain formal interrelationships prevail among these terms, by reason of their role as attributes of a common ground or substance [and] their participation in common ground makes for transformability" (*Grammar* xix). This "transformability" parallels Aristotle's *generation* and *corruption*. The most salient characteristic of Pentad terms, therefore, is their potential ambiguity; equivalent, in Aristotle's model of the elements and qualities, to unstable hybrid states, such as steam. These points of ambiguity are significant because they represent possible points of semantic transformation.

Thus, rather than looking to philosophically "dispose of ambiguity through definitions and logic," Burke proposes to "use it to acquire deeper insights by clarifying the resources of the ambiguity, much as medieval alchemists sought to distinguish the dross from base metal or the soul" (*Grammar* xix). Just as steam can be transformed into either water or air (through heating or cooling), a ratio derived from the Pentad can be transformed semantically to either of its constituent parts, depending on the rhetor's motives in a given discourse. Burke's primary purpose in explicating the Pentad is to demonstrate how each term potentially overlaps at some point with every other, just as, for example, the elements Water and Earth share the quality Cold. He also seeks to show how, at each of these points of overlap, "there is an alchemic opportunity, whereby we can put one philosophy or doctrine of motivation into the alembic, make the appropriate passes, and take out another" (Ibid). These points constitute symbolic motives, as

"separate crusts," highlighting certain distinctions, such as those between freedom and necessity, the combination of which exemplify occult invention.

Alchemically, therefore, "if you reduce the terms [of the pentad] to any one of them, you will find them branching out again" (Ibid xxi). Such reductive "ratios" pair two terms of the Pentad (e.g., Scene-Act) wherein "principles of determination" can be explored as relational models of refinement, interaction, and intersection (15). For instance, the term Agent might require further subdivision insofar as "an agent might have his act modified (hence partly motivated) by friends (co-agents) or enemies (counter-agents)" (xix-xx). Ideas and motivational values such as will, fear, and malice also contribute to the efficacy of an agent. Here again, we find a parallel with the elements, wherein, for instance, Air could be subdivided into Air-like combinations with other elements, e.g., a mixture of Fire and Earth (rather than Fire and Water) would produce smoke rather than steam. Likewise, combining Scene with Act produces a situation wherein "the scene contains the act" in that it constitutes a backdrop for what occurs therein. Combining Scene with Agent produces as situation wherein "the scene contains the agents" who carry out the act (3), etc.

In terms of rhetorical discourse, the production of meaningful ratios consists of finding points of common ground as a means of identification. In keeping with a Burkean example, suppose that colleague A and colleague B belong to the same political party C. Their common loyalty and affiliation to C make them consubstantial with it in the same way that siblings are consubstantial with their parents; or, in keeping with another Burke metaphor, in the same way that fingers are consubstantial to a hand. Viewed from a singular perspective, colleagues and siblings appear distinct and separate, while their

consubstantiality links them; at the same time, their consubstantiality "does not deny their distinctness [for] there is nothing abstruse in the statement that the offspring both is and is not one with its parentage" (*Rhetoric* 21-22). A bloodline, confirmable through DNA, need not determine how a child's life differs from that of its parents; likewise, a consubstantial ratio, while connecting its constituent terms figuratively, need not determine the nature of their combined meaning.

Accordingly, invention of a common ground as a basis of identification and potential compromise derives not from what binds such individuals together as allies or relations, but from what separates them as adversaries. Identification means "to confront the implications of *division*" (*Rhetoric* 22, italics his) in lieu of dismissing or ignoring it. Therein lies the *resource* of ambiguity within a consubstantial difference: The intrinsic divisions inherent in a potential unity loom as desirable to a rhetorician as the overlap of separate branches of a tree, which provide far more common shade than the unified trunk from which they stem. Hence, "Identification is affirmed with earnestness precisely because there is division. [In fact,] Identification is compensatory to division. If men were not [ideologically] apart from one another, there would be no need for the rhetorician to proclaim their unity" (Ibid) through the identification of common ground.

Unlike the organic unity of a tree trunk, however, identification based on a unity of diverse perspectives, as the ground of rhetorical divisions, must be unified through invention. Through direct observation, one can readily infer that a trunk subsumes a group of branches by way of *induction* (reasoning from particular premises to general conclusions), in visually tracing it from the ground up. But arriving at an identification forged from among the various branches, i.e., through combination of disparate views,

requires a conciliation of opposites by means of *deduction* (reasoning from general premises to particular conclusions). Traditionally, such invention entails the juxtaposition of topics to find logical links capable of bridging disagreement. Burke's contribution to this process via the ratios of the Pentad constitutes a figural alchemical reduction of the topics *before* juxtaposition, revealing their logical points of potential linkage as the resources of their ambiguity.

If, as the Ancient Greek philosopher Zeno of Elea (c. 490-430 BCE) suggests, logic acts in the manner of a closed fist and rhetoric in the manner of an open hand, Burke's alchemical reduction might be likened to spreading rhetoric's extended fingers to reveal the folds of connective flesh between their sources. As Burke describes it, "If you would go from one finger to another without a leap, you need but trace the tendon down into the palm of the hand, and then trace a new course along another tendon" (*Grammar* xxii). A more powerful visualization consists of mentally draining all the water from the ocean, exposing its islands as mountains on the ocean floor, rather than disconnected fragments of land. These analogies play especially well dramatically, insofar as "the dramatist gets his effects by a splitting of the total action into diverse roles and step-by-step unfoldings" (*Permanence* xlviii). By metaphorically transferring the conflicting perspectives of a disagreement to the points of these islands or fingers, it becomes much easier to see why Burke insists that, linguistically, "what we want is *not terms that avoid ambiguity*, but *terms that clearly reveal the strategic spots at which ambiguities arise*" metaphorically, as on the ocean floor and between the tendons of the fingers (*Grammar* xviii, italics his).

The symbolic beginning of a "perspective of perspectives," then, might mirror a pilot's view from 35,000 feet above the ocean floor drained of water, enabling one to

32

conceive of different routes between islands other than those perceivable by means of a ship with the water still there. Only by taking full advantage of the resources of ambiguity afforded by the larger, new perspective can one bring about a genuine transformation of perspective. This means looking at the symbolic "islands" or sub-perspectives in a new way. Burke calls this look "perspective by incongruity," meaning an intentionally generated "disorientation" of the terms used to formulate a situation, through an "impious" disregard for conventional order and arrangement. This disorientation eventually leads to a "reorientation," based on the human need to impose order through symbols.

Perspective by incongruity "embodies the assumption that certain clusters of terms spontaneously exclude certain other clusters of terms; and these clusters tend to be kept apart, as though in different bins, unless a thinker who is in some respect 'perverse' suddenly bridges the gap" (*Permanence* 18). Such a thinker seems perverse in the sense that she deliberately stirs the semantic pot, developing bizarre and unfamiliar perspectives through "planned incongruity." However, one seeks incongruity not to shock, but to cultivate additional ambiguities "for the purpose of experimentally wrenching apart all those molecular combinations of adjective and noun, substantive and verb [so as to] subject language to the same 'cracking' process that chemists now use in their refining of oil" (Ibid 119). These dislocated terms constitute the alchemist's crusted fragments to be tossed back into the molten center of raw potential meaning, made possible by a method of invention that rewards verbal disintegration.

Ironically, seventeenth-century philosophers such as John Locke (1632-1704), who spearheaded the most aggressive attempt to exterminate symbolic language and

33

invention, provide a remarkably rich, albeit unwitting, source of metaphorical dramatistic

ratios. For instance, in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke writes that

"the Scene of Ideas that makes one Man's Thoughts, cannot be laid open to the immediate

view of another" (4.21.4). Burke could not ask for a more apt example of how agents as

ideas are contained within a scene. By identifying ideas and the mind in these terms, the

English philosopher openly invites their reduction via the scene-agent ratio, inadvertently

welcoming the type of perverse disorientation he and fellow English empiricist Thomas

Hobbes (1588-1679) so vigorously resist. Ultimately, Burke demonstrates that invention

by means of analogic extension, as originally conceived by Aristotle in connection with

the four Ancient elements, is an intrinsic attribute of human thinking, which cannot be

blotted out.

E. The Demise of Traditional Heuresis

1. Reforms of Ramus

Unlike previous educators, Ramus saw invention as an impediment to learning and

objectivity, rather than as an asset. According to Wilber Samuel Howell in *Logic &*

Rhetoric in England 1500-1700, Ramus felt so strongly about the separation of invention

and rhetoric that "He ordained that logic should offer training in invention and

arrangement, with no help whatever from rhetoric. He [further] ordained that the office of

arrangement should take care of all speculations regarding methods of discourse, with no

help whatever from invention" (148). In short, invention's reassignment to logic looked

to be as permanent as its expulsion from rhetoric; and so long as invention was excluded

from rhetoric within the Liberal Arts, rhetoric would remain ostracized from its original

purpose as designated by Aristotle, to see the available means of persuasion.

The idea of reclassifying invention originated with Rudolph Agricola (1444-1484), a French scholar and professor who died before Ramus was born, but whose disciple, Johannes Sturm (1507-1584), a German educator, passed the radical vision on to Ramus while the latter studied under him at the University of Paris. Ramus solidified Agricola's theory by developing and justifying it in accordance with Aristotle's three general laws for organizing knowledge as presented in his *Posterior Analytics (1.4)*. Aristotle proposed that all classifications be made according to whether their truth: 1) was necessary or contingent (*lex veritatis*); 2) existed as an art in itself or as a form of another art (*lex justitiae*); and 3) was universal or specific in application (*lex sapientiae*). While Ramus agreed with Aristotle about invention's universal application, and that heuresis existed as a form of another art, he disagreed as to which art it belonged, perceiving logic as more universal than rhetoric. For Ramus, invention and memory pertain to thinking and the discovery of truth, whereas the other canons—arrangement, style, and delivery— pertain to the *communication* of thinking and the meaning thought discovers.

2. Plain Language Movement

Ramus's decision to align invention with logic rather than rhetoric deepened a great divide between thinking in relation to meaning on the one hand, and language as expression on the other. In the eyes of Ramus and his literal-minded followers, meaning, as a product of clear thinking, exists in and of itself, *independent* of language. Language was seen merely as a vehicle with which to express meaning. However, for Occult Mode poets such John Donne (1572-1631) and Abraham Cowley (1618-1667), and for occultists such as Agrippa, meaning resides *within* language. Therefore, the expression of meaning through language *constitutes thinking*. The argument for privileging thinking

over language, led by Ramus, became an early battle cry of the highly influential proto-scientific intellectual group known as the *Royal Society of London for the Purpose of Improving Natural Knowledge*, established in 1660. As Covino observes, the group systematically "reduced [philosophy] from the exploration of changeable truths to the production of direct, transparent propositions" (1994 65). Moreover, as a guarantor of these objectives, the Society sought to establish a "language resistant to disruption," wherein "Reliable writing maintains the separation of observer and observed" and "all writing [that is] not directly referenced to observable phenomena" is deemed "empty ornamentation" (65).

Most philosophers and linguists now agree that such a separation between language and observable phenomena defies human capability. Modern science, by at least *attempting* to maintain the subject-object split through rigorous method, can stake a reasonable claim to some semblance of objectivity. By contrast, the Early Modern rhetorician, whose disciplinary domain was the superstructure of language itself, could not abide a linguistic restriction that separates language from meaning. As Covino explains, the Royal Society ensured that "The rhetor who once participated in a world of tentative perspectives (*topoi*), alert to the Greek doctrine of logos as magic, [was] replaced by the technician fixed on clarity and precision, for whom words are lifeless" (988 82-83). This change in the role of rhetoric sparked a proliferation of language theories based on inductive knowledge, precipitated by Descartes' *Discourse on Method*, wherein tropes were deemed obfuscating. The push to eliminate tropes and all other figuration came to be known as the Plain Language Movement.

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BCE), the Ancient Roman lawyer, orator, and statesman, sowed the seeds of the Plain Language Movement many centuries before Hobbes, Locke, and the Royal Society co-founder Thomas Sprat (1635-1713) began their reform crusade. Cicero envisioned a simplification altogether different, however, from what his seventeenth-century successors had in mind. In his *De Oratore,* published around 55 BCE, Cicero admonishes writers and orators to eliminate "every word that is unnecessary," insofar as it "pours over the side of a brimming mind" (xxiii, 76-79). Nonetheless, he acknowledges the unnaturalness of adopting such a goal, noting that, "plainness of style seems easy to imitate at first thought, but when attempted, nothing is more difficult" (Ibid). Unlike Hobbes and Locke, Cicero does not advocate the wholesale elimination of all ornaments and tropes, merely those that prove frivolous or unnecessary. In fact, he explicitly advocates the judicious use of tropes and figures as a vital component of his Plain Language project.

Cicero even employs tropes in his examples of an effective plain style, writing that, "although [a plain style] is not full-blooded, it should nevertheless have some of the sap of life so that, though it lack great strength, it may be, so to speak, in sound health" (Ibid). Cicero's use of tropes accomplishes more than simply advocating them as part of a simple style; it also paints a memorable word-picture:

> Just as some women are said to be handsomer when
> unadorned [...], so this plain style gives pleasure when
> unembellished. [...] All noticeable pearls, as it were, will be
> excluded. Not even curling irons will be used. All
> cosmetics, artificial white and red, will be rejected. Only
> elegance and neatness will remain. (Ibid)

The plain-style Latin eloquence of Cicero resisted formative translation into English and other European vulgar languages, especially after the appearance of Dante

Alighieri's (c. 1265-1321) *Divine Comedy* in the early 1300s, and Martin Luther's

German translation of the Bible in 1534. Instead, the Christian Church and feudal class

system perpetuated a disparity between the Latin literacy of the nobility and the vulgar

tongue of commoners. As the number of morphed and hybrid words proliferated, tropes

and figures drifted further from their original meanings and roots, making vulgar

languages more colorful, but also less precise. Sprat, in *The History of the Royal Society*,

acknowledged that the resulting figures and tropes "were at first, no doubt, an admirable

instrument in the hands of wise men," but argued that in his time "they are generally

changed to worse uses, [making] the fancy disgust the best things if they come sound and

unadorned" (111), wondering,

> Who can behold without indignation how many mists and
> uncertainties these specious tropes and figures have brought
> on our knowledge? […] Of all the studies of men, nothing
> many be sooner obtained than this vicious abundance of
> phrase, this trick of metaphors, this volubility of tongue,
> which makes so great a noise in the world (Ibid).

Yet, even as language reformers worked to eliminate the "noise" of tropes and figures

from the English language, they failed to do so in their own works. In the *Leviathan*, for

instance, Hobbes, proclaims that "Metaphors, and senseless and ambiguous words, are

like *ignes fatui*" (116, italics his), alluding to the phenomenon of phosphorescent light

hovering over swampy ground at night as a metaphor for figural illusion.

Ultimately, as Covino observes, the turning point for the prevalence of plain

language came around 1700, when "rhetorical and magical invention were

complementary and in some ways identical processes" (2006). With the shift from a

theological to an empirical model of the universe came the "determined effort to

eliminate 'fantastical' rhetoric, and its attendant magical cosmology, and to establish a

stable, absolute language" (2006). The Royal Society implemented an effective plan to effect this change; a plan to link rhetoric to magic, condemning "the magical imagination as an antisocial, anti-intellectual force" (Calvino 1994 62) in natural philosophy and academia. The effort proved wildly successful in devaluing rhetoric as a discipline.

3. Conflation of Magic and Rhetoric

In its effort to link rhetoric to magic, the Royal Society demonstrated that both invention and magic rely on *analogy*, albeit with a fundamental distinction. Rhetoricians refer to analogy as metaphor, while seventeenth-century magicians such as John Dee (1527-1609) and Bruno call analogy *correspondence*. The rhetorician's concept of metaphor derives from the Greek word *metaphera* (μεταφορά)*, with *meta* meaning "change" and *phera* "to bear" (Liddell 2007), connoting the "transfer" of meaning from an abstract concept to a concrete symbol or image. By contrast, the magician's concept of correspondence derives from Neoplatonic principles, in which all natural terms correspond to a supernatural counterpart. As Manfredi Piccolomini notes in his twentieth-century Forward to Bruno's *On the Composition of Images, Signs, and Ideas*, magicians "did not believe that meanings of words, images, sounds and symbols could be defined semantically but [that they] could [only] be understood intuitively and analogically through other words, images, sounds, and symbols" (xxi). The Royal Society sought to further devalue rhetoric by linking metaphors and allusions to magical correspondences.

The Society highlighted another important parallel between the disciplines. Both rhetoric and magic employ utterance, in rituals or through persuasion, to effect figurative transference. Invention supplies the impetus in the chain of transference from the mind to words in the process of figuration; rhetorically, inducement stands second to invention in

the development of a convincing argument. Likewise, in magic, the goal of changing the state of a situation through sympathetic correspondence depends on the invention of an efficacious ritual.

The link between rhetoric and magic dates back at least to Gorgias (c. 485-380 BCE), a Greek sophist and one of the founding fathers of rhetoric as a discipline. Gorgias compares rhetoric to magic and witchcraft in his "Encomium for Helen," circa 414 BCE, noting that both employ "Sacred incantations with words [that] inject pleasure and reject pain, for in associating with the opinion of the mind, the power of an incantation enchants, persuades, and alters it through bewitchment" (Leitch 32). Incantations and words, whatever their effect, do not constitute magic, however, any more than persuasion constitutes rhetoric; rather, their efficacy lies in the invention of the *means* for "associating with the opinion of the mind," which Burke refers to as "identification," and designates as the beginning point of invention.

Both magic and rhetoric are outgrowths of invention, in keeping with their common methodology of associative reasoning. Therefore, Bacon was able to undermine the legitimacy of both magic and invention in his *Advancement of Learning* by redefining heuresis as a faculty of memory:

> The invention of speech or argument is not properly an
> invention: for to invent is to discover that we know not, and
> not to recover or re-summon that which we already know:
> and this use of this invention is no other but, out of the
> knowledge whereof our mind is already possessed, to draw
> forth or call before us that which may be pertinent to the
> purpose we take into our consideration (58).

Bacon's reductive view confuses invention with Plato's concept of knowledge as remembrance, whereby humans possess access to all possible knowledge *a priori*. This is

the Neoplatonic starting point of occult invention: an interconnected, correspondent universe in which all knowledge becomes deductively accessible. Bacon derides traditional invention as simplistic and outdated, describing it pejoratively as nothing more than a chase "of a deer in an enclosed park" (Ibid). In addition to providing another example of a reformer employing the type of language he denigrates, the deer-in-a-park metaphor encapsulates the nature of the struggle between Natural Philosophers and magicians, who readily agree with the metaphor's implication, i.e., that their arts presume to encompass all knowledge (the totality of "deer") in the entire universe ("an enclosed park") with a finite, predefined symbol set.

Philosophically, the dispute Bacon alludes to hinges on a question of *kairos*, i.e., whether or not the universe abides by a set of principles established for its duration, or responds to circumstances that vary over time. The Greek word *kairos* (καιρός) denotes the "right," "opportune," or "supreme" moment. In contrast to *chronos,* which signifies sequential time, *kairos* signifies a particular moment of indeterminate duration, arrived at in passing, in which something special happens. The concept of a constitutive moment of a discourse dates back to pre-Socratic Empedocles, who viewed the universe as an aggregate of agonistic relationships originating in the opposition of monad and dyad. The interaction of these aggregate parts results in events and circumstances occurring in *kairos*, at "the right time" (Carter 103). As explained in the *Dissoi Logoi*, an anonymously authored treatise discovered among the papers of the Roman physician Sextus Empiricus (c. 160-210 CE) around 600 BCE, differences in *Kairos* enable rhetors to argue convincingly on both sides of a matter by noting that "everything done at the right time is seemly, and everything done at the wrong time is disgraceful" (283). Gorgias

41

seized on this contradictory, relativistic method of reasoning as a means of doing

precisely what the Greek playwright Aristophanes (446-386 BCE) accuses Socrates of

doing in *The Clouds*, by "making the worse case appear the better" (DK80b6).

When Gorgias likens language to magic, he speaks to the role of *kairos* in occult

invention. Gorgias sought to understand "the structure and function of language as a

framework for expressing the implications of action and the ways decisions about such

actions were made" (Jarratt 103). His most radical innovations, i.e., the suggestion that

rhetors *use* rather than *avoid* paradox, and his belief that the sound and rhythm of words

wield a supernatural influence (Herrick 42), prefigure Burke's advocacy of the "resources

of ambiguity," and the concept of relating natural terms to supernatural terms through

"magical charting." Consequently, Gorgias' parabolic epideictic speech on Helen

represents an early bridge between traditional heuresis and occult invention.

F. Occult Invention and the Occult Mode of English Literature

The reemergence of rhetorical heuresis through occult invention in the Occult

Mode (c. 1550-1800) occurred over four general periods, in relation to four types of

occult arts. Each period saw the predominate occult art give way to a corresponding

science, which displaced the art from mainstream respectability. In the first period, c.

1550-1600, the practice of sympathetic magic gave way to natural philosophy as

Renaissance poets and playwrights such as George Chapman (1559-1634) and William

Shakespeare (1564-1616) incorporated elemental and temperamental correspondences in

their works. Chapman wove imagery of darkness, night, and melancholy into his themes

of saturation and illumination through obscure figuration in *The Shadow of the Night*.

Shakespeare bridged the gulf between the rhetorics of science and magic, employing speculative etymologies in his semantically rich comedy, *The Tempest*.

The second period, c. 1600-1650, saw alchemy displaced by chemistry and metallurgy, as the first Metaphysical Poets, John Donne and Abraham Cowley (1618-1667), began using *discordia concors* as a method of alchemical text transformation in their Baroque poetry. Donne employed suspense and symbolic inference as a means of blending emergent empirical information with tropes, distinguishing between use and enjoyment in the externalization of taste. Cowley attempted to bridge natural philosophy and poetry through "mix't wit" and discursion, introducing and reviving the odic form of Pendar (c. 522-443 BCE). In the third period, c. 1650-1700, astrology lost face as the credibility of astronomy increased, though John Dryden (1631-1700) continued using astrological reasoning to develop his comedic plots. Dryden, an amateur astrologer who predicted the death of his own son, employed planetary symbolism to thematize his character dualities in *An Evening's Love*.

In the fourth period, c. 1700-1750, cabala, which relies on playful troping, unorthodox word use, and ambiguity, collapsed under the weight of formal linguistics. Nonetheless, Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) continued deploying irony and satire through fallacious arguments and language codes in relation to his love-hate relationship with the Ancients and Moderns. This fourth period marks the end of a marriage between literature and the occult that spawned the Occult Mode, encompassing Mannerism, Baroque, and the Metaphysical Poets. Table 5 charts these periods and their respective relations to a particular occult art, the proto-scientific discipline that supplanted it, and its representative authors.

Table 5. Correlation of occult arts, disciplines, authors, and respective period dates.

Period	1550-1600	1600-1650	1650-1700	1700-1750
Occult Art	Magic	Alchemy	Astrology	Cabala
Displacing Discipline	Scientific Method	Chemistry, Metallurgy	Astronomy	Linguistics
Representative Authors	Chapman, Shakespeare	Donne, Cowley	Dryden	Swift

Within these periods, four types of occult invention emerge out of Aristotle's forms. The stratification conforms to a classification developed by George Campbell (1719-1796), an eighteenth-century rhetorician and Presbyterian minister. Campbell expands on Aristotle's divisions of the soul—the *senses,* the *imagination,* the *mind,* and the *appetite*—as derived from the elements and causes, to formulate four "appeals." Appeals are methods of persuading readers or listeners based on Aristotle's three categories of "means," *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*, i.e., logic, emotion, and authority. A syllogism makes an appeal to logic; compassion makes an appeal to emotion; and citing an expert makes an appeal to authority. (Thus, Campbell translates *ethos* as will, perceiving it as implicit in authority.) Campbell rounds out Aristotle's means by adding an appeal to *mythos*, or the imagination. In framing the scope of his project in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric,* Campbell asserts that "All of the ends of [rhetoric] are reducible to four": 1) "to enlighten the understanding"; 2) "to please the imagination"; 3) "to move the passions"; or 4) "to influence the will" (1). Campbell maps these appeals to four delivery methods, four mentor qualities, and four types of proofs or *pisteis*. Table 6 shows these relations, and include Aristotle's four heuristic forms and the occult arts.

Table 6. Correlation of primary rhetorical appeals, Campbell's methods, qualities, and means, as well as Aristotle's heuristic forms in relation to the four primary occult arts.

Rhetorical Appeal	Understanding	Passion	Imagination	Will
Delivery Method	Perspicuity	Wit	Humor	Ridicule
Mentor Quality	Instruction	Empathy	Sublimity	Vehemence
Proofs	Examples	Conformity	Insinuation	Disguise
Heuristic Form	Paradigm	Maxim	Enthymeme	Fallacy
Occult Art	Magic	Alchemy	Astrology	Cabala

These correspondences outline the basic framework of my explication of occult invention in conjunction with Burke's occult-based theory of language. Where new interpretations of the representative literary authors' works emerge, I pursue them only insofar as they further my purpose, leaving other literary implications for another study. In explicating the works of the Occult Mode authors I have selected, my foremost purpose is to explain and demonstrate their use of occult invention, to which I now turn.

CHAPTER II

DARKNESS, KNOWLEDGE, AND SCIENTIFIC MAGIC

IN CHAPMAN AND SHAKESPEARE

A. Chapman, Melancholy, and the Beginnings of Occult Invention

Near the beginning of George Chapman's "Hymnus in Noctum," the first of two

allegorical poems published in 1594 as *The Shadow of Night*, the poet identified by the

Scottish scholar William Minto (1845-1893) as Shakespeare's rival makes a traditional,

seemingly innocuous, appeal to his muse of choice, the Moon goddess Cynthia. The

metaphysical, rhetorical, and proto-scientific themes embedded in the folds of these

thirteen lines provide a foundational cipher for occult invention:

> now let humor give
> Seas to my eyes, that I may quickly weep
> The shipwreck of the world: or let soft sleep,
> (Binding my senses) loosen my working soul,
> That in her highest pitch, she may control
> The court of skill, compact of mystery,
> Wanting but freedom and memory
> To reach all secrets: then in blissful trance,
> Raise her (dear Night) to that perseverance
> That in my torture, she all earths may sing,
> And force to tremble in her trumpeting
> Heaven's Chrystal temples: in her powers implant
> Skill of my griefs, and she can nothing want (8-20).

Examining these lines as an initial map of the Occult Mode, four words in

particular—*humor*, *seas*, *shipwreck*, and *world*—command our attention. These words

encode four sets of symbolic connections: *humor* as the temperament of melancholy and

as a symbol of wit; *seas* as a metaphor for Renaissance magic and occultism; *shipwreck*

as a symbol of proto-science and an empirically fragmented worldview; and *world* as a

metaphor for the abundance of natural terms that constitute the symbol sets of occult invention.

In Chapman's time, the word *humor* referred both to wit and to the four temperaments Hippocrates associated with the four symbolic elements, *Earth*, *Air*, *Fire*, and *Water*. This Ancient taxonomy, capable of classifying everything in the universe according to four bodily fluids (blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile) constitutes an analogical epistemology. Everyone was believed to possess all four humors in combination, and in a healthy individual they maintained a balance. However, one fluid occasionally dominated and came to define a person in terms its respective temperament. As the twentieth-century German iconologist Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) notes, the humors vary in their desirability. For example, the sanguine temperament, "associated with air, spring, morning and youth, [is] favored with a well-knit body and a ruddy complexion," whereas the melancholic "causes the most dreaded of diseases, [and] insanity" (1943 158). Temperamentally, the sanguine "seemed to surpass all other types in natural cheerfulness, sociability, generosity and talents of all description" whereas the melancholic was "awkward, miserly, spiteful, greedy, malicious, cowardly, faithless, irreverent and drowsy" (Ibid). The sanguine, choleric, and phlegmatic all merit praise of some sort, but the melancholic's "only redeeming feature, and even this is frequently omitted from the texts, is a certain inclination for solitary study" (Ibid). In short, melancholy emerges as the most undesirable of the humors.

Yet, Chapman bases his *Shadow* on the symbolism of this dreaded humor, presenting melancholy as a praiseworthy ideal through the imagery of darkness and shadow. Two vital questions emerge from this preliminary distinction: 1) What prompted

Chapman to embrace the darkness of melancholy over the comparative brightness of the others? And 2) How and why would such a negative disposition come to be associated with "solitary study" and thinking? In *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age*, Frances Yates (1899-1981) provides a valuable lead for answering both questions when she identifies Albrecht Dürer's (1471-1528) *Melencholia I*, shown in Figure 1, as the probable source of Chapman's figurations of melancholy in the *Shadow*. By examining the visual rhetoric of this artwork in relation to Dürer's knowledge of occult symbolism, we can frame Chapman's fascination with darkness through the emergence of a modern psychological perspective out of the distortion of natural optical perspective. The figural implications of this development allow us to understand why Chapman chose melancholy to symbolize his commitment to learning and occult invention.

1. Dürer's Iconographic Fusion of the Natural and Supernatural

The brooding, dark-faced woman of Dürer's 1514 copper etching, *Melencholia I*, known as the Angel *Melencholia*, is seen lost in contemplation amidst a plethora of occult symbols. She epitomizes the mindset of the Early Modern intellectual, clinging wistfully to a holistic, poetic worldview. As Panofsky, Raymond Klibansky (1905-2005), and Fritz Saxl (1890-1945) show in *Saturn and Melancholy*, much of the imagery in Dürer's *Melencholia I,* derives from Cornelius Agrippa's (1486-1535) *De occulta philosophia ibri tres*, a compilation and synthesis of the occult correspondences from the time of Aristotle. Born in Cologne, Agrippa began working on *De occulta* around 1509, revising and rewriting it numerous times over the next twenty years before publishing it in 1531. During that time, he studied and lectured in England, Germany, and Italy, while

Figure 1. Albrecht Dürer's 1514 copper etching, *Melencholia I.*

allowing various drafts of *De occulta* (translated into English as *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*) to circulate among friends throughout Europe.

While his unpublished manuscript circulated, Agrippa became friends with a German lexicographer and cryptographer named Johannes Trithemius (1462-1516). Dürer etched a portrait of Trithemius, who gave him a copy of Agrippa's *De occulta*. Dürer became fascinated by the occult correspondences described in Agrippa's work; in particular, by the way in which they symbolically fused the natural and the supernatural. As Panofsky notes in *The Life and Art of Abrecht Dürer*, Dürer decided to attempt a fusion of natural and supernatural iconography with his newly discovered techniques of perspective. Two such fusions appear in 1511, the *Mass of St. Gregory* (Figure 2) and the frontispiece of *Life of the Virgin* (Figure 3). In the *Mass*, he creates a visionary effect "not by a mere interpenetration of the natural world with the supernatural, but by what a spiritualist would call the 'dematerialization' of tangible objects coupled with the 'materialization' of imaginary ones" (137). In *Life*, meanwhile, he fuses two images of the Virgin Mary—one realistic (of her sitting humbly on the ground), the other sublime (based on the Book of Revelation line, "clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet"). The result, Panofsky observes, approaches a "coincidence of opposites." This coincidence parallels the rhetor's goal of inventing a common ground of identification for melding opposing views together.

Dürer did not achieve the fusion he sought until completing *Melencholia I*, four years later. The uniqueness of this etching has nothing to do with its melancholic female subject. Several other artists had rendered melancholic females in the middle of the twelfth century, as archetypes of the Liberal Arts. Some of these figures personified

Figure 2. Albrecht Dürer's 1511 copper etching, *Mass of St. Gregory*.

Figure 3. Albrecht Dürer's 1511 copper etching, *Life of the Virgin.*

miserly sluggards despised for their incompetence and unsociability; others, of the type known as "Geometrie"—after the second leg of the Quadrivium—portrayed an unemotional woman, incapable of suffering. Agrippa associates such heartlessness with the planet Mars (1973 89). The most famous example of this type, Gregor Reisch's (1467-1525) *Typus Geometriae,* shown in Figure 4, parallels Dürer's conception of the Angel *Melencholia*, but with a significant difference. Published in the 1504 and 1508 editions of *Margarita Philosophica,* one of the most widely read encyclopedic treatises of the sixteenth century, Reisch's woodcut features nearly all the devices Dürer uses in *Melencholia I*, but rather than rendering a melancholic woman, Reisch shows an attentive *sanguine* woman. She is seen working deftly and cheerfully with instruments associated with Jupiter instead of Mars. With this image, Reisch subsumes the Liberal Arts under the Technical Arts, i.e., blends them into the emergent domain of natural philosophy, showing their mutual dependence on geometrical operations.

By contrast, Dürer's *melancholic* woman appears more mental and less active, in keeping with the planet *Saturn*. As Panofsky explains, "Dürer's engraving represents a fusion of two iconographic formulae hitherto distinct: the 'Melancholia' of popular Calendars and *Complexbuchlein* with the 'Typus Geometriae' of philosophical treatises," resulting in "an intellectualization of melancholy on the one hand, and a humanization of geometry on the other" (1943 161). Here, then, we find a topical iconographic fusion of Reisch's lady of Liberal Arts with Agrippa's taxonomy of humors under the *topos* of melancholy. The pairing of these two elements—intellectual melancholy and humanized geometry—exemplifies aesthetically the combinatory process of occult invention, establishing a foundation for its literary deployment via the topos of *perspective*.

Figure 4. Gregor Reisch's 1504 copper etching, *Typus Geometriae.*

2. Artificial Perspective and Lifeless Space

The melancholic's relation to knowledge parallels that of the lover's natural view of the beloved, as portrayed by Plato in the *Phaedrus*. The mystery of the beloved's beauty depends on the illusion of natural perspective. Dürer alters that perspective with his invention of the *lucinda,* an eyepiece mounted behind a grid glass panel that divides and fragments the artist's cone of vision into arbitrary sections (Figure 5). Using the *Lucinda*, Dürer was able to "correct" the beholder's natural single-point perspective by moving the vanishing point from the center to the side. This shattered the illusion of the interactive gaze, objectifying the beloved by establishing the artist's detached and artificial viewpoint as the only meaningful one. Angel *Melencholia*'s morose disposition reflects this loss of natural perspective and the onset of a fragmented worldview. A dejected Cupid sits consolingly by her side, while the dog, an animal whose mood reflects that of its master, looks forlorn as well.
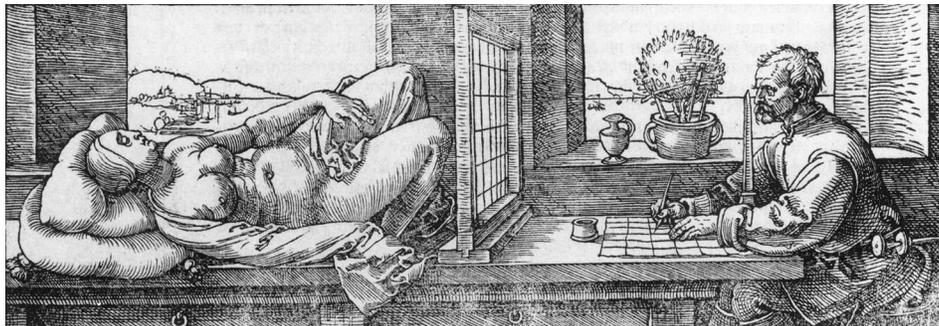
Figure 5. Albrecht Dürer's 1525 copper etching, *Draughtsman Drawing a Recumbent Woman,* which depicts him using his new perspective altering invention, the *Lucinda.*

The aesthetic paradigm shift symbolized by the *lucinda* reoriented the human perspective as much as the artist's, transforming our conception of space from an empirical actuality, inhering in the real world to an apperceptive illusion constituted by

55

our psychological perspective. Beginning with the Greek philosophers of the fifth century BCE, humans envisioned space not as a vacuum (*kenon)*, but as a living entity, animated by infinite spirits (*pneuma aperiro*). Such spirit beings maintained both the limits and the interconnectedness of space through their activity. As Covino notes in "Magic and/as Rhetoric: Outlines of a History of Phantasy," the idea of space being "populated by myriad phantasms—images that constitute a cosmology of interactive powers—offers the possibility for phantasy, for an imagination consistently engaged in the transfiguration of the soul, in the interplay of phantasms" (2006).

Dürer's development of artificial perspective challenged the paradigm of agent-populated space and its interconnectedness, incidentally revolutionizing the art of rhetorical invention. No longer could the rhetor rationally envision *topoi*—virtual places where ideas resided—as being populated by helpful agents. Muses could no longer be expected to help the rhetor invent and remember ideas. As Alberto Pérez-Gómez and Louise Pelletier explain in *Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge*, the Greek "notions both of natural place (*topos*) and of space were opposed to the perspective image of the world and to the homogeneous space and time that have become primary assumptions of our instrumental world" (98). In short, the expanse of a rhetor's mind had shrunk from that of the entire universe to the inconsiderable confines of his own head.

The idea of space as a lifeless, empty void was reinforced when Dürer used his glass device to discover a realistic method of shadow projection. Theologically, from Ancient times through the Renaissance, shadows were seen as projections of a higher reality. Reduced to a matter of perspective, light and darkness no longer stood as physical embodiments of good and evil in a spiritual universe; a purely symbolic depiction arose

in their stead. As Keith Thomas, a twentieth-century American historian, explains in *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, those phrases that formerly accorded with darkness such as "to have a devil" become reduced to mere idioms, as "a kind of phrase or form of speech" (572). Consequently, Dürer's artificial *optical* perspective informs, but also regulates, a new *psychological* perspective. As Pérez-Gómez and Pelletier affirm, "In the context of the new ontological epiphanies brought about by *perspectiva arificialis* and its geometric constructions, the [symbolic] projection of shadows was deliberately subjected to the same constructive laws" (Perez-Gomez 115) as the objects whose presence had produced the shadows.

From the standpoint of rhetorical invention, Dürer's artificial perspective of nature parallels Ramus' artificial perspective of rhetoric. Just as the *lucinda* divorced darkness from its spiritual symbolism, Ramus' realignment of the Liberal Arts divorced heuresis from rhetoric. As Covino observes, the change re-characterized the *word* "darkness" as well as darkness itself, for "When words lose their souls, and spirits are no longer alive in the material world, a language of facts becomes realizable, and magic rhetoric becomes alien. In the mechanical universe that houses a determinate language, we no longer require the resources of ambiguity: there are no antinomies and analogs and demons to travel among in discourse" (60). In short, Dürer's artistic but pragmatic demonstration that vision and light conspire to distort reality shattered the illusion of an agent-maintained world of interconnectedness, upon which the Neoplatonic concept of magical correspondence relies.

3. The Visual Rhetoric of Dürer's *Melencholia I*

The visual structure of *Melencholia I* expresses Agrippa's division of the universe in *De occulta* across three realms: the elemental world, corresponding to natural philosophy and natural magic (alchemy); the celestial world, corresponding to mathematics, philosophy, and celestial magic (astrology); and the intellectual world, corresponding to ideas, theology, and ceremonial magic (cabala). Hierarchically, each realm reflects the one above it, creating a "chain of influences" that descends from the angels through the stars to the earth. These realms correspond to the three parts of Agrippa's compilation of occult correspondences, titled "Natural Magic," "Celestial Magic," and "Ceremonial Magic." As David Pingree observes in "A New Look at *Melencholia I*," Dürer's copper etching reflects Agrippa's realms as "three linked states of being," viz., the "terrestrial," the "intermediate," and "celestial" (257). The projection of a ladder and tower beyond the top edge of the etching suggests a fourth state.This fourth state accords with Burke's fourth supernatural realm, which he describes as "ineffable." These sections and their correlation to Agrippa's realms constitute a *visual argument*. As John T. Gage points out in *The Shape of Reason*:

> [An image] makes a claim. Just as a sentence that makes an assertion, it has parts, even though we do not experience them in a particular order as we do a sentence. Visually, we more often take in the idea as a whole, but we get our sense of that whole by noticing particulars. Also, like a verbal assertion, the image is understood to be making a claim in the context of other information (65).

Rhetorically, the four sections of Dürer's *Melencholia I* constitute areas of *stasis*, i.e., stable, balanced zones of conflict. As a method of invention, *stasis* entails asking strategic questions to determine the salient point at issue in a given argument. The four

types of questions rhetoricians most often employ are questions of *interpretation* ("What

does it signify?"); questions of *value* ("Is it good or bad?"); questions of *consequence*

("What will it cause to happen?"); and questions of *policy* ("What should be done about

it?"). Accordingly, the woman, dog, and objects within each section represent the *topoi*.

The questions posed by the sections of Dürer's etching, deducible from the contents of

each, exemplify stasis questions about melancholy:

1) *Question of Interpretation (Fourth Realm)*: "What does melancholy signify?"
2) *Question of Value (Third Realm)*: "Is melancholy good or bad?"
3) *Question of Consequence (Second Realm)*: "What does melancholy cause?"
4) *Question of Policy (First Realm)*: "What should be done about melancholy?"

Dürer answers the fourth-level (supernatural realm) question of *interpretation* by

cutting off the tops of the ladder and tower, suggesting that melancholy signifies

contemplation of the spiritual and ineffable. He answers the third-level (intellectual

realm) question of *value* by depicting a planet's rays illuminating the sky, reflecting off

the water, and then glancing off a massive, immovable stone, symbolizing the

"goodness" of melancholy as a means of balancing the four parts of the soul in relation to

the four elements. Dürer answers the second-level (celestial realm) question of

consequence through the solemn demeanors of the dog, the cherub, and Angel

Melencholia, showing contemplation as the result of melancholy. The scales on this level

suggest the negatives and positives of melancholy balance each other, while the bell over

the magic square of Jupiter warns that melancholy requires perpetual wakefulness. He

answers the first-level (elemental realm) question of *policy* by means of the tools and

instruments in the foreground, indicating that those of a melancholic temperament should

remain constructively engaged in intellectual projects, ordering their consciousness

through language.

Accordingly, Panofsky calls the Angel *Melencholia* "a superior being […] by virtue of her intelligence and imagination surrounded by the tools and symbols of creative endeavor and scientific research" (1943 160). Panofsky's description corresponds to Chapman's conception of melancholy as the temperament most suited for learning and study—his lifelong project—which he conveys through obscure figuration and darkness in *The Shadow of Night.*

B. Chapman's Human Shipwreck: Learning, Darkness, and Obscure Figuration

1. Autodidactic Learning and Chapman's Affinity for Melancholy

Chapman's melancholic affinities stem from his life-long advocacy of study and learning. Born around 1559 in Hitchin, a small town of Hertfordshire, England, he claimed to have been largely self-educated, though some speculate he may have attended Oxford for a time. According to Phyllis Brooks Bartlett, "Chapman was intolerant of academic degrees, intolerant of critics who made pretense to scholarship, [and] intolerant of the 'general reader' who presumed in his own light-witted way to pass judgment on every literary piece that came along" (13). In his dedicatory epistle to *The Shadow of Night*, addressed to Matthew Roydon (1580-1627), a close literary friend and fellow member of the abstract society known as the "School of Night," Chapman exalts in the "exceeding rapture of delight in the deep search of knowledge […] that maketh men manfully endure th'extremes incident to Herculean labor."

As a Christian humanist, Chapman maintained, according to his twentieth-century biographer Ennis Rees, that only "Study and contemplation may enable a man to impose order upon his passions to the point where he himself is capable of producing that which is beautiful and eternal" (3). Consequently, Chapman had no tolerance for profit-seekers,

writing, "Good Lord, how serious and eternal are their Idolatrous platts for riches! No marvel sure they here do so much good with them" (Bartlett 19). He believed the rational faculty must order the corporeal chaos within itself before an individual's truly human nature could impose itself over the animal nature of birth. The mind, Chapman argues, naturally seeks order in language, and "One becomes human in this sense only when his soul mounts up as queen of that 'small world,' his body" (Ibid 7).

2. Elemental Symbolisms as Allegories of the Body, Soul, and Mind

The metaphorical image of learning that depicts the human body as a small world and the soul as its queen permeates all of Chapman's work. As Raymond B. Waddington observes in *The Mind's Empire*, "The anthropomorphic analogy of body and soul runs through Chapman's critical commentaries [with] unvarying correspondence between microcosm, geocosm, and macrocosm, [acting] as a principle of interpretive control in [his] allegorized myths" (15-16). Waddington notes that Chapman's allegorical method was lost on S. K. Heninger, Jr., who describes Chapman's compositions as "long and formless" (*Handbook* 183), affirming Chapman's not-readily-apparent "inner form, shaping the [*The Shadow of Night*] to a directly symbolic purpose" (14). Moreover, Waddington notes that "A comparison with Agrippa reveals how closely Chapman works with the standard [symbolisms]" (99) of the German occultists, which Dürer adopted in *Melencholia I*. Chapman adopts the Neoplatonic model of the body, soul, and mind as world, seas, and continents, in which the body-as-world contains the soul-as-the-sea, which contains the continents-as-mind.

For Chapman, the human body begins its life as the world did, emerging as an active molten mass of raw fiery potential, a chaos of desires. The human soul,

symbolized by the sea, cools the world's newly formed fires, tempering desires, and transmuting passions into images. The soul dissipates and suffers in contact with the body, just as water turns to steam when in contact with fire. Not until the molten world cools and hardens sufficiently to separate into continents can it sustain human life. This individuation of the world into distinct continents, which Chapman sometimes refers to as "earths" in contrast to "the world," represents the ordering function of language. The mind, as king, takes its place alongside the soul, as queen. The mind absorbs suffering and keeps desires in check; consequently, its control over the soul and body manifests as depression and brooding, defining attributes of *melancholy*. Charting Chapman's symbolism as an analogical extension of Agrippa's correspondences produces the relations in Table 7.

Table 7. Chapman's symbols for body, soul, and mind, with their functions and modes of expression, in relation to Agrippa's realms and the Ancient elements.

Chapman's Symbols	World	Seas	Continents
Human Components	Body	Soul	Mind
Human Function	Desire	Temperance	Order
Mode of Expression	Chaos	Images	Language
Agrippa's Realms	Elemental	Celestial	Intellectual
Ancient Elements	Fire	Water	Earth

In the passage from Chapman's *Shadow* quoted at the beginning of this Chapter, we find these symbols deployed in a scene that simultaneously depicts the state of the individual narrator's body, soul, and mind, and mirrors the collective state of humanity's corresponding counterparts:

> [...] now let humor give
> Seas to my eyes, that I may quickly weep
> The shipwreck of the world

The narrator calls on the melancholy of his mind ("humor") to enable his soul ("Seas") to quench the fiery desires of his body ("the world"), which flounders in a shipwrecked state of chaos. Collectively, the poet depicts humanity imploring members of its melancholic members ("humor") to direct the *animus mundi*, or soul of the world, to overcome its fragmented, uncommunicative state ("shipwreck"). To the sixteenth-century reader, a shipwreck—tantamount to a plane crash in our time—conjured images of extreme havoc, the chaotic fragmentation of people, goods, supplies, and wood, dispersed by the sea beyond retrieval, tossed ruinously to shore, bringing the journey, if not the lives, of its passengers to a tragic end. As a symbol of the human body wracked by uncontrollable passions, and of a modern world run amok with educational reforms, profit seeking, and the dismantling of poetic forms of expression, the ship's fragmentation connotes trauma and a loss of cohesive consciousness, which Chapman likens to sleep:

> or let soft sleep,
> (Binding my senses) loosen my working soul,
> That in her highest pitch, she may control
> The court of skill, compact of mystery,
> Wanting but freedom and memory
> To reach all secrets

As with the traumatic numbing of passengers adrift on cold seas following a shipwreck, sleep "loosens" the "working soul" by "binding" or disabling the bodily senses so that the imagination can process images, where the soul is queen in the "court of skill." This skill, "compact of mystery, wanting but freedom," requires dissociation from the body's desires to access the inventory of images stored in the "memory" to

"reach all secrets." As a captive of the body, the soul is broken down by trauma (via a "Shipwreck") or subdued (through "sleep") to obtain release from the fiery bodily realm to enter the intellectual realm. During sleep, notes Agrippa, the "divine soul being loosed from all hurtful thoughts, and now freed by dreaming, […] receives those beams and representations which are darted down, and shine forth from the divine mind into itself" (1976 633). Both methods of escaping the body's stronghold—trauma and sleep— involve the same problem: They tend to incapacitate the mind as well as the body. What the soul needs, then, is a way to subdue the desires of the body without also paralyzing the mind. Chapman describes the requisite means as "blissful trance," the melancholic state of contemplation, the midpoint of sleep and wakefulness, which Dürer depicts in the Angel *Melencholia*:

> then in blissful trance,
> Raise her (dear Night) to that perseverance
> That in my torture, she all earths may sing

Engaged in a contemplative trance produced by melancholy, the mind remains clear, even as the body shuts down, allowing the soul free reign to produce images, enabling the mind to translate those images into words. This process occurs in a state of solitude and stillness, of which night is a symbol. As Rees explains, "Night is symbolic of that condition of the soul most conducive to contemplation and is the divine source of all true illumination in that it represents *a blotting out of the world of sense* and a consequent excitement of the spiritual experience" (15, italics mine). Unlike Shakespeare and Donne, who depict darkness and night as symbols of chaos, Chapman shows them as the antidote to the mind's errors and uncertainties. In his nocturnal consciousness, the poet calls on the night to "Raise" his soul "to that perseverance," summoning the courage to withstand

64

the "torture" of controlling the body's desires while the soul and mind ("all earths") can

"sing" its imagery through words, transmuting physical pleasures into intellectual

meaning. Such meaning abides in "Heaven's Chrystal temples," a pure state of mental

clarity, and divine inspiration:

> And force to tremble in her trumpeting
> Heaven's Chrystal temples: in her powers implant
> Skill of my griefs, and she can nothing want (8-20).

These three lines characterize the poetic process in sum: the emergence of the

chaotic soul's "trumpeting" force, a cooling liquid to the body's fiery "griefs," which

reluctantly aligns with the order of the mind, transforming unbridled desires into aesthetic

clarity and vision. That such clarity conveys neither a purely optical vision nor one

comprised solely of images born of tropes, but rather, a fusion of both, can be seen in an

epideictic poem Chapman dedicated to his scientist friend Thomas Harriot (1560-1621).

In "To My Admired and Soul-Loved Friend, Master of All Essential and True

Knowledge," Chapman refers to Harriot's telescope as his "perfect eye."

> O had your perfect eye Organs to pierce
> Into that Chaos whence this stifled verse
> By violence breaks: where Glow-worm like doth shine
> In nights of sorrow, this did soul of mine:
> And how her genuine forms struggle for birth
> Under the claws of Panther earth (*Poems* 382).

Chapman peers through the reverse end of Hariot's "perfect eye," as if looking

backwards through Dürer's *lucinda*, the "Chrystal temple" that divides (and "by violence

breaks") the artist's cone of vision into arbitrary sections, clawing "genuine forms" from

the inventive mind, "Panther earth." Chapman distrusts the light of day, but he distrusts

devices of artificial perspective more. Looking through the wrong end, he seeks to

deconstruct the illusion of artificial perspective, to regain the symbolic cohesiveness of

natural appearance. But the distortion of the psychological perspective produced by the *lucinda* cannot be deconstructed. As French psychologist Jacques Lacan (1901-1981) observes in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, reversing the *lucinda*, yields "not the restoration of the world that lies at the end, but the distortion, on another surface, of the image that [would have been] obtained on the first [surface]" (87). A distorted psychological perspective does not afford a "point by point correspondence of two unities in space" (86). Rather, as Chapman demonstrates in *Ovid's Banquet of Sense*, the eye unveils the earth's secrets with "grief" and "sorrow," the excrements of the black bile saturating the melancholy's form-producing order through semantic opacity.

3. Obscure Figuration: Illumination through Saturation

Critics complained during Chapman's lifetime that his symbolism was too dense, his allusions too obscure. Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909), in his introduction to *George Chapman: Poems and Minor Translations*, accuses Chapman of being "of all the English poets, [the] most genuinely obscure in style upon whose works I have ever adventured to embark in search of treasure hidden beneath the dark gulf" (xiv). Describing Chapman's poetry as "overcharged with overflowing thoughts" (Ibid), Swinburne concludes that "only random thinking and random writing produce obscurity; and these are the radical faults of Chapman's style" (xv). T. S. Eliot (1888-1965) suggests Chapman's obscurity derives less from his style of thinking and writing than from his penchant for saturation, i.e., his semantically dense metaphysical symbolism. Note that the word *saturation* derives from the same root (*satur*, meaning "full") as *Saturn*, the planet Panofsky associates with melancholy.

Eliot, a great admirer of Chapman as the most figurative of the "Metaphysical Poets," discusses his use of saturation in *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*. Observing that "the right imagery, saturated while it lay in the depths […] will rise like Anadyomene from the sea," Eliot traces the short lineage of such saturation to Seneca and Chapman, noting that the injection of personal meaning is what makes their symbolism so difficult to fathom:

> There is for the first probability that this imagery had some
> personal saturation value, so to speak, for Seneca; another
> for Chapman, and another for myself, who have borrowed
> [his saturated symbolism] twice from Chapman. I suggest
> that what gives it such intensity as it has in each case its
> saturation [is the abundance of] feelings too obscure for the
> others even to know quite what they are (149).

Chapman acknowledges his obscurity in dedicating *Ovid's Banquet of Sense* to Roydon, stating that while "obscurity in affection and in word, and indigested conceits, is pedantic," obscuration of meaning is justified "where it shrouds itself in the heart of [the] subject, [and is] uttered with fitness of figure" (*Poems* 49). He scoffs at the idea that "poesy should be as pervious as oratory," that making "plainness her special ornament" is tantamount to making "the ass run proud of his ears, to take strength away from lions, and give camels horns" (Ibid). Chapman insists that obscurity, "being with a little endeavor searched, adds a kind of majesty to Poesy, [insofar as] rich minerals are digged out of the bowels of the earth, not found in the superficies and dust of it" (Ibid). His image of the earth as the mind combines here with shining gems, noting that the "rich minerals" of symbolism are to be found *within*, not through the "superficies" of an illusory perspective of the outer world. Eliot wonders not whether Chapman has excessively saturated his poetry with such "minerals," but whether they are too

personally charged for others to dredge up. In fact, Eliot suggests in his essay, "The Metaphysical Poets," that Chapman does not use *obscure figuration* to veil his private meanings, but rather, to "be more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect [with regard to universal meaning], in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning" (289).

Chapman wrote for his like-minded peers, irreverent intellectuals such as Harriot, Roydon, Walter Raleigh (1552-1618), Thomas Nash (1593-1647), and Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), the "free-thinking" group now known as the "School of the Night." Accused of atheism for their interest in natural philosophy and humanism, Harriot and Raleigh spent years in the tower, despite their secrecy; Marlowe was murdered while awaiting trial on similar charges. Perhaps Chapman would have suffered a corresponding fate, had he not taken such care to obscure his meaning. Nonetheless, in the above-quoted dedication of the *Ovid's Banquet of Sense*, Chapman suggests that the reader who fails to comprehend his meaning has his own dull wits to blame:

> I know that empty and dark spirits will complain of palpable
> night: but those that beforehand have a radiant and light-
> bearing intellect will say they can pass through *Corynna's*
> Garden without the help of a Lantern *(Poems* 49).

In this passage, Chapman dislocates "light" from its symbolic affinity with illumination of the mind, depicting knowledge, instead, as darkness in the mind's "Garden" of melancholy temperament. The mind sees by its own light, without artificial illumination from an external "Lantern" of optical perspective. This, too, parallels the perspective of Dürer's dark Angel *Melencholia*. Her eyes look blankly outward, blotting out her natural vision of world, while her intellect looks inward, illuminating the subject of her thoughts with her self-constructed mental perspective.

4. Transformed Perspectives: The Merging of Visual and Psychological Frames

Chapman published *Ovid's Banquet of Sense* in 1595, at the peak of narrative poetry's popularity, and at a time when interest in Ovid ran high. Rather than translate or re-render a myth from Ovid, however, Chapman chose to make Ovid himself the subject, thematizing the classical poet's love for Corinna, the daughter of the Roman Emperor Augustus. Having fallen in love with Corinna, Ovid ventures to approach her as she bathes in a tree-shrouded garden on a hot summer's day. At first, Ovid merely listens to Corinna singing. Moving closer, he smells, and is enraptured by, the fragrance of her soaps. Eventually, he cannot resist looking in on her, and is discovered. Corinna protests, but Ovid not only convinces her not to be angry with him, he persuades her to let him kiss her. Finally, disarmed by his charms, she allows him to touch her breast.

All five of Ovid's senses partake of his experience of Corinna, but *vision* plays a special role in the drama. As Waddington notes, while "Chapman employs the senses in a hierarchical scheme, his placement of vision, in particular, does not correspond to any of the traditional ones" (116). Aristotle, for instance, ranks vision as the most useful and versatile of the senses, given its comparative efficiency in relation to the quantity and quality of sense-data it effortlessly assimilates (*Metaphysics* 980a). Yet, Chapman positions vision third behind the senses of hearing and smell, making Ovid hear Corinna singing, and smell her perfume, before *seeing* her. James Phares Meyers maintains in "This Curious Frame" that the sense of sight "attains greater thematic value from this medial placement" (200) in the poem.

Before Ovid feasts his eyes on Corinna, he encounters a set of fifteen statues, which depict Niobe and her fourteen children. Positioned outside the garden at the direction of

69

the emperor Augustus, the statues stand as reminders of Niobe's fate, and as a warning

against the hubris of fertility. In the myth, Apollo and Artemis kill Niobe's fourteen

children, and turn Niobe to stone, punishing her for boasting about her abundant fertility

to Leto, who had only two children. Tellingly, the statue of Niobe is *anamorphous*, its

shape and dimensions changing dramatically in relation to the viewer's proximity:

> Into these spring *Corynna's* bathing place;
> So cunningly to optic reason wrought,
>   That afar of it showed a woman's face,
> Heavy, and weeping; but more nearly viewed,
> Nor weeping, heavy, nor a woman showed (54).

Appearing as a different object from different distances, the statue's interpretative

meaning varies according to the perspective of the beholder. As Louise Vinge notes in

"Chapman's Banquet of Sense: Its Sources and Theme," these two factors, "the warning

[of the statue] and the optical illusion [of its seemingly changing appearance] together

give a sort of clue to the poem" (235). Waddington delineates the significance of this clue

contextually in terms of art theory:

> Within the framework of Renaissance art theory, one can
> see that *Ovids Banquet* is contrived as a perspective poem.
> The signal achievement of Renaissance art was the
> theoretical mastery of vanishing-point perspective,
> permitting the two-dimensional pictorial surface to be
> treated as a window through which a three-dimensional
> scene is revealed. With the Renaissance writers upon and
> practitioners of perspectivism we find, as well, the
> theoretical origins of pictorial illusionism, its largely
> unexplored by-product [as] the exterior manifestations of
> psychological drives (117-118).

Chapman applies Dürer's discovery of artificial perspective to *Ovid's Banquet,*

portraying Ovid's psychological perspective as a visual "terministic screen," Burke's

name for a term-framed perspective. Our interpretation of *Banquet's Sense* depends on

70

how we frame the symbolism of its terms, how we "see" Corinna, and how we view Ovid's approach to the statues. If, as Waddington argues, Corinna represents sexual allure and a descent to debauchery, she symbolizes temptation, and Ovid's approach is his downfall. If, as Frank Kermode (1919-2010) suggests (44), Corinna represents Lady Philosophy—the wise Sophia whom Boethius (c. 480-525) consults in the *Consolation of Philosophy*—then she symbolizes a noble ideal to which Ovid aspires, and his approach leads to truth.

Accordingly, Ovid's view of Corinna parallels the beholder's view of Dürer's dark Angel in *Melencholia I*. As Millar MacLure notes in *George Chapman: A Critical Study*, an analogy can be drawn between the appeal of a "speaking picture" in relation to an audience with a special vision, such as depicted in Dürer's occult symbolism, on the one hand, and the penchant of Elizabethan poets for perspective literary devices (46-47) on the other. The Angel *Melencholia* sits with her eyes open, but "looks" within at ideas and objects in the mind, symbolized by the images her beholder views in the etching. In de-emphasizing her optical vision, Dürer directs the beholder to the symbols surrounding her as images of her perspective. In devaluing Ovid's vision in relation to his senses of hearing and smell—and by distorting his vision through anamorphous perspective— Chapman directs the reader to see Corinna and her garden as psychological symbols.

Applying Burke's Pentad to *Ovid's Banquet*, Chapman's contrast of visual and psychological perspectives emphasizes the Scene-Purpose ratio. Ovid, in visually surveying the Scene, sees Corinna's garden, and it leads him to a philosophical reason for entering. The Scene of Corinna's garden contains Ovid's Purpose. Ovid finds motivation, first, in her non-visual sexual allure, i.e., the sound of her voice as she sings, the smell of

her soaps and perfume. Upon encountering the statues of Niobe and her children, seeing them first as tragic human figures, and then simply as stones, Ovid's purpose changes. Instead of acting like a voyeur, he becomes a welcome participant:

> O that as man is called a little world
> The world might shrink into a little man,
> To hear the notes about this Garden hurled (58).

No longer a virile young man venturing a peek at a beautiful young woman, he scripts himself into the Scene of her bath as authentically as nature scripts a plant into a garden. Twillpants rightly "cling about this Natures naked Gem," so, too, is his desire "to taste her sweets, as Bees do swarm [to flowers]" justly motivated (55). In aligning his presence with the plants and bees, he realigns his perspective as well; he is not entering the garden simply to view her nakedness. He finds "Her sight, his sun so wrought in his desires," that "His [lustful] savor [for her nakedness has] vanished in his visual fires" (63). Love replaces lust as the motive of his intrusion, and he calls on the goddess Juno to "Assist my hopes, me and my purpose" (65), fulfilling his rightful role as her lover. Symbolically, he becomes a lover of knowledge, a philosopher who finds wisdom in authentic experience. Ovid's rhetorically invented perspective, his revised motive for entering Corinna's garden, exemplifies analogic extension though the fusion of terms for his natural vision of the garden with supernatural terms of anamorphous vision and love through Burke's Scene-Purpose ratio.

C. Shakespeare's *The Tempest*: Scientific Magic and the Shipwreck of the World

In the sixteenth century, despite Chapman's literary integration of visual and psychological perspectives, the loss of philosophical unity precipitated by Dürer's artificial perspective persisted. Yet, even as Plain Language advocates sought to push

invention out with the occult arts, natural philosophers sought to retain certain aspects of a magical worldview. Burke argues that the two disciplines, having sprouted from the same trunk, share surprisingly similar methods, observing that "both magic and positive science assume a uniformity or regularity of natural processes, and attempt to harness these processes by the discovery of the appropriate formulae." For "In magic and science, if the practitioner has observed the correct procedure, the desired results will follow" (*Permanence* 59).

Whereas magic relies primarily on *techne*, the accurate naming of correspondences, science depends more on *episteme*, an ever-growing base of empirical data. But in both disciplines, insofar as the practitioner maintains a correlation between actions performed and outcomes achieved, a perceived methodological efficacy redounds. As Scottish social anthropologist James Frazer (1854-1941) observes in *The Golden Bough*, "the analogy between the magical and the scientific conceptions of the world is close. In both of them the succession of events is assumed to be perfectly regular and certain, being determined by immutable laws, the operation of which can be foreseen and calculated precisely; […] both of them open up a seemingly boundless vista of possibilities to him who knows the causes of things and can touch the secret springs" (56) of the world. Indeed, scientific objections notwithstanding, a certain madness of method underlies both disciplines.

Both magus and scientist seek to control nature by labeling, inventorying, and categorizing its topology as word-concepts in a specialized language. Each discipline seeks, as Burke notes, to direct and manage the "infinite *wordless* universe" via *words* (Ibid, italics mine). But whereas the scientist uses language "to induce motion in things" the magician uses language "as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that

by nature respond to symbols" (*Rhetoric* 42). In the face of irreconcilable differences

over whether things respond directly to symbols, the two disciplines part ways. Yet, as

Burke notes, the implications of the split remain unsettled:

> The magician would have us believe that he suspends the
> laws of motion. […] Indeed, the analogy suggests the
> thought that 'true' magic prevails *outside* the strict realm of
> motion, in the area of more-than-motion that we call *action*.
> […] But magic, in the sense of novelty, is seen to exist
> normally, in some degree, as an ingredient of every human
> act; for each act contains some measure of motivation that
> cannot be explained simply in terms of the past (*Grammar*
> 65, italics his).

This analysis captures the spirit of the cultural milieu at the time when Shakespeare wrote

The Tempest. As the play begins, we find Prospero engaged in a debate about the magical

and scientific use of words. A practitioner of magical science, he has been isolated from

society due to his social and political irreverence, forced to retreat to an island where his

new theory of language can be tested on the natives and his shipwrecked visitors.

1. Magic vs. Science in *The Tempest*

Many commentators argue that Renaissance theater audiences would clearly have

seen Prospero's operations as acts of magic rather than feats of science. Others, such as

Karin Johannisson, theorize that Shakespeare presents Prospero as using empirical

methods—such as weather prediction instruments and manufacturing—to direct events

on the island. B. J. Sokol favors a middle ground, suggesting that Shakespeare "presented

an intellectual background to Renaissance 'high magic,' describing the alliance of 'New

Learning' with a 'vigorous efflorescence of forbidden or phantasmal arts'" (143).

Virginia Mason Vaughn and Alden T. Vaughn conflate the two realms, asserting that

74

Propero's "Magic is his technology, a means to the end of getting what he wants" (25). Though just what Prospero wants, the Vaughns admit, remains unclear.

In her *A Brave New World of Knowledge*, Sokol argues for an empirical explanation of the *Tempest* indicative of Bacon's "New Learning." Presenting evidence that the seventeenth-century magus and physician Robert Fludd discovered a seven-hundred-year-old manuscript describing the manufacture and use of a weather glass, Sokol suggests that Fludd constructed an instrument that acted both as a thermometer and barometer for the purpose of gauging the temperature and predicting atmospheric changes. In keeping with this, she cites John Bate, an English craftsman, who, in a 1634 book about the instrument, writes that "you may (the time of the yeare, and the following observations understandingly considered) be able certainly to foretell the alteration of uncertainty of the weather a good many hours before it come to passe" (106). According to Sokol's theory, Prospero possessed a barometer and "simply waited for an appropriate coincidence involving a just-strong-enough storm, and all his enemies on a ship nearby" (137). Given the unreliability of weather prediction technology more than three-hundred years later, predicting a perfect storm with a primitive a device seems all the more unlikely. Yet, Sokol underscores a larger point as to whether Prospero differentiated between science and magic. Her theory accords with Agrippa's confession that much of what people took for magic in his time was merely the empirically unexplainable:

> Incredible miracles are often accomplished not so much by art as by nature […] magicians are like careful explorers of nature only directing what nature has formerly prepared […] so that these things are popularly held to be miracles when they are really no more than anticipations of natural operations; as if someone made roses flower in March or grapes ripen, or even more remarkable things such as clouds, rain, thunder (quoted in Rossi 21).

How the shipwreck occurred, and whether or not Prospero engineered it, matters less than how he symbolically transforms the island from its native wooded state to a harvestable forest through the symbols of magic and science. In contrast to Sokol's theory, I explore the semantic confluence of what Burke calls speculative etymologies, attempting to deconstruct Shakespeare's symbolic depiction of logs on the island.

2. Speculative Etymology: Prospero's Island as an Extended Linguistic Symbol Set

In developing his theory of the Pentad in *A Grammar of Motives*, Burke introduced a heuristic concept of discovering word meaning through *speculative etymology*, the idea that words contain additional, unsuspected symbolisms, based not only on their roots, but also on points of poetic "overlap" through spelling, pronunciation, and etiology. He presents what he considers the *Ur* of such speculations in the word *substance,* explicating its various meanings in the context of different languages, definitions, and philosophies. In particular, he notes the paradox of its dual signification, both as that which *props up everything*, but also that which must itself *be propped up*. Burke suggests that every word, when similarly examined, has, "etymologically, a pun lurking behind" its roots; and that we should not "thereby conclude that such linguistic tactics are 'nothing but' puns and word play," but, rather, that a pun "reflects real paradoxes in the nature of the world itself—antinomies that could be resolved only if men were able [...]to create an entire universe" (Grammar 65, italics his). In short, Burke argues that we cannot fully ascertain the lineage and range of a word's meanings without having been present at its creation, and attendant to the circumstances of all its morphologies.

Virginia Allen examines the process in relation to invention in "Some Implications of Kenneth Burke's 'Way of Knowing' for Composition Theory," suggesting that all

"Invention for Burke, however intriguing the digressions prove to be, is ultimately [an instance of] speculative etymology" (*JAC* 1982). Allen notes that etymological speculation "must necessarily begin with a semantic or 'terminological' circumference," that grows out of the nomenclature of a word's totality of users, embodying it with the same type of "equations," "transformations," and "implications" that Burke identifies in the process of magical charting (Ibid). But rather than analogically extending the meaning of texts by identifying potentially related word-symbols, speculative etymology analogically extends word-symbols by identifying potentially related meanings. In working with speculative etymologies, Burke suggests the poet-as-rhetor "unfolds" or "makes progressively manifest" a design hidden within the fabric of a word's history and usage, weaving together a "set of timeless relationships that prevails" as in the pattern of a garment (Ibid).

Herbert Marks applies Burke's theory of poetic etymology to historically significant Hebrew words in "Biblical Naming and Poetic Etymology," describing the method as a process of generating "perspective by incongruity, but raised to a higher power" (33). According to Marks, whenever an author uses a word in a sense differing from its standard definition, he or she "articulates a network of nominal echos" that reverberate beyond the scope of the word's semantic tradition. In doing so, the author "plants a unifying cryptonym, so as to bring about a shift in the inherited matrix" (28) of the word's etymological history:

> Poetic etymology thus becomes a technique for troping the
> received tradition, for rescuing the text from prescriptive or
> reductive interpretation, without defining it. Within the oral
> tradition which may have provided the material for the
> glosses, etymology could have intended a static realism, if
> not a magical science" (Ibid).

77

Burke expresses a similar idea in "Semantic and Poetic Meaning," suggesting that

"Shakespeare's *Tempest* […] would represent the ideal poetic vocabulary" for deriving

such etymologies. As a possible starting point, he cites Caroline Spurgeon's observation

(in *Shakespeare's Imagery*) that the play "is constructed about the imagery of sound,

'from the clashing discords of the opening to the serene harmony of the close'" (quoted

in Newstok 52). In keeping with this cacophony of imagery, Burke suggests that scholars

should note not only the sound symbolisms of frequently used words in their accepted

meanings, but also in their potential alternative meanings, as suggested by the meanings

of words that appear similar. Marks admits that researchers risk criticism in applying this

methodology, insofar as "modern scholars, bound by different canons of interpretive

fidelity, have usually dismissed [speculative etymological glosses] as incidental

embellishments or isolated them as curious residua of a primitive folk tradition" (22). In

justification of his project, Marks points to the work of Hermann Gunkel, "who, under

the influence of contemporary folklore theory, argued that [speculative poetic]

etymologies were especially clear examples of the etiological legend, responses to the so-

called *Kinderfragen* [childlike questions], which arose from simple curiosity about

natural cultural phenomenon" (Ibid).

Marks submits that the proper method for exploring speculative etymologies

consists not of inventing new word-symbolisms randomly or at whim, but of enquiring

with deliberate, *childlike* curiosity, into possible alternative meanings within the "natural

cultural phenomenon" of the author and the work's characters. Burke prescribes

essentially this approach in relation to Spurgeon's "imagery of sound," suggesting that

one could "establish the 'curve' of Shakespeare's writings, with relation to the curve of

historical processes operating in his day" (Newstok 52). The technique allows us to

examine potential speculative etymologies in *The Tempest*, exploring alternative

meanings of the word *log* in relation to the emergent logging industry and specific uses of

timber around the time Shakespeare wrote the play (c. 1610-1611). Accordingly, I

investigate a potential "play on words" based on a speculative etymological and semantic

relationship between the English word *log* and the Greek word *logos.*

While potential etymological parallels exist between the words *logos* and *log*, the

word *log* does not stem directly from the same root as *logos.* However, the etymology of

the word *logos* provokes several remarkable semantic parallels with logs as objects.

According to the *American Heritage Dictionary of Indo-European Roots*, the Greek root

of *logos*, *legein*, means, "to lay forth." Its Latin equivalent, *lignum*, translates as

"firewood," or "that which is gathered," and its primary Indo-European derivative, *leg-*,

means, "to collect" (Watkins 658). The Germanic derivative of *logos*, *ikjaz*, presents

another suggestive parallel with the play, translating as "enchanter, one who speaks

magic words" (Ibid). Pragmatically, the cutting, debarking, and trimming of timber into

stackable logs suggests the mental processes of abstracting, analyzing, and relating.

In any case, Burke's method of speculative etymology does not require an

etymological relation, merely an open mind. I pursue Shakespeare's possible

etymological play on the word *log* in the poetic sense Burke describes in reference to the

word *tree* in *The Rhetoric of Religion*. Any word used poetically, Burke asserts,

"transcends its unique individuality" within a given context, providing additional visual,

analogical, and symphonic associations, whether or not the author intended them as such:

> [I]f we put an apostrophe after the word "tree," thereby
> getting the possessive form, "tree's," we'd have something

quite different from the way in which a tree owns its bark, branches, etc. [And] since the word "tree" rhymes with the words "knee," "be," and "see," we here have an order of associations wholly different from entities with which a tree is physically connected (9).

In "Questions and Answers about the Pentad" Burke notes that Shakespeare's "dramaturgy was designed to enlist the consent, or cooperation, of the audience in both the ingenuities of every sentence and the work's overall unfoldings" of each word's "implications" (331). Moreover, as Vaughan observes, "*The Tempest*'s language is no less elusive than the island and its music" (20), thereby discouraging standard interpretations. I examine Shakespeare's tropological use of the forest and its byproducts as a linguistic symbol set, indicating potential semantic congruencies within the terms of scientific and magical language at a time when the line between the disciplines had not yet been drawn. The potential for semantic cross-pollination between the words *log* and *logos,* once explored, enables us to see how speculative etymology functions heuristically through the cultural phenomenon of their substitution within Shakespeare's text.

The Tempest depicts an evolution away from the perspective-based methods of invention employed by Chapman, through a fusion of the visible and psychological, to linguistic-based methods of fusing the literal and figural. Linguistic fusion does not result in *ambiguous* meaning, but rather, *alternative* meanings—only one of which may function at a given time, in a given context. By comparison, in *Ovid's Banquet*, Chapman depicts a forested garden as a visual wonderland, in which myth and magic conspire to produce an optical illusion and an enchanted psychological state. In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare depicts a forested island as a pragmatic scene, in contrast to his earlier forested scenes in *As You Like It, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Merry Wives of*

Windsor, Macbeth, and *King Lear*. A forest depicted as a magical place of wonder

accords with the Greek word for "forest" (*drymus*), whereas a forest depicted as a

pragmatic place consisting of raw "form" waiting to be harvested, gathered, and

measured, accords with the Greek word for "matter" (*hyle*).

In *The Tempest*, Caliban and Ferdinand spend substantial time carrying logs to-and-

fro for purposes that seem anything but magical. In fact, their transport (and implied

processing) of what amounts to timber brings to mind images of the logging industry. As

Shakespeare wrote *The Tempest*, England was beginning mass-production logging in

timber-rich New England, having gradually depleted its own island forests over the

course of several centuries. The newly founded wood industry provided much needed

material for ship-building, but also supplied charcoal for smelting iron, as coal had not

yet been discovered (Cowan 14-14). Smelting at that time required tremendous quantities

of timber, as much as one hundred pounds of Oak to produce twenty-three pounds of

charcoal. (*Scribner's Lumber and Log Book* 1882).

Of England's native timber, only the Royal forests had been spared from harvest;

nonetheless, certain trees had been methodically cleared from those forests as well, albeit

for a much different reason. As John Manwood (?-1610) records in his 1598 *Treatise and*

Discourse of the Lawes of the Forrest, the royal woods were cleared to open lines of

sight, allowing Royalty and certain members of the aristocracy to see the available deer

and other game during a hunt. Yet, symbolically, a forest strategically cleared for hunting

shares more in common with a pristine forest than one that has been completely

harvested. In fact, such hunting brings to mind Aristotle's definition of rhetoric as "an

ability, in each particular case, to *see the available means* of persuasion" (37, italics

mine). In the deer-killing scene in *As You Like It* (4.2), hunting is portrayed as a normal activity, with no emphasis, as Michael Hattaway notes, "on forest-trespass or on hunting as poaching," whereas scenes featuring "forest-retreats are [presented as] fantasies" (28). Shakespeare depicts the forest of Prospero's island more through its dismantled by-products than through its majesty. In Act III, Scene One, Ferdinand complains of having to remove "Some thousands of these logs and pile them up" (3.1.10), substantially more than would be needed for basic heating and cooking.

The continual transport of logs may also have provoked a connection in the minds of the audience of a nautical speed measurement device, especially in relation to the opening shipwreck of the play. In 1578, William Bourne (1535-1582) published details of a nautical invention that entailed the use of a small log attached to the end of a rope with knots tied at precise intervals wound on a spool in conjunction with an "hourglass" timer (Turner). To measure a ship's speed, one sailor held the spool while another heaved the log attached to the rope aft over the stern, turning over the 28-second timer when it hit the water. The first sailor counted the knots that passed through his hands, and the ship's speed in terms of "knots" (nautical miles per hour) were then calculated and entered into a "log-book." Given Shakespeare's intimate acquaintance with nautical terminology, he would certainly have been familiar with the use of log-lines for measuring a ship's speed.

Whether or not these contemporary uses of actual logs sparked any semantic relations with the word *logos* in the mind of Shakespeare or his audience, the myriad connections drawn between the language of the play and the period it depicts merit exploring for their own sake, as the Vaughns so aptly suggest:

> No one knows why and how the dramatist drew,
> consciously or unconsciously, from such rich sources.

Scholars can, however, indicate likely connections between
The Tempest's language and characters and the political,
social and intellectual climates in which Shakespeare lived
and worked. Such connections mitigate our human
tendency to see only the present era's concerns mirrored in
Shakespeare's text. When *The Tempest* is situated within its
early seventeenth-century historical framework, cultural
and literary audiences but opaque to subsequent generations
are often clarified (37).

These connections between logs and the Greek word *logos*, when conditionally

adopted for the purpose of invention, lend new meaning to many seemingly mundane

scenes in *The Tempest* if the word *log* is read symbolically rather than literally. For

example, the simple stage direction "*Enter* FERDINAND, *bearing a log*" (3.1), might be

reinterpreted to read "*Enter* FERDINAND, *thinking,*" or "*Enter* FERDINAND, *holding a*

thought." Such substitutions become more relevant once we contextualize Shakespeare's

potential heuristic and symbolic reasons for using log-related terms in relation to

Prospero engaging Ferdinand and Caliban in carrying logs, aside from his ostensible

purpose of maintaining fires. Given Ferdinand's role as a suitor and future husband of

Miranda, Prospero seeks to test Ferdinand's wit and mettle as a future son-in-law. He

does so openly in Act I, after admonishing Miranda not to speak with Ferdinand, whom

he warns about courting his daughter:

> Come,
> I'll manacle thy neck and feet together;
> Sea water shalt thou drink; thy food shall be
> The fresh-brook mussels, withered roots, and husks
> Wherein the acorn cradled. Follow! (1.2.461-64)

When Ferdinand attempts to resist, Prospero says: "Put thy sword up, traitor, who mak'st

a show, but dar'st not strike, thy conscience is so possessed with guilt; come from thy

ward for I can here disarm thee with this stick and make thy weapon drop" (1.2.470-

474). Miranda recognizes the confrontation as a test of Ferdinand's character as well, beseeching her father, "Make not too rash a trial of him" (1.2.467). Yet, despite his sword-to-stick advantage, Ferdinand comprehends the symbolic inferiority of his sword, as a weapon of violence, in contrast to Prospero's stick—a log of another sort—which connotes the power of reason.

Prospero's stick is a magical staff, which typically takes the form of a crooked, rough-hewn knotty tree limb, usually about four feet long, sometimes with leaf-bearing small twigs still growing on it. According to James Hastings, et. al., in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, the staff represents an important tool for both the shepherd and the priest; the shepherd uses it to gently guide his sheep away from danger, whereas the priest employs it as a shape-shifting means of magical persuasion (291). For example, Moses turned his staff into a snake to convince the Egyptians that God would side with him and his people against the Pharaoh's magic (Exodus 7.8-13). Whereas a staff symbolizes gentle guidance and non-violent persuasion, a rod—as a precisely measured and cut piece of wood, no more than two feet long, with a smooth and uniform surface (Hastings 291)—symbolizes stern guidance, in the form of corrective punishment, with which Caliban is "striped," "racked," and "bruised" (1.2.345-72).

Prospero's staff, along with his books and robe, positions him and the play ostensibly in the realm of magic and the occult. As Vaughan notes, "*The Tempest* itself can be compared to one form of magic, the alchemical process" (63). Indeed, the title comes from an alchemical term for the boiling of the alembic (a still consisting of two vessels connected by a tube) to remove impurities and transform base metal into pure silver or gold (Mebane 181). Prospero's goal is often described in terms of spiritual

alchemy, i.e., purification of the soul through a transformation of human nature. While such arguments hold up, I see Shakespeare's use of magic—which, ultimately, does not figure prominently in the play—as an artifice, perhaps even a decoy, in which to embed his tropological language transformations and analogic extensions. Shakespeare understands, as Burke does, that the magic of language stands more powerfully than the language of magic. By presenting Prospero's magic as central to the play, and portraying it in a politically acceptable way, Shakespeare was able to incorporate figural magic in his language symbolisms; perhaps even the speculative *log-logos* model I present here.

In addition to Ferdinand's log-related confrontation with Prospero, Ferdinand's log-carrying provides Miranda with additional opportunities to gauge his character for herself. While carrying logs unsupervised one evening, Ferdinand refuses to stop working, even though Miranda admonishes him, "Pray set [the log] down and rest you," noting that her father is hard at study, and that he can rest "safe for these three hours" (3.1.18-20). When Ferdinand refuses, Miranda exclaims: "Alas! Now, pray you, work not so hard […] pray set it down and rest you […] I'll bear your logs the while" (3.1.15-26). Applying our log metaphor, we can translate her compassionate plea as, "pray set your *thoughts* aside and rest you […] I'll bear your *worries* the while." Ferdinand proves his loyalty to her father, as well as his own perseverance, telling Miranda: "For your sake, am I this patient log-man" (3.1.84), or in the language of our model, "For your sake, am I this patient *thinking*-man."

Given Caliban's lowly status as an uneducated, enslaved native of the island, one naturally presumes that Prospero's primary, if not only, motive for directing him to carry logs is to keep the fire going. Yet, when logs are interpreted as instantiations of *logos*,

other, more provocative possibilities present themselves. Two literal potentialities emerge in terms of contemporary cultural phenomena. First, given our knowledge of the charcoal industry, England's New England logging operation, and Prospero's need for metal tools, harvesting the island's timber to smelt ore seems plausible. Simply accumulating a sufficient quantity of wood for cooking and night-time heating in the tropics would not require the high volume of log transfer Shakespeare depicts. Second, given the play's obvious magical and alchemical overtones, Prospero could have employed Caliban in the stoking of an alchemical alembic for the transformation of base metals into gold or silver. If so, the cavernous "rock" to which Caliban is confined might also have served as Prospero's alchemical laboratory.

A third possibility emerges when we view the logs Caliban carries as symbolic markers of meanings derived from *logos*, beginning with Prospero's need to teach the primitive Caliban his language. Within this paradigm, Prospero could have taught Caliban by playing a "language game" similar to one the twentieth-century German Philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) describes in *Philosophical Investigations* (5). The game involves a teacher pointing at, lifting, or otherwise manipulating, an object while simultaneously saying its name, thereby forming ostensive definitions in the mind of the student. Commanding Caliban's attention, Prospero could have lifted a log while saying "log," carried it to a specific location while saying "carry," stopped at that location while saying "to," and then dropped the log into the fire while saying "fire." By repeating the process, Prospero could have coaxed Caliban into assisting him through imitation, eventually directing him to do the work himself, simply by uttering the meaning-infused words, "Carry logs to fire."

As noted earlier, once meanings have been transferred from objects and processes to word-symbols, they can be "borrowed back" or transferred to the objects themselves, so as to infuse both the objects and words with new meaning, thereby allowing for their ambiguous use as polyvalent signs. A mind new to the use of language, such as Caliban's, could then speak of logs and intend a figurative meaning while conveying a literal one. To the extent that Caliban does so naively, without awareness of the disconnect between the meaning he intends and the meaning he sends, he remains a primitive fool; but if he possesses sufficient intelligence to understand the difference, he acquires the cleverness he needs to artfully deceive in the manner of a wise fool, becoming a vehicle for Shakespeare's dramatic irony.

Mindful of such transference, consider the first verbal exchange between Prospero and Caliban. After explaining Caliban's value to Miranda, in fetching wood and making fire, Prospero calls out to his slave: "Thou earth, speak!" Caliban replies, "There's wood enough within" (1.2.315). We assume he means, "There's enough wood within the pit for a fire." But in our speculative symbolic paradigm of logs-as-*logos*, this statement takes on new meaning, viz., "There's enough *language in my brain to understand you*." Through analogic extension, if the word *logs* is reconstituted to mean "language," then the word *within* is reconstituted to signify the figural equivalent of that which logs go into, a fire. By the same type of extension, if literal logs belong within the fire, figural logs (as language) belong in the mind; therefore, the word *fire* has also been analogically extended to mean "mind." In short, Caliban can privately intend, perhaps even derisively, "There is no need to call me *earth*, I recognize my name," while publicly expressing a sense of duty.

When Caliban later complains to Prospero that, "You taught me language, and my profit on't Is I know how to curse" (1.2.365), Caliban demonstrates that he does, in fact, understand language beyond the simple transference of meaning. Caliban's alternating lucid and biting commentary mixed with his seemingly naïveté, confirms him as a wise fool, rather than a genuine one. When Stephano wonders, upon meeting Caliban, "Where the devil should he learn our language?" (2.2.65-66), Caliban couches his response in log symbolism: "Do not torment me, prithee. I'll bring my wood home faster" (2.2.70-71). When "wood" is interpreted literally as logs, Caliban seems cowering and dull-minded. However, when read as analogically extended symbolism, the image of wood burning at "home"—i.e., where it belongs, in a fire pit—symbolizes language working efficiently in the mind. In this case, Caliban combines his quick wit with a threat, saying, in effect, "Do not torment me, prithee. *I have already outsmarted you*."

Accordingly, Caliban expresses his disdain, both for the arrogance of Prospero and the foolishness of Stephano, when he admonishes the latter to "brain him, Having first seized his books, or with a log, Batter his skull" (3.2.85-87). Symbolically, Caliban instructs Stephano to undertake a highly ironic act, i.e., to kill Prospero by smashing his head as the repository of his language, either with a stack of his own books, symbolizing the source of his knowledge, or with a log, symbolizing language itself. Killing a fictitious character through the unambiguous use of language is easy, as any author knows; killing a character symbolically through analogically extended substitution, requires the subtly of an author well-versed in occult invention. Shakespeare's use of semantic subterfuge to contrive alternative meanings underscores the potential for occult invention to encompass and provoke more subtle disclosures of linguistic texture.

CHAPTER III

ALCHEMY, THE OCCULT MODE, AND TEXTUAL TRANSFORMATION

IN DONNE AND COWLEY

A. The Rhetoric of Alchemy

Alchemy consists of two interrelated goals and processes, one metallurgical the other symbolic. Metallurgical alchemy, which gave birth to the science of chemistry, seeks the transmutation of base metals such as lead into gold or silver. Symbolic alchemy, also known as spiritual alchemy, endeavors to purify the human soul through the transformation of thought and emotion. As Titus Burckhardt (1908-1984) notes in *Alchemy: Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul*, "One is predominantly artisanal in nature; the symbolism of an 'inward work' appears here as something superadded to a professional activity and is only mentioned occasionally and incidentally. The other makes use of metallurgical processes exclusively as analogies, so that one may even question whether they were ever employed 'outwardly'" (17). In this chapter, I use the term *Alchemy* primarily in the symbolic sense, as applied to the transformation of language and meaning in parallel with the alchemical process.

1. Metallurgical vs. Symbolic Alchemy

According to twentieth-century alchemy scholar E. J. Holmyard in *Alchemy*, metallurgical alchemy is "concerned with attempts to prepare a substance, the philosopher's stone, or simply the stone, endowed with the power of transmuting the base metals lead, tin, copper, iron, and mercury into the precious metals gold and silver" (15). From Ancient times through the seventeenth century, metallurgical alchemy attracted legitimate seekers of wealth, as well as frauds, employing an alluring array of chemicals,

powders, tubes, and alembics. Metallurgical alchemy also attracted the interest of

reputable scientists such as Sir Isaac Newton (1643-1727), but by the end of the

eighteenth century, alchemy had become the province of delusional dreamers and

swindlers, as lampooned much earlier by Ben Jonson's (1572-1637) character, Subtle, in

The Alchemist. In "Some Problems with the Historiography of Alchemy," Lawrence M.

Principe and William R. Newman explain that, "Increasingly, from the beginning of the

century, there was a tendency to sequester the 'older' alchemy from the 'newer' science

of chemistry, and this divorce appears clearly in the etymological distinctions between

'alchemy' and 'chemistry,' which became entrenched in the first decades of the

eighteenth century" (386). The Royal Society suppressed Newton's voluminous writings

on the subject, and subsequent scientists continued to deny their existence until more

open-minded scholars brought them to light in the twentieth century (Von Hofe 63-68).

In symbolic alchemy, the transformation of matter and of human consciousness

were inextricably linked. Arthur E. Waite (1857-1942) insists that "The metallic

transmutation could not be accomplished without the spiritual transformation," and that

the two were, in fact, "a coincident and parallel process" (x). Burckhardt takes this idea a

step further, maintaining that most "alchemists [who] knew and practiced metallurgical

procedures such as the purification and alloying of metals" considered symbolic alchemy

"their real work […] for which all the procedures were merely the outward supports or

'operational' symbols was the transmutation of the soul" (23). Symbolic, or spiritual,

alchemy differs from mysticism and religion in two key respects. First, alchemy does not

share mysticism's aim of uniting with God. And unlike religion, alchemy possesses no

theological framework apart from the mythology of the planets associated with metals.

90

As Burckhardt explains, "Alchemy, for its part, is primarily neither theological (or metaphysical) nor ethical; it looks on the play of powers of the soul from a purely cosmological point of view, and treats the soul as 'substance' which has to be purified, dissolved, and crystallized anew" (27). Symbolic alchemy allows humans to envision themselves as another substance-like, willfully modifiable component of the universe.

Both metallurgical and symbolic alchemy derive from a brief, cryptic text called *The Emerald Tablet*, attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, a mythical Egyptian sage and magician often conflated with the god Thoth, said to have lived around the time of Moses (1392-1271 BCE). Originally quoted in the first century by Balinus and translated into Latin from Arabic sometime between 600 and 750 CE, medieval writers more commonly referred to the text as the *Secret of Creation* (Ball 78). Metaphysical Poets, such as John Donne and Abraham Cowley, borrow from and allude to the text indirectly. The most significant passage, of which the 1680 translation from B. J Dobbs's "Newton's Commentary on the Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus" appears below, asserts the interconnectedness of the heavens and the earth:

> Tis true without lying, certain & most true.
> That which is below is like that which is above & that
> which is above is like yet which is below to do ye
> miracles of one only thing (183-4).

This passage states the basic premise of both astrology and alchemy, reflecting the previously discussed worldviews of Chapman and Shakespeare, that everything on earth is connected to the cosmos through a symbolic chain of correspondence. The historical lineage of *The Emerald Tablet* remains obscure. Jabir ibn Hayyan (c.721-c.815 CE), an eighth-century persian polymath, emerges as the earliest link to the document, providing an explanation of its theory of transmutation. Jabir (Latinized as Geber) asserts

91

correspondences between the seven (then) known metals—silver, quicksilver, copper, gold, iron, tin, and lead—and the seven planets visible to the naked eye, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. He theorizes that all metals are composed of varying combinations of two fundamental substances, sulfur and mercury, the parents of salt (or ore), from which all metals derive.

Both metallurgical and symbolic alchemy encompass the myriad ways in which mercury and sulfur could be combined and treated through refinements associated with the four elements. Alchemists used these refinements—heating, drying, condensation, and dissolution—in various combinations to attain twelve critical turning points: calcination, solution, separation, conjunction, putrefaction, congelation, cibation, sublimation, fermentation, exaltation, multiplication, and projection. Metallurgically, these points mark irreversible points of transformation; symbolically, they represent stages of intellectual insight. Rather than achieving these transformations directly, however, alchemists first sought a magical "substance" not found in nature, which they deemed more valuable than gold, known as the Philosopher's Stone. According to Holmyard, "The stone was also sometimes known as the Elixer or Tincture, and was credited not only with the power of transmutation but with that of prolonging human life indefinitely" (15). Symbolically, the stone represents enlightenment.

The roots of symbolic alchemy run at least as deep as the fourth-century and the works of Synesius (373-414 CE), a Greek bishop of Ptolemais, who insisted that true alchemists

> only express themselves in symbols, metaphors, and
> similes, so that they can be understood by saints, sages, and
> souls endowed with understanding. For this reason they
> have observed in their works a certain way and a certain

rule, of such a kind that the wise man may understand and,
perhaps after some stumbling, attain to everything that is
secretly described therein (De Richebourg 379).

Alchemy's symbolic language corresponds to Aristotle's most cryptic heuristic

form, the maxim, claiming to encapsulate universal truths concisely and succinctly.

Principe and Newman note that the "well-organized complexity and opacity of

alchemical literature has long constituted a barrier to its proper understanding" (385). But

while most alchemists claim to have obscured their works for the purpose of confounding

the foolish—those intent on learning only its literal, metallurgical, and potentially

profitable meaning—Burckhardt believes the interpretive difficulty of deciphering its

symbolism constitutes its functional value. Eighth-century Arab alchemist Jābir ibn

Hayyān, for example, inserts passages that instruct the alchemist to perform an operation

with an object or process not previously mentioned, e.g., "Now take this substance, which

you know well enough, and put it into the vessel." Searching the text, the reader finds no

other mention of any such substance, nor is the vessel specified or identified.

Burckhardt explains that such omissions are included as exercises in which "mental

understanding is rudely brought to a halt, and this indeed is the purpose of an exposition

of this kind [of alchemy, wherein] the pupil is made to experience directly the limits of

his reason" (31). Jarring reason beyond its limits, an alchemical writer seeks to redirect

the intellect emotionally, reconfiguring the mind's role and function, in confirmation of

alchemy's correspondence with the rhetorical "appeal" English rhetorician George

Campbell calls "passion." The planned disruption of thinking parallels the textual

transformations found in poets of the Metaphysical Mode, particularly, those of Donne

and Cowley.

B. Metaphysical Poetry

1. The Metaphysical Mode, Alchemical Wit, and the Occult Mode

The Metaphysical Mode, best exemplified by the Metaphysical Poets, has been

described as differing from other types of Early Modern literature in several ways. As

Rolf P. Lessenich notes, neoclassicists originally used "Metaphysical" as a derogatory

term to differentiate their aesthetics, based on reason and "clearly defined rules" derived

from the Baroque aesthetics:

> From their point of view the Baroque poets had offended
> against the eternally valid norms of reason and nature and
> so, in this diphemistic sense, "Metaphysical" was meant to
> describe something "unnatural" or "adverse to nature" rather
> than the "supernatural." After John Dryden's and Samuel
> Johnson's derogatory use of the term "Metaphysical," it
> became a neutral technical term— a frequent semantic
> change when the immediate historical context sinks into
> oblivion (1999).

For decades, the modern definition of the Metaphysical Mode stemmed from what

T.S. Eliot called a *dissociated sensibility*, the union of thought and feeling. According to

Eliot in his *Metaphysical Poets*, prior to the seventeenth-century poets were "constantly

amalgamating disparate experience" (65) conflating their emotional and intellectual

reactions to a subject. However, the Metaphysical Poets, "revolted against the

ratiocinative, the descriptive; they thought and felt by fits, unbalanced" (Ibid). Emotion

and thought emerged as separate realms, no longer to be mingled poetically. Dissociated

sensibility, characterized by "strong lines," conceits, and wit, does not in itself distinguish

Metaphysical poetry from previous forms. As Earl Miner (1927-2004) points out in *The

Metaphysical Mode From Donne to Cowley*, Joseph Hall (1574-1656), John Marston

(1576-1634), and Chapman used "strong lines." Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542), the Earl

of Surrey (1517-1547), and the Elizabethan sonneteers previously used conceits. And many poets, including Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), and Jonson employed wit. Miner positions Metaphysical poetry in what he calls the "private mode" in contrast to the "social mode" of previous English poets, noting that the private mode treats time and place in terms of the "dramatic," "transcendent," "meditative," and "argumentative" (xi).

However, when defined as "the immediate experience of an individual, especially the transactions of his private heart" (5), the private mode does not seem to differentiate Metaphysical poetry from its predecessors any more clearly than dissociated sensibility. Most scholars do not include Sidney among the Metaphysical poets, yet his *Astrophel and Stella,* published in 1591, expresses the private mode, personal experiences of the speaker's heart:

> He loves my heart, for once it was his own;
> I cherish his because in me it bides.
> His heart his wound received from my sight;
> My heart was wounded with his wounded heart;
> For as from me on him his hurt did light,
> So still, me thought, in me his hurt did smart:
> Both equal hurt, in this change sought our bliss,
> My true love hath my heart and I have his (266).

Miner also describes the Metaphysical poets as innovators of an "unsequential, transcendent universe" (53) through manipulation of experiences of time and space (54). As an example, he cites Richard Crashaw's (1613-1649) *Sospetto d'Herode*, in which the poet depicts the Countess of Denbigh's heart as "standing" in a particular moment and contemplating bliss as a place to which it may travel (97):

What Heav'n besieged Heart is this
Stands Trembling at the Gate of Blisse:
Holds fast the Door, yet dares not venture
Fairly to open and to enter?

Yet, Shakespeare seems already to have accomplished something similar in Sonnet

No. 27. He gives the narrator's mind a separate, non-physical body capable of journeying

through the portal of his head, in a moment that stands experientially non-sequential with

the etheric body's travels, and apart from the fatigue of the physical body's limbs:

Weary with toil, I haste to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired,
But then a journey begins in my head
To work my mind, when body's work expired (S27, 1-4).

Neither of these counter-examples diminishes the value of Miner's observations;

clearly the Metaphysical poets take the elements he identifies further than their

predecessors. But prior use of such elements illustrates the difficulties of defining

Metaphysical poetry strictly in terms of modes, tropes, and devices. When we evaluate

the authors traditionally placed in the Metaphysical Mode, such as Donne and Cowley,

and include those on the periphery of the classification, such as Spenser, Chapman,

Shakespeare, and Sidney, we find a broader commonality in their use of occult

symbolism and occult invention. Miner highlights important similarities between the

Metaphysical Mode and the Occult Mode when he explicates the nature of wit as the

most characteristic feature, quoting Samuel Johnson's (1709-1784) disparaging remark:

"The most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together" (Johnson 2008 20). This

violent yoking stems from what Dr. Johnson refers to as *discordia concors*, a rhetorical

device in which opposites are juxtaposed to produce striking contrasts.

According to Frank L. Huntley in "Dr. Johnson and Metaphysical Wit," *discordia concors* originally derives from "the idea of world harmony, the discovery of unity in variety or variety in unity in the cosmos and in ourselves. Thus the crucial point of Johnson's criticism of the metaphysical poets is their 'imitation of nature'" (103). Huntley cites a passage from *Ovid's Metamorphoses in Fifteen Books* as the seminal text, in which the qualities of the Ancient elements as established by Aristotle are depicted as fighting until they achieve mixture:

> For heat and moisture, when in Bodies joyn'd,
> The temper that results from either Kind
> Conception makes; and fighting till they mix,
> Their mingled atoms in each other fix.
> Thus Nature's hand the Genial Bed prepares
> With friendly discord, and with fruitful Wars (105).

This fourfold interplay of forces and ideas, Huntley maintains, persists throughout the eighteenth century as the mainstay of Augustan wit, noting that there are "four books of Horace (two of epistles and two of satires), four speakers in Dryden's Essay, four parts to Pope's Essay on Man, four books of The Dunciad, four books in Swift's Gulliver's Travels, and four pictures in Marvell's 'Gallery'" (106). Whereas literature in the Metaphysical Mode incorporates the violent yoking in its wit, the Occult Mode adds a systematic method of invention, based on transformation of text in accordance with Aristotle's elemental qualities.

Although Miner acknowledges the influence of *discordia concors* on the Metaphysical Mode, he rejects what he calls the "schoolboy" rhetorical analysis as part of the solution. Stating that "the differences between Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and Ramus in matters rhetorical […] do not seem matters of very pressing poetic interest" (120-121), he asks, "What two central arts of the Renaissance and the seventeenth

century have less relevance to our familiar experience [than logic and rhetoric]?" (Ibid).

Miner specifically dismisses "the 'grammar' of Kenneth Burke" along the same lines, noting that the Metaphysical poets were not "taught at school and at the university to memorize" Burke's theories. However, in denying the heuristic insights provided by Burke's theories, Miner overlooks a defining commonality between authors of the Metaphysical Mode and related authors who fall just outside of it.

By examining a passage from Andrew Marvell's (1621-1678) "The Definition of Love" in relation to Miner's account of the Metaphysical Mode, and then in relation to my definition of Occult Mode and textual transformation, we can better understand the differences between them. In identifying Dr. Johnson's description of Metaphysical wit as the violent yoking of heterogeneous ideas, Miner points out that "there is a particular idea abroad that Metaphysical poetry is somehow quintessentially witty (in a sense not true of other poets for its imagery)" (124). He cites a passage from Marvell in which he claims "there is hardly an image […] and yet the ideas sparkle as they move" (124):

> Therefore the Love which us doth bind,
> But Fate so enviously debarrs,
> Is the Conjunction of the Mind,
> And Opposition of the Stars (Ibid).

According to Miner, the passage shows that "a fundamental way in which the ideas work in Metaphysical poetry is through "'definition' or 'identification': the technique of saying of x that it means thus-and-so, sometimes that it is identical to y, and often by 'dialectic' or argument that means a, b, c, and therefore d" (125). Marvell employs definition as Miner suggests, identifying "Love" with "the Mind," "Fate" with "the Stars," "bind" with "conjunction," and "debarrs" with "opposition." However, Miner appears to misrepresent the process of dialectic in calling it an "argument that means a, b,

c, and therefore *d,*" conflating dialectic reasoning with syllogistic thinking. Traditionally, dialectic entails the emergence of a synthetic third term out of a thesis term and an antithesis term; for instance, the synthetic term "warm" results dialectically from an interaction between the thesis term "hot" and antithesis term "cold." This distinction is not a quibble, given Miner's precise use of terms to define a wide swath of literature.

Were Marvell attempting to draw a dialectical conclusion, he would likely have concluded that some lovers, like stars, are fated to remain separate forever. But Marvell does not establish a dialectical relationship between the four sets of binaries based on semantics as Miner suggests; rather, he establishes transmutational, alchemical relationships based on the imagery Miner denies. Marvell juxtaposes two matched terms, both astronomical (*conjunction* and *opposition)* with two unmatched terms, one human (*mind),* the other astronomical (*stars)*. The unmatched human term is *symbolically compatible*, but *logically incompatible*, with its matched astronomical term. Minds may stand in opposition or conjunction ("disagreement" or "agreement"), but the stars, perceived as "fixed" in the heavens, forever retain their respective relations to each other. Marvell depicts fate as "envious" of this distinction because space maintains a separation between the stars, but can never enforce a separation between the minds of lovers. Miner's account of *discordia concors* accounts for the transmutation of the term "conjunction" from a logically incompatible astronomical term to a symbolically compatible human term, but does not identify the underlying dialectical process, which characterizes interactions between the elements and the Pentad of Burke.

2. Alchemical Transformation and the Occult Mode

In *discordia concors*, each of the elements react in combination with two qualities assigned by Aristotle from the set of Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry. For instance, Fire is considered Hot and Dry while Earth is Dry and Cold. The order of these terms for each element corresponds to a division developed in the Middle Ages by the English Scholastic philosopher William of Ockham (1288-1348), which he calls *First Intention* and *Second Intention*. First Intentions consist of signs that refer exclusively to objects, whether concrete or abstract, e.g., "earth" or "heaven." Second Intentions consist of more general signs that refer to other signs, e.g., "genus" and "species" (Bos 47). In *On Christian Doctrine*, St. Augustine (354-430 CE) correlates these terms to the qualities of *Enjoyment* and *Use*, respectively, noting that "To enjoy something is to cling to it with love for its own sake. To use something, however, is to employ it in obtaining that which you love, provided that it is worthy of love" (9). As a symbolic alchemist, Ramon Llull (1232-1315) adopted these distinctions to the qualities of the elements in his *Liber Chaos*, in which he explains their roles.

According to Llull, the two qualities of each element correspond to its First and Second Intention, or Enjoyment and Use, which he also identifies as embodiments of *active form* and *passive matter*. The First Intention of Fire is Hotness, which it enjoys in and of itself, i.e., Fire basks in its own heat. The Second Intention of Fire is Dryness, which it *uses* to consume fuel, and produce the heat it *enjoys*. Llull explains that the "motives" of the respective qualities determine how the elements combine with each other in an unmixed state of "chaos":

> From the Chaos there is an influx of four simple elements,
> each one of them has its first intention for itself, as simple

form seeks simple matter and vice versa, so as to make up
one simple supposite; but as an element cannot accomplish
this by itself, it seeks composition, and thus the compound
element arises by the second intention (I.xi-2).

Fire naturally combines with Earth because it *enjoys* its own active form, heat, in its

First Intention. Fire's heat *uses* Earth's dryness as a passive form in its Second Intention.

In literal terms, Fire's heat ignites and consumes the dryness of Earth, e.g.,wood, as a

means of sustaining its heat. The pattern perpetuates between the four elements in a

never-ending cycle: Earth's active form, dryness, while serving as Fire's passive

consumable, also consumes Water's passive coldness; Water consumes Air's moisture;

Air consumes Fire's heat, etc. Thus, Llull observes that "As a compound of these forms

and matters, Chaos exists within an universal form composed of several simple forms,

and one universal matter composed of several simple matters" (I.ix-2). Similarly, Burke

notes "the relationship between interest and *intention*" (*Permanence* 104-105, italics his)

as it corresponds to enjoyment and use. "One who intends to build a fire, for instance, has

dropped from the mind many specific details involved in the actual process of fire-

building" (105), and focuses, instead, on a fire's enjoyment, e.g., its heat and cooking

potential. Interest in the enjoyment of a particular process, then, acts as a pathway to the

facilitation of its use, which yields its enjoyment. Table 8 charts the intentions of the four

Ancient elements in relation to their qualities as the basis of *discordia concors*.

Table 8. Relation of Ancient elements to Aristotle's qualities and the Intentions of William of Ockham as employed by Ramon Llull in his rhetorical alchemy.

Element	First Intention	Second Intention
Fire	Hot	Dry
Earth	Dry	Cold
Water	Cold	Wet
Air	Wet	Hot

In the four lines from Marvell cited by Miner above, the poet seeks to align "love" and "mind" to "fate" and "stars" through the terms "bind, "debarr," "conjunction" and "opposition." Modernizing the vague and outdated term "debarr" to the more common and understandable term "exclusion," we can equate the primary four terms to the four elements, and the remaining four terms to their functions as first and second intentions as charted in Table 9.

Table 9. The poetic terms used by Andrew Marvell in "The Definition of Love," charted in relation to their First and Second Intentions.

Poetic Term	First Intention	Second Intention
Love	Binding	Conjunction
Stars	Conjunction	Exclusion
Mind	Exclusion	Opposition
Fate	Opposition	Binding

Love seeks to *bind* lovers as its First Intention, and uses *conjunction*, or sexual union, to bring about that binding as its Second Intention. Stars seek the *conjunction* of planets as their First Intention, and use mutual *exclusion* to isolate two planets and determine their angles of aspect as their Second Intention. *Fate* seeks the *opposition* of heroes and forces as its First Intention, and uses *binding* relationships to create inevitable conflict as its Second Intention. Marvell aligns the logically incompatible terms in

relation to their First and Second Intentions, symbolically connecting "stars" and "mind" through the common quality of "exclusion."

3. Occult Invention in John Donne's "The Flea"

Donne's "The Flea" exemplifies the alchemical basis of the Occult Mode more clearly. While Laura Lojo Rodriguez and others identify the flow of "The Flea" as a logical progression, based solely on the flea's perspective, Rodriguez characterizes the poem's unfoldment as dialectical, based on the perspectives of all the terms in "a motion of ideas" (156). Her interpretation nonetheless tracks the poem's progression in only one direction: The perspective of the flea in pursuit of its goal. In the interactive realm of Llull's alchemical chaos, where the elements interact through their respective qualities, each element can be seen as pursing its own goal in relation to the other three, the sum total of which creates a "perspective of perspectives" in the manner of Burke's Pentad. In Donne's "The Flea," reproduced below, four essential terms interact in the manner of the elements: the *flea*, the *poet* ("me"), the *lover* ("you"), and *death,* through the combination of their respective "qualities," which symbolize their "intentions," i.e., *blood*, *intimacy* ("suck"), *marriage,* and *honor.* The interaction of poem's elements in relation to intentions of their qualities appears in Table 10.

> Marke but this flea, and marke in this,
> How little that which thou deny'st me is;
> Me it suck'd first, and now sucks thee,
> And in this flea our two bloods mingled bee;
> Confesse it, this cannot be said
> A sinne, or shame, or losse of maidenhead,
>   Yet this enjoyes before it wooe,
>   And pamper'd swells with one blood made of two,
>   And this, alas, is more than wee would doe.
>
> Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
> When we almost, nay more than maryed are.

This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;
Though parents grudge, and you, w'are met,
And cloysterd in these living walls of Jet.
　　　Though use make thee apt to kill me,
　　　Let not to this, selfe murder added bee,
　　　And sacrilege, three sinnes in killing three.

Cruell and sodaine, has thou since
Purpled thy naile, in blood of innocence?
In what could this flea guilty bee,
Except in that drop which it suckt from thee?
Yet thou triumph'st, and saist that thou
Find'st not thyself, nor mee the weaker now;
　　　'Tis true, then learne how false, feares bee;
　　　Just so much honor, when thou yeeld'st to mee,
　　　Will wast, as this flea's death tooke life from thee.

Table 10. The primary poetic terms of Donne's "The Flea" depicted in the manner of the four elements, in relation to the First and Second Intentions of their qualities.

Poetic Term	First Intention	Second Intention
Flea	Blood	Intimacy
Poet	Intimacy	Marriage
Lover	Marriage	Honor
Death	Honor	Blood

The flea uses the *intimacy* of its bite, its Second Intention, to obtain *blood*, its First Intention. The poet uses a pledge of *marriage*, his Second Intention, to obtain *intimacy*, his First Intention. The lover uses the *honor* of her virginity, her Second Intention, to attain *marriage*, her First Intention. Death uses the loss of *blood*, its Second Intention, to obtain *honor*, its First Intention. Thus, breaking down the poem alchemically, we find four goals and four perspectives; unified into a narrative, they present a larger, cohesive perspective that subsumes the other four.

C. Information, Suspense, and Symbolic Inference

1. Information and the Transformation of Taste

In his 1925 essay, "The Psychology of Form," Burke provides a prospective template for the Metaphysical Mode as a dichotomy of what he calls the *psychology of information* and the *psychology of form*. Cézanne's landscapes, he suggests, would serve well as forestry bulletins, if not for their distinctive form. Burke distinguishes between "information" and "form" as the difference between understanding and expression. *Information*, which he calls "intrinsically interesting," consists of specific bits of knowledge, such as "backyard gossip" or "the most casual newspaper item" (33). *Form*, which he calls "extrinsically useful," defines the manner in which two people exchange such information, through the "creation of an appetite in the mind," followed by "the adequate satisfying of that appetite" (31). Art, literature, and a newspaper employ various ratios of information and form: Sculpture exemplifies form with little information; literature balances structural form with informational content; and a newspaper, exclusive of artwork and advertisements, exemplifies information with little form.

Burke draws a more literary distinction between information and form by characterizing them in terms of what he calls "the psychology of the audience" and the "psychology of the hero," respectively. The *psychology of the audience* centers on the information the audience wants from a particular verse or scene, whereas the *psychology of the hero* stems from the actions the hero deems best for himself in the context of the story. For example, Burke notes that when Hamlet encounters the ghost of his father in Act I, Scene Four, the audience wants Hamlet to linger and learn what he can from the ghost about his father's murder. But Hamlet does not think an extended interaction is in

105

his best interest at that time, so he breaks it off. Not until Scene Five does Hamlet speak with the ghost long enough for the audience to obtain the information it wants about the murder. The delay creates and enhances the audience's appetite for *information*, and the creation and fulfillment of that appetite constitutes the *form* of those two scenes.

Burke roughly aligns the various ratios of information-to-form in relation to three fundamental ways in which taste can be transformed. Taste can be *eliminated* by means of scientific clarity, which erases symbolic poesis; taste can be *deranged*, by focusing exclusively on "the psychology of the hero"; or taste can be *externalized* by attending to "the psychology of the audience." Donne's style exemplifies the third transformation. He does not *eliminate* taste altogether, as science does, by providing pure information, nor does he *derange* taste by overemphasizing the biography of his heroes; rather, he *externalizes* taste by combining information and form, a technique more typically used in plays, but rarely employed in poetry in Donne's time.

As Burke observes, even in the twentieth-century, a period in which informational art proliferated, aesthetic taste had "not yet had time to make a spiritual readjustment adequate to the changes in our [vast information-producing] resources of material and knowledge" (Ibid). Donne's introduction of information into poetry in the early seventeenth century required still more adjustment from his readers, who were accustomed to a style in which form predominated. Dr. Johnson either did not understand, or else did not approve of Donne's attempt to reconcile the information precipitated by proto-science with the prevailing norms of taste, calling Donne's style "unnatural," and accusing him of "abiding unpolished stylistic carelessness" (Johnson I.13-22). Such a reconciliation mandated the invention of a new type of poetry, capable

of incorporating a higher ratio of information. Donne employs two methods for achieving

this synthesis of information and form, alchemical transformations, like those we

examined in "The Flea," as well as information-based *suspense*.

2. Suspense, Delay, and Appetite

As George Williamson observes, much of Donne's poetry hinges on "delayed

surprise [which] builds upon suspense" and "a deceptive mode of argument" (32-39).

Rhetorically, Juan Antonio Prieto Pablos asserts that Donne restructures "the foundations

of communicative context in which only a selected few could participate" through the

"organization of a topic or argument by means of postponement and deception" (129). An

excellent example of such suspense, commonly cited, occurs at the beginning of Donne's

"Valediction: Of Weeping," in which we find new meaning when examined in terms of

Burke's psychology of information and form:

> Let me pour forth
> My tears before thy face, whilst I stay here
> For thy face coins them, and thy stamp they bear,
> And by this mintage they are something worth,
> For thus they be
> Pregnant of thee;   (11.1-6).

The poem begins in *medias res* with the speaker asking permission to pour forth his

tears for reasons not yet known to the audience, giving the listener reason to wonder

about the events that cause this moment of sadness. But rather than immediately giving

the audience the information it wants by explaining why the speaker feels the need to ask

for his lover's permission to cry, Donne employs a technological metaphor of tears as

"coins" that have been "minted" by the speaker's lover, whose "stamp" has made them

pregnant with her presence. Coins imply exchange value, but unlike tears, they are

manufactured for use at will, rather than shed naturally. The delay on the part of the

speaker in conveying the reason for needing permission from his lover before shedding tears creates an appetite in the audience. This appetite, from what Burke describes as "concern over the possible outcome of some specific detail of plot," represents the essence of dramatic suspense. The missing reason as to why the speaker needs his lover's permission to cry has "intrinsic value," insofar as the poem is not understandable without it. Thus, withholding the information establishes the form of the verse in relation to the ones that follow.

Donne creates another type of suspense through the use of what Pablos calls "argumentative deception" (132), in which an addressee is temporarily deceived into adopting a point of view that ultimately proves false. This type of suspense violates "the maxims of standard informative communication" by seeking "to delay the recognition of the topic" (Ibid) of the poem's message or theme. Accordingly, it functions as an inventive form derived from the occult distinction of First and Second Intentions. In Donne's "Valediction of Weeping," four lines after the above quoted passage requesting permission to cry, the poem takes a surprising, disruptive turn. Rather than suppling the reason for his tears as expected, the poet embarks on a new topic altogether (11.10-18):

> On a round ball
> A workman that hath copies by, can lay
> An europe, Afric, and an Asia,
> And quickly make that, which was nothing, All;
> So doth each tear,
> Which thee doth wear,
> A globe, yea, world by that impression grow,
> Till thy tears mix'd with mine do overflow
> This world, by waters sent from thee, my heaven, dissolved so.

Now the speaker explains that his tears could cover entire worlds in the manner of a globe-maker placing decals of the continents on a ball to make a globe. He suggests that

his lover can do the same, and that their tears, like continents, will mix and overflow, dissolving the world in which their love resides. Instead of presenting information that might help the audience understand why the speaker needs his lover's permission to cry, the poet provides a progression of seemingly unrelated symbolic facts: a workman places decals of the continents on a ball to make a globe; a tear is like a continent; excess tears overflow when mixed; an entire world can be dissolved when sufficiently flooded. In doing so, the poet artfully frustrates the audience, increasing its appetite to know, and rendering the eventual fulfillment of that appetite all the more intense. As Burke explains, "Truth in art is not the discovery of *facts*, not an addition to human knowledge […] but], rather, the exercise of human propriety, the *form*ulation of symbols which rigidify our sense of poise and rhythm" (Ibid 42, italics mine). The images evoked by the manufacture of globes in relation to tears not only convey the immensity of the speaker's sadness or concern, but also embody form through distraction and delay.

Donne's factual references to globes and globe-makers tell us nothing about the speaker and the general chaos of his Early Modern life; nor do they suggest the gossip of a subplot. Therefore, they do not constitute an elaboration of the "psychology of the hero." Rather, the facts "subtilize" the suspense of not knowing the topic of the poem through a complexity of details that Burke describes as necessary

> down into the writing of a line or a sentence, until in all its
> smallest details the work bristles with disclosures, contrasts,
> restatements with a difference, ellipses, images, aphorism,
> volume, sound-values, in short all that complex wealth of
> minutiae which in their line-for-line aspect we call style and
> in their broader outlines we call form (38).

Had Donne told us specifically that tears can be synthetically altered as in the manufacture of globes, he would have *eliminated* taste through scientific clarity, in

109

keeping with the Plain Language Movement; had he suggested that the speaker employed the analogy because he happened to be a part-time globe-maker on the side, he would have *deranged* taste through "the psychology of the hero"; instead, Donne incorporates his references to globe-making into the poem's suspenseful and deceptive form, by delaying his revelation of the speaker's reason for crying, thereby *externalizing* taste through the "psychology of the audience." In doing so, Donne creates a symbolic appetite akin to those of the Ancient elements in relation to their respective qualities and intentions.

3. Symbolic Inference, Productive Texts, and Hermeneutic Codes

Donne's technical imagery is intrinsic to the form of "Valediction of Weeping." We can determine why Donne brings in images of manufacturing and the business of globe-making, instead of simply comparing tears to imaginary worlds, by using a method Fredric R. Jameson (1934-) calls "Symbolic Inference" (1978), which he developed as an extension of Burke's theory of literary form, as exemplified by Roland Barthes (1915-1980) in *S/Z.* Viewed through an inferential lens, Donne produced texts representative of what Barthes calls "writerly" (5), i.e., texts that require decipherment as well as interpretation. Alchemical texts, for example, are writerly in the extreme, insofar as they cannot be read for understanding, but require in-depth knowledge of the subject matter simply to be understood. Composed of "a galaxy of signifiers" rather than a "structure of signifieds," *writerly texts* constitute "mobilizing codes" that extend "as far as the eye can reach" (Ibid), i.e., to the full extent of one's imagination. One such mobilizing code, which Barthes calls the "hermeneutic code," employs "various (formal) terms by which

an enigma can be distinguished, suggested, formulated, held in suspense, and finally

disclosed" (19).

A hermeneutic enigma is a "proposition of truth" consisting of five parts: 1) the

theme or topic of the enigma; 2) a question; 3) the promise of an answer; 4) delays; and

5) disclosure (84-85). According to Barthes, the *theme or topic* of an enigma is an

ostensive identification, e.g., pointing to the Moon and saying, "That is the Moon." The

question of an hermeneutic enigma seeks a definition ("What is the Moon?"). The

promise of an answer takes the form of a reassurance ("Be patient, I will tell you"). *Delay*

consists of one or more of the following: *ambiguity* ("It's an object of some sort"),

suspended answers ("Well, let me think..."), *partial answers* ("An astral body that..."), or

jammed answers ("No one knows"). Finally, *disclosure* answers the enigma in full ("The

Moon is a lifeless astral body that revolves around the Earth").

Examining the disclosure provided in the final stanza of Donne's poem in light of

the respective parts of Barthes' enigma code clarifies its suspense hermeneutically:

> O more than Moon
> Draw not up seas to drown me in thy sphere,
> Weep not dead, in thine arms, but forbear
>   To teach the sea, what it may do too soon;
>   Let not the wind
>   Example find,
>   To do more harm than it purposeth;
>   Since thou and I sign one another's breath,
>   Whoe'er sighs most, is cruellest, and hastes the others death.
> (11.19-27)

1) What is the *Topic*? The speaker is crying.
2) What is the *Question*? Why is the speaker crying?
3) Is there a *Promise of an Answer*? No.
4) Is there a *Delay*? Yes, his tears are figuratively relocated to a "little round ball."
5) Is there *Disclosure*? Yes, "Whoe'er sighs most is cruellest, and hastes the
   other's death."

111

The hermeneutic disclosure comes in the last line of the poem, presented cryptically in the form of a maxim. In developing his metaphors of tears as coins and as drops of seawater, Donne implies that 1) tears have value; and 2) they could have devastating results. The value of crying lies in the comfort it brings the crier, but crying too much results in the disaster of the speaker's figurative "heaven dissolved," or the rupture of mutual trust. Therefore, the speaker admonishes his lover to "Drawn not up the seas" through her tears, which would "drown me in my sphere." In the final line, wherein "sighs" are equated with tears, the speaker states that whichever of them cries the most, "hastes the others death" by potentially flooding their figurative world. Consequently, the speaker seeks his lover's permission before he cries, knowing that while crying brings him comfort, it hastens her demise. The obscure, but decipherable, message is delivered symbolically in a way that transforms the comprehending reader in the manner of a well-worded maxim or alchemical cipher.

D. Cowley, Mix't Wit, and Discursion

1. Attempt to Bridge Natural Philosophy and Literature

Abraham Cowley stands as a mediating figure in the Early Modern language debate between the growing prominence of natural philosophy and the resilient heuristic methods of literature in the Occult Mode. Cowley not only co-founded the Royal Society, but also was identified by Dr. Johnson as the first of the Metaphysical Poets. As twentieth-century biographer Robert B. Hinman notes, Cowley believed that poetry "bridges the gap between the mutable, knowable universe in which second causes operate, and the timeless, mysterious universe of the soul" (146). Consequently, Cowley thought poets should also be natural philosophers. Toward this end, he revived and

revised the rugged, uneven form of Pindar's (522-443 BCE) odes in service of what he calls "Divine Science," a fusion of poetry and natural philosophy.

In a 1661 treatise titled *Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy*, Cowley "unmistakably connects scientific advancement and educational reform with good poetry," insisting that "the poet-philosopher not only must be cognizant of contemporary research in natural philosophy […] but must himself contribute, at least to the advancement of the cause if not to the accumulation of knowledge" (147). Thomas Sprat (1635-1713) recognized Cowley's contribution to natural philosophy in his *History of the Royal Society*, including Cowley's laudatory poem, "To the Royal Society," which compares Francis Bacon to Moses:

> Bacon, like Moses, led us forth at last,
> The barren wilderness he past,
> Did on the very border stand
> Of the blest promis'd land,
> And from the mountain's top of his exalted wit,
> Saw it himself, and shew'd us it.

Despite being hailed by King Charles II (1630-1685) as the greatest bard of his time—and being buried next to Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400) and Spenser at the behest of the Duke of Buckingham—Cowley attracted fierce critics in attempting to combine literature and natural philosophy. The Cambridge Platonists, a group of seventeenth-century English thinkers that included philosophers Henry More (1614-1687) and Ralph Cudworth (1617-1689), saw Cowley's attempt to bridge science and poetry as an attack on the imagination. John Dryden (1631-1700), despite admitting in his 1672 preface, "An Essay of Heroic Plays," that Cowley was "almost sacred to me" (Hinman 7), recants his praise twenty-eight years later in the preface to his *Fables*, characterizing Cowley as "sweetmeats for boys and women, but little of solid meat for men" (Dryden 559).

Likewise, Alexander Pope (1688-1744), despite borrowing substantially from Cowley, discourages others from doing so in his "Epistle to Augustus," asking deprecatingly, "Who now reads Cowley?" Finally, Johnson, the period's final arbiter of poetic taste, delivered a death blow to Cowley's legacy when he manacling him with the title of the "first metaphysical poet"—the ultimate insult at the time—in his *Lives of the Poets.*

Yet, Cowley's influence on the authors who rejected him, as well as those who did not, remains readily apparent. John Milton (1608-1674) names Cowley as one of his three greatest influences, along with Shakespeare and Spenser, citing Cowley's epic poem, *Davideis,* published in 1656, as his primary inspiration for *Paradise Lost.* Dryden borrowed much from Cowley, as William Peterfield Trent (1862-1939) notes in summing up Cowley's influence in *The Cambridge History of English and American literature:*

> With out his example, […] the couplet could hardly have
> attained that force which, in combination with flexibility
> and ease, it acquired in Dryden's hands. [Cowley] made
> those qualities in Dryden possible, and that their efforts
> helped to give his couplets that polish and balance and good
> sense which, in his case, became a second nature
> (Ward 68).

While Cowley failed to erect the bridge he believed would enable science and poetry to coexist as partners in the search for meaning, the methods he used in attempting to span the chasm exemplify an alchemical type of occult invention distinct from Donne. Whereas Donne employs symbolic transformations based on elemental qualities, Cowley favors textual transformations based on semantic interactions.

2. Cowley's Mix't Wit and Hobbes' Discursion

Twentieth-century scholar Joseph Mazzeo (1923-1998) describes the effects of Cowley's composition methods, a hybrid of art and knowledge, as "that quality of vision

which the discovery of correspondences can bring, 'the thrill' which the awareness of analogy gives the intellect when it first becomes aware of the identity between things formerly believed unconnected" (quoted in Trotter 122). Cowley uses two methods, in particular, to achieve his analogical insights: an innovative literary device identified by the English essayist Joseph Addison (1652-1719) as "mix't wit," and the associative form of invention that English philosopher Thomas Hobbes calls "discursion."

Addison, who openly disapproved of Cowley's method, writes in a 1711 essay in the *Spectator* that mix't wit occurs "When in two ideas that have some resemblance with each other, and are both expressed by the same word, we make use of the ambiguity of the word to speak that of one idea included under it, which is proper to the other" (1). Whereas "true wit consists in the resemblance of ideas, and false wit in the resemblance of words, [mix't wit] consists partly in the resemblance of ideas and partly in the resemblance of words" (1). By way of example, Addison notes that "most languages have hit on the word, which properly signifies *Fire*, to express love" (Ibid), whereas Cowley also uses it within the same poem to signify physical light or heat. As twentieth-century scholar David Trotter explains in *The Poetry of Abraham Cowley*, with mix't wit "there is no distance between vehicle and tenor, no congruity asserted on the basis of certain specified attributes only. Thus, one word [...] might in the same sentence stand for either of the ideas that is annexed to it" (45). Addison recognizes Cowley as the paragon of mix't wit, citing sixteen instances in poems from *The Mistress,* and writing that mix't wit "abounds in Cowley, more than any author that ever wrote" (1).

A poem from Cowley's *The Mistress*, "Written in the Juice of Lemon," features several symbols of mix't wit—in addition to *fire*—some of which employ triple, rather

than double, meanings. They include, for instance, the use of the word *tree,* not only as a tree, but also as the alphabet and paper; a woman's *hand* holding a pen to symbolize an author as well as courtship; the word *writing* to symbolize not only writing, but also romantic wishes and the inner dialog with one's Muse; and finally, the word *reading* operates both in the usual sense and in the sense of contemplating proffered love. Three of these mix't witticisms appear in the first stanza, which also establishes multiple variable perspectives:

> Whilst what I write I do not see,
>   I dare thus, even to *you*, write *Poetry*.
> Ah foolish Muse, which do'st so high aspire,
>   And know's her judgment well
>   How much it does thy power excel,
> Yet dar'st be read by, thy just doom, the *Fire*.
> <div align="right">(Cowley 72)</div>

The term *writing* is used both in the sense of private romantic thoughts ("what I write I do not see") and actual writing ("I dare thus, even to you, write *Poetry*"), and is aimed at the poet's source of inspiration ("Ah Muse, which do'st so high aspire") as well as his mistress ("And know's her judgment well"). The lover writes in ink and in lemon juice, addressing himself, his muse, and his mistress, while also admonishing the very words he secretly thinks and openly writes not to reveal themselves indiscreetly ("Yet dar'st be read by, thy just doom, the *Fire*"). Fire in this sense represents both a light source by which to read and the capacity of the writer's passion to consume itself if his mistress rejects his offer of affection.

Similarly, the following lines from "Inconstancy" depict the lover-poet seemingly defending himself against his mistress' charges that he has been fickle:

> No *Flesh* is now the same 'twas then in Me,
> And that my *Mind* is changed your self may see.

> The same *Thoughts* to retain still, and *Intents*
> Were more inconstant far; for *Accidents*
> Must of all things most strangely *'Inconstant* prove,
> If from one *Subject* they t'another move (Cowley 74).

This passage uses scientific terms figuratively, creating ambiguity, but also disguises its meaning from those not familiar with the terms. In stating that his "flesh" is not the same, the poet refers, literally, to the fact that humans periodically shed and replace all of their skin, while figuratively, he states his realization that his previous desire to feel his lover's flesh next to his has changed as well. Similarly, while his mind has changed both biologically and ideologically, he insists that such changes occur in keeping with what natural philosophers call "accidents" as distinct from "substance." For example, the *substance* of both charcoal and a diamond is carbon; however, their respective forms, as either an opaque, smudgy fuel or a clear, hard crystal are deemed *accidents* of their geologic circumstance. Thus, to the extent that we apprehend the connection between the accidental and substantial attributes, our minds "from one *Subject* they t'another move."

Mix't wit enacts what Burke calls "perspective by incongruity," wherein ambiguity correlates to the *prima materia* of the alchemical process. Burke suggests that rather than looking to philosophically "dispose of" ambiguity through definitions and logic, we recognize it as a *resource* capable of providing deeper insight into an incongruent situation, much as medieval alchemists recognized the dross of base metal or the body as a resource for creating gold or purifying the soul" (*Grammar* xix). Such resources, he argues, "arise out of the great central moltenness, where all is merged [and] have been thrown from a liquid center to the surface where they have congealed. Let one of these crusted distinctions return to its source, and in this alchemic center it may be remade [...]

117

and enter into new combinations" (Ibid). Accordingly, ambiguity becomes a transformational literary device when authors reduce words to "mere symbolizations, rather than [...] accurate and total names for specific, unchangeable realities" (Ibid).

Discursion operates through symbolic free association, the process whereby symbols suggest each other according to similarities in resemblance, time, place, or causality. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes describes discursion as

> The succession of conceptions in the mind, their series or consequence of one after another, [which] may be casual and incoherent, as in dreams for the most part; and it may be orderly, as when the former thought introduceth the latter; and this is discourse of the mind. But because the word discourse is commonly taken for the coherence and consequence of words (37).

In short, Hobbes maintains that, though we try to think teleologically and order our concepts logically, the process of intellection inevitably occurs associatively and, hence, alchemically, through the combining of ideas through mutual transformation. While Cowley rejects certain aspects of Hobbes' strictly causal worldview, he admires the philosopher's use of analogy, and was intrigued by his theories regarding the association of ideas. As Trotter notes, "Words, for Hobbes and for Cowley, were pictures of conceptions, and it followed that what applied to the succession of mental conceptions must also apply to language" (117). Subsequently, discursion led Cowley to regard "experimental truth"—truth obtained through observation and characterized by the free association of ideas in the Hobbesean sense—as "the truest poesie."

Cowley's use of discursion came about by chance, when he discovered what he saw as the perfect model for a corresponding style while traveling to Jersey in 1651 to raise money for the Queen. There, according to Sprat, he stayed "in a place, where he had

118

no other Books to direct him" than a set of Pindar's works in Latin (quoted in Nethercot

135). In Pindar's rough, but meticulously artful style, Cowley perceived what might be

called a congruent incongruence, or more precisely, a pairing of incongruent and

paradoxical *content* with incongruent and paradoxical *form*. According to Charles Segal

in *The Cambridge History of Classical Greek Literature*, Pindar's odes "typically feature

a grand and arresting opening, often with architectural metaphor or a resounding

invocation to a place or goddess" (232). Pindar makes rich and concise use of decorative

language, liberally employing florid compound adjectives. In *A Short History of Greek*

Literature, Jacqueline de Romilly (1913-2010) calls Pindar's sentences "compressed to

the point of obscurity, unusual words and periphrases give the language an esoteric

quality, transitions in meaning often seem erratic, and images seem to burst out—it's a

style that baffles reason and which makes his poetry vivid and unforgettable" (38).

An example may prove useful in comparison with Cowley's *Pindarique Odes*.

The following stanza comes from an ode called *Pythian 2*, which Pindar composed in

honor of Hieron, the tyrant of Syracuse from 478-467 BCE (Conway 92-93):

> God achieves all his purpose and fulfills
> His every hope, god who can overtake
> The winged eagle, or upon the sea
>   Outstrip the dolphin; and he bends
>   The arrogant heart
>   Of many a man, but gives to others
> Eternal glory that will never fade.
> Now for me is it needful that I shun
>   The fierce and biting tooth
> Of slanderous words. For from old have I seen
> Sharp-tongued Archilochus in want and struggling,
>   Grown fat on the harsh words
>   Of hate. The best that fate can bring
> Is wealth joined with the happy gift of wisdom.

Note, particularly, how certain lines transform their predecessors in a way that seems perfectly logical, but serve to jolt our semantic sensibility. For instance, in lines 1-2, we find an image of an all-powerful God as achieving "all his purpose" and his "every hope," only to see his potency challenged by his creatures as Pindar assures us that "god" (now lowercased) can "overtake the Winged eagle" or "outstrip the dolphin." Likewise, we cannot be certain whether the narrator is shunning his own tooth or that of this slanderous words when he states, "Now for me is it needful that I shun / The fierce and biting tooth / Of slanderous words." Every pair of lines in the ode conveys a similar juxtaposition of seemingly incongruent words and ideas.

Cowley began imitating Pindar's odes by reworking some of his original Greek topics, and then proceeded to apply and revise the form in relation to topics relevant to his own age, such as the emergence of science and the influence of Hobbes. Cognizant that he was introducing the Pindaric ode into English literature as a new form, he annotated his attempts, providing a rare and interesting historical trail of their evolution. Searching for an apt metaphor to explicate the form, he seized on the image of an unruly horse, vividly described in relation to both the writer and reader in "The Resurrection":

> 'Tis an unruly, and a *hard-Mouth'd* Horse,
> Fierce, and unbroken yet,
> Impatient of the *Spur* or bit.
> Now *praunces* stately, and anon flies o're the place,
> Disdains the *servile Law* of any settled *pace*,
> *Conscious* and *proud* of his own *natural force*.
> 'Twill no *unskillful Touch* endure,
> But flings *Writer* and *Reader* too that *sits* not *sure* (183).

The last line reflects Cowley's grave and legitimate concern, expressed in the preface, that, "as for the Pinarick [sic] Odes I am in great doubt whether they will be understood by most *Readers*; nay, even by very many who are well enough acquainted

120

with the common Roads, and ordinary Tracks of *Poesie"* (11). Along with the challenge

of discursion—wherein, as he puts it, the lines fall "from one thing to another" (183) and

"leaves the reader to find as he can, the connexion" (177)—the form's ragged articulation

creates added difficulties. Insofar as "the numbers are various and irregular, and

sometimes (especially some of the long ones) seem harsh and uncouth, if the just

measures and cadencies be not observed in the *Pronunciation*" (11) the intended effect

collapses. Cowley attempts to remedy this by capitalizing and italicizing several words in

each ode as an aid to pronunciation, but in some verses, the emphasized words seem to

read even more awkwardly. The source of the difficulty, Cowley suggests, is that "almost

all of the *Sweetness* and *Numerosity* [of the odes] is to be found [...] in the roughest

[lines], if rightly repeated" (Ibid).

This leaves Cowley, by his own admission, "wholly at the *Mercy* of the *Reader*"

(Ibid), a casualty of the alchemical transmutability of his terms, and their ability to

change meaning with each reading. As the symbolic alchemists understood when they

chose to write in seemingly nonsensical, albeit meaning-packed code, the most

significant transformation—if indeed one occurs—takes place in the thinking process of

the reader, rather than in his or her understanding of the text. And herein lies the ultimate

paradox of textual transmutation through the particular form of occult invention I call

alchemical wit: To the extent that such invention succeeds in transforming one's

thinking, those changes appear only through the prism of one's changed consciousness;

never can one return, even momentarily, to the state of consciousness that held sway

before the change the text brings about.

Cowley clearly understood the inefficacy of metallurgical alchemy in terms of its

inability to produce precious metals, as evidenced by the fourth stanza of "The

Maidenhead," a lyric love poem from *The Mistress* collection. In the poem, he notes that

accidental, symbolic knowledge gained by alchemists (or "Chymicks" as they were

sometimes called) more than compensates for the alchemists's inability to produce gold

or enlighten their readers:

> So, though the Chymick his great secret miss,
>   (For neither it in Art nor Nature is)
>   Yet things well worth his toyle he gains:
>   And does his Charge and Labour pay
>   With good unsought exper'iments by the way.
>   (Cowley 129)

Understanding that the value of alchemical poetry lies not just in its message, but

also in the transformation it brings about within the consciousness of those able to

decipher it, Cowley disdains rigidly rhymed and structured stanzas in favor of jagged

experimental ones, believing his "muse," and the seventeenth-century worldly powers

whose approval he sought, rewarded bold acts of exploration for their own sake,

regardless of one's success or failure in attaining the desired goal. As Hinman observes,

"To the poet who recognizes this fact, alchemy provides an effective analogy to the

lover's attempt to conquer his mistress, to his search for what may cynically be

misconsidered a chimera, because, in science or in love, attainment to a goal may be less

important than what happens along the way" (205). Cowley appears to have had this goal

in mind when composing the lyric poems he published in 1656 under the title of *The

Mistress*.

While admitting in the preface that he would not "be ashamed to be thought really

in *Love,*" Cowley directs a barbed caution to those who presume that love poets

necessarily derive their inspiration from romantic love. Poems, he writes, are not "the *Picture* of the *Poet*, but of things and person imagined by him." Thus, the poet "may be in his own practice and disposition a *Philosopher*, nay a *Stoick*, and yet speak sometimes with the softness of an amorous Sappho" (10, italics his). The point seems to have been lost on Dr. Johnson, who quipped, "The compositions [of *The Mistress*] are such as might have been written for penance by a hermit, or for hire by a philosophical rhymer who had only heard of another sex" (quoted in Nethercot 101). Properly understood, however, the "mistress," to whom Cowley impassions his alternately dry and amorous sentiments in *The Mistress*, is his Muse or i*magination*. Despite the mistaken counterclaims of his detractors, Cowley does not privilege science over imagination; rather, he seeks to integrate poesis and empiricism at a time when others sought to divide them. Straddling his age with one foot resting precariously on the crumbling roof of Renaissance occultism, and the other imprinting the freshly poured foundation of science, Cowley's alchemical wooing exemplifies a fundamental technique of occult invention.

CHAPTER IV

ASTROLOGICAL REASONING, SYMBOLIC DUALITIES,

AND DRYDEN'S METHOD OF COMPOSITION

A. The Rhetoric of Astrology

1. Problems Pertaining to Astrological Scholarship

Astrology employs a remarkably cohesive method of combinatory heuresis. Based

on a geocentric chart of the sky as seen from a particular time and place—similar to a

sectioned circle that the American philosopher Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914) calls a

hypoicon diagram or "weathercock" (Vol. 2 274)—the astrological system depicts

various combinations of symbolic elements in dyadic relationship. Each relationship, as

an indexical semiotic identifier, yields a broad spectrum of interpretive values in virtually

limitless contexts, subject to a special type of symbolic reasoning. Claude Fischler, in *On

the Margin of The Visible: Sociology, the Esoteric, and the Occult*, describes astrology's

dual role historically as a discipline, linking ancient wisdom and mythological symbolism

to analogical thinking and the rise of modernity:

> Far from being a remnant of the age of witches which
> somehow or other found its way into the age of computers,
> astrology is closely linked to the advance of modernity. But
> it rests upon a mode of thought and a conception of the
> world in the deepest and most primitive recesses of the
> anthropos: *magic-analogical thought*, micro-macrocosmic
> conception (283, italics his).

In *Astrology and the Seventeenth-Century Mind*, twentieth-century scholar Ann

Geneva attempts to explain why more scholarly work has not been done on Astrology,

writing that "For all the contexts recently provided for astrology, almost no attempt has

been made to understand and analyze the internal mechanisms of the art itself […] as

124

opposed to its intellectual content" (3). Astrology's internal mechanism combines astronomy with rhetorical invention; its intellectual content consists of symbolisms and occult correspondences derived from observations of astronomical phenomena in relation to speculation and myth. Geneva suggests two factors for Astrology's scholarly shortcoming: first, astrology's technical complexity, which stands "at least as daunting as those of the 'hard' sciences," and offers far less academic cachet; and second, the "embarrassment factor," which prompts scholars to strike a "condescending pose" in relation to their periphery studies of astronomy's step-sister (Ibid).

2. A Hybrid Polysemic, Probability-Based Language

Securing a working understanding of astrology preparatory to examining its rhetorical foundations requires a two-pronged approach: one semiotic, the other semantic. Semiotically, astrology operates with signs expressed as geometrical patterns and glyphs. However, these signs become meaningful only when interpreted as symbols and tropes. In this sense, astrology constitutes a hybrid language, combining the polysemic, semantic richness of word-based languages such as English, and the algebraic variability of symbolic languages such as logic and mathematics. As Geneva observes, astrology occupies "the middle ground between the abstract symbolic system of classical mathematics and [the] common discourse" (269) which concerns rhetoricians. Ellen McCaffery articulates what sets the language of astrology apart from purely symbolic and word-based languages in *Astrology: Its History and Influence in the Western World*, noting that "with [astrological] symbols, there is an inner and outer meaning, [so that] what is easily comprehensible in, say, two or three symbols, to one who knows a *little* astrology, is more comprehensible to one who knows *more* astrology" (300). In short,

125

whereas a word signifies a limited number of *related meanings*, and a variable denotes

any number of *possible meanings*, an astrological symbol connotes a wide range of

probable meanings, in the manner of an enthymeme, given the range of interpretations to

which its unstated assumptions are subject.

For example, the meaning of the English word *cat*, which consists of the three

letter-glyphs "c," "a," and "t," can vary according to the type of cat intended, e.g.,

Siamese, Tiger, Lion—it can even refer to a 1940s jazz musician, or a tractor

manufacturer—but its essential meaning remains clear. By contrast, the astrological dyad

"mercury in Aquarius," which consists of two symbol-glyphs—one composed of a cross,

a circle, and a semicircle (☿), the other of two wavy lines (♒)—connotes concepts as

diverse as "independent thinking," "electronic commerce," or "space travel," depending

on the context of the matter under consideration. However, insofar as each symbol allows

for multiple meanings subject to various combinations, the dyad could also connote

"electronic thinking," "independent travel," or "space commerce." Robert Hand (1942-)

provides an example in *Horoscope Symbols* of the spectrum of probabilities indicated by

the planet Mars, which symbolizes—among other meanings—*aggression*. Hand notes

that, "if a woman receives a strong Mars influence, she may encounter strong,

domineering males. But she may also encounter domineering females, be domineering

herself, or encounter other entities that embody Mars energy" (23). The underlying

heuristic relies on a symbolic type of "fuzzy logic" that delights those who understand it,

and infuriates those unable, or unwilling, to learn it. Burke describes this type of

ambiguity as a natural outgrowth of analogical extension, observing that "such terms as

analysis, synthesis, classification, and ideality are to be viewed similarly" with respect to

one's intentions and interests (*Permanence* 106). For example,

> One fears fires or intends to make fires by the singling out
> of certain characters: as, say, that fire burns. But acids can
> also burn. Hence, one's interests in this matter enable him
> to analyze both fire and acids as having a burn-character,
> which is an *ideality*—and by it he may produce a synthesis,
> may give us a classification of events in accordance with
> their burn-character, despite the many important differences
> between these events in other respects. And when he
> changes the nature of his interests, or point of view, he will
> approach events with a new ideality, reclassifying them,
> putting things together that were different classes, and
> dividing things that had been together (Ibid, italics his).

Similarly, as twenty-first-century Uruguayan scholar Aldo Mazzucchelli points

out in "Astrology, Hermeneutics and Metaphorical Web," astrological symbols and dyad

meanings derive from classifications, divisions, and synthesis of myths as idealities,

extended, or "strung," together through analogy and invention. Interpreting an

astrological dyad consists of making or "winding" meaning into what the Ancient Greeks

called a twine (χορδή), then cutting and weaving it into a myth (μύθος). Astrology

constitutes a system "based on the experience gathered by its practitioners, […] with the

possibility of adjustment offered by the placing of its metaphors [in an astrological

chart]" (2000). In doing so, astrologers have "gradually built a metaphorical web and

refined its net to in turn refine the meanings it captures and formulates" (Ibid). Thus, for

Jung, "astrology represents the summation of all the psychological knowledge of

antiquity" (Wilhelm 192), a myth-based symbol set encompassing all mental faculties

and processes. Yet, as with other heuristic forms, astrological symbolism adapts itself to

any subject, and need not be viewed through the prism of any particular discipline.

3. The Astronomical and Phenomenological Symbol Set

　　To understand how authors have used astrological symbolism to generate fictional characters, plots, and themes rhetorically, we need a basic familiarity with the symbols. A representative set of dyadic relationships in an astrological chart include traditional symbol sets denoted by the terms "signs," "planets," "houses," and "aspects." A typical dyadic set involving these terms consists of a planet located in a sign and house forming an angular relationship with another planet, also located in a sign and house. A "sign" consists of an arbitrary 30-degree segment of the ecliptic (the apparent path of the sun) as envisioned from the earth. Named after the twelve most famous constellations—i.e., Aries, Taurus, Gemini, etc.—signs differ from those constellations in both size and location. The signs represent time periods of approximately 30 days, with the first day of spring, around March 21, designating astrology's first sign, Aries.

　　A "house," in the simplest sense, represents an arbitrary 30-degree fixed segment of the sky through which the constellations appear to move. The circle of signs and houses—which, from a geocentric perspective, surrounds the earth—consists of two concentric circles: the phenomenologically "moving" circle of signs revolving around the arbitrarily "fixed" circle of the houses. The third set of elements in these relationships, "planets" (placed in quotes here because astrologers include the Sun and the earth's Moon in this category), appear to revolve around the earth and "pass through" the 30-degree segments of the ecliptic, subdivided into signs and houses. In doing so, the planets form angular relationships, or "aspects," with other planets located elsewhere in the sky.

B. Astrological Invention

1. Astrological Symbols as Topics

Astrological symbols function heuristically as indexical signs of probable reasons—in the manner of enthymemes—rather than as causal triggers of events, traits, or situations. An astrologer's description of a compound dyadic relationship between two sets of symbols is an act of rhetorical invention, whereby the planets, signs, houses, and aspects serve as *topoi*, and their interrelations constitute tropes. The topics function in a more systematic way than topics in traditional rhetoric, due to their symbolic affinities with each other. Mazzucchelli characterizes them as

> webs, wefts, [or] groups of metaphors which organise
> themselves around every symbolic nucleus: [viz.,] 'signs',
> 'planets', 'houses', 'aspects.' [These symbols] form a
> centre, a nucleus that generates new meanings from the
> kinship shown by its associated metaphors, one which
> communicates to whom knows and applies the language a
> 'way of understanding how things are bound together',
> 'what has to do with what', [and this is] where the secret of
> a cohesive astrological system lies (2000).

Each of these terms function in a specific way. The *houses* connote various mundane areas of life, in the manner of *nouns*. For instance, the seventh house corresponds to partners, being opposite the first house of self; whereas, the tenth house, being opposite the fourth house of the home, represents one's career. The placement of the *signs* over these houses modifies their meaning, much like *adjectives*, so that Taurus on the seventh house would characterize one's partner in terms of that sign's meanings ("stubborn," "conservative," etc), and Aquarius on the tenth house would color one's career in terms of Aquarius characteristics ("progressive," "freedom-loving"). The

129

planets represent actions and energies in the manner of *verbs*; for example, Venus "attracts," whereas Mars, "pursues." Consequently, an astrologer might interpret or *invent* the meaning of "Venus conjunct Mars in Taurus in the Seventh House" as attraction (Venus) to an aggressive (Mars) but conservative (Taurus) partner (Seventh House).

Each dyadic relationship suggests numerous *probable* meanings within a valid range of interpretation, based on the symbolism of the respective planets, houses, signs, and aspects involved. Mazzucchelli presents this semantic variability as an organic characteristic of the art, explaining that "the main feature of [astrology as a] language is that it has been built, like every other human effort of representation, on the basis of threads that lead to the multiple meanings" (2000). The various relations between the symbols produces a vast number of possibilities, which increases exponentially in complexity and variety as the dyadic relationships compound. Pairings of signs and houses yields 576 possibilities (24 elements taken 2 at a time); adding planets produces 8,436 potential permutations; adding in aspects increases that number to 284,664,384. Each combination represents just one semantic probability. Taking into account the virtually unlimited universe of differing polysemic hermeneutic probabilities, each symbol represents myriad symbolic probabilities.

Therefore, as with an enthymeme, nothing logically "follows" from any such combination with any degree of determinateness or certainty; the meaning of each symbol set must be invented within the context of each chart, via the specification of probable interpretations from more generalized symbolic meanings. Consequently, as Dane Rudhyar (1895-1985) suggests in *Person-Centered Astrology*, "one should consider astrology first of all as a discipline of the mind, [which consists of] learning to see and to

130

understand all situations and all persons as wholes—that is, as patterns of interrelated and

interdependent factors which become meaningful only if they are consciously

apprehended in their structured totality" (Rudhyar 93). This requires an interpretation of

the underlying context as well: All astrological interpretations derive from combinations

of heuristically meaningful *topoi* within a predefined system.

As with other forms of occult invention, astrological heuresis deems the totality of

its *topoi* to be all-inclusive. Topics, as the symbolic elements of astrological reasoning,

comprise a self-contained universe. William Lilly (1602-1681), the most famous

seventeenth-century English astrologer, writes in *Christian Astrology*, that "There is

nothing pertaining to the life of man in the world, which in one way or other has not

relation to one of the twelve Houses of Heaven" (50). Every planet naturally belongs in a

particular sign and house, has a symbolic affinity with an aspect, and with one of the

twelve signs. These basic affinities stirred the literary imaginations of Early Modern

authors in the Occult Mode, such as John Dryden, who understood astrology well enough

to analogically extend meanings, substituting planets, houses, signs, and aspects for

characters, situations, locations, and conflicts.

2. Literature, Astrological Reasoning, and Vichian Myth-Making

Astrology provides a reverse analogical representation of how the elements of

literature—characters, settings, situations, and conflict—combine as heuristic tokens in

the development of themes and plots. Aristotle explains the process in his *Poetics* as a

metaphorical transfer of meaning, through "the application of a strange term either

transferred from the genus and applied to the species or from the species and applied to

the genus, or from one species to another or else by analogy" (1457b). Aristotle's theory

addresses literary transfer between genus and species as word concepts, but does not address the transfer of meaning between terms and polyvalent symbols via myth. Giambattista Vico's (1668-1744) "imaginative class concepts" (*New Science* 128: 403) offers a promising explanation of how astrological symbols carry and transfer meaning. Imaginative class concepts, as oral fables, predate writing and logical reasoning; according to Vico, they emerged in a "mute" period of human history, when symbols comprised a "mental language" (127: 401).

Astrological symbols parallel Vico's imaginative class concepts insofar as they derive from personification myths of "imagined bodies" interpreted as "divine substances" (127: 400). According to Vico, myth-making began with astrological reasoning, which he terms "poetic astronomy." Lacking a *logos*, "the first peoples wrote in the skies […] depicting the heroes and the heroic hieroglyphs [visible therein] with one group of stars rather than another, and in one part of the sky rather than another, and for severally placing in one planet rather than another the major gods by whose names the planets have since been called" (*New Science* 277: 729). The "group of stars" Vico references correspond to the astrological "signs" of astrologers, as described above, and the "parts of the sky" or those "regions, marked out by the augurs with their wands [which] were called temples of the sky" (123: 391) correspond to astrological houses.

Fables based on these first signs, being celestial, and thus universal, "had natural relations to the ideas" they expressed rather than to "the nature of the things [they] dealt with" (127:401). For example, the planet Jupiter, or Jove, represented the "king and *father* of [all] men and gods" (278: 730, italics mine), not by virtue of royalty or fatherhood, but simply by being the largest visible body in the sky. At the same time, and

without concern for contradiction, Jupiter was considered the *son* of the planet Saturn, known as Chronos to the Greeks. Chronos was the timekeeper, insofar as motion determines time, and the slowest-moving object denotes the longest duration of time, as with the hands of an analog clock. As original *Ur* signs, celestial *fabula* garnered wide acceptance, expressing "an univocal signification connoting a quality common to all their species and individuals" (128: 403). In short, ancient astrological myths constituted universal truths, a transcultural reality based on a *sensus communis* of the heavens.

With these primary fables, diverse mythologies began to emerge as "the allegories corresponding to" (128: 403) them through analogically extension of their symbolisms. Allegory, as Vico defines it, denotes "*diversiloquium,*" or that which constitutes the distinction between species and genus. Put another way, allegories "signify the diverse species [of myths] or the diverse individuals comprised under these [univocal] genera" of fables (Ibid, italics his). The predication of specific myths on generic fables constitutes Vico's "poetic logic," the literary precursor to classical logic, wherein a particular judgment is predicated on a universal judgment. The difference between poetic logic, which predicates myths on fables (producing tropes from symbols) and classical logic, which predicates minor terms on major terms (producing conclusions from premises), is abstraction. A natural sign, imbued with mythical meaning, becomes a symbol, susceptible to various interpretation, which ultimately leads to richer meaning. But meaning, once *abstracted* from the symbol or trope from which it derives, becomes an arbitrary sign. Consequently, as Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005) expresses so elegantly in his *Interpretation Theory, Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*, the earliest use of symbols

was "confined within the holy universe," for that which "impregnates everything and may be seen in the movement of the stars" (1998 74):

> This confined nature of symbols establishes the whole difference between symbol and metaphor. The latter is a free invention of discourse; the former is linked to the cosmos. We have come to an unyielding element, more uncompromising than that revealed by poetic experience. In the holy universe, the capacity to speak is founded on the capacity of the cosmos to signify. Consequently, the logic of meaning arises from the same structure of the holy universe. Its law is the law of correspondence between creation *in illo tempore* and the current order of natural appearances and human activities (1998: 74, italics his).

Astrological reasoning inevitably takes place in Ricoeur's "holy universe," where a biological, geocentric perspective "impregnates everything" with life and motivation through personification. Such personification lends itself to plot-making and storytelling, in combination with the shaping of perspectives and motives.

3. Personification, Perspective, and Motive

The personification of astrological symbols as *topoi* encompasses everything within "the current order of natural appearances and human activities," imbuing every object, plant, animal, microbe, and corpuscle with anthropomorphic meaning in accordance with "the law of correspondence" (Ibid). Consider the astronomical phenomenon of retrogradation, in which a planet appears to move backwards in the sky. Modern observers, equipped with the knowledge that all planets, including the earth, revolve around the sun at different velocities, comprehend retrogradation as a matter of relative perspective, comparable to the apparent backward movement of buildings as viewed from a moving train. But to pre-rational humanity, reliant on poetic logic, the retrograde planet—imbued with life and a personality—must have a *motive* for reversing its course.

134

So when Mars, the fiery red warrior, seemingly passes by Venus, the lover, and then reverses his course, he must be courting her.

Within the geocentric astrological paradigm, every such relation between planets, signs, and houses discloses symbolic poetic meaning. For instance, if a planet appears opposite another from the perspective of the earth, it must be confronting it; if a male planet such as Jupiter appears near, or conjunct, a female planet such as the moon (known not to be his wife), he must be having an affair, and so on. These motivations and personifications drive the plots of generic celestial fables, the basis of Greek and Roman mythology. Accordingly, Vico tells us, "[pre-rational] man in his ignorance makes himself the rule [or measure] of the universe" (130: 405). The poetic logic of astrology renders such fables specific enough for astrologers to apply them interpretatively to the affairs of humans.

As with Vico's poetic logic, astrology predicates general phenomena on specific phenomena. But rather than subsuming a diversity of myths under a set of archetypal fables, astrology subsumes an array of mundane relations under a set of symbolic configurations. This subsumption operates within the primary tenant of Hermeticism, described earlier as the Theory of Correspondence, viz., "as above, so below." The theory states that every observable phenomenon in the macrocosm expresses a truth in relation to the microcosm by way of analogy. In Astrology, mundane objects, creatures, and their myriad relations, predicate mythological meaning subsumed from fables as imaginative class concepts through *a reversal of the process*, yielding what might be called *pragmatic class concepts*, or rules. As Burke notes, when such rules, as "terministic interrelationships, are embodied in the narrative style (involving acts, images and

personalities), an irreversibility of the [story] sequence" results (Religion 182). This sense of inevitability creates "the possibility of a story so self-consistent in structure that an analyst could, ideally, begin at the end and deductively 'prophesy' what earlier developments must have taken place, for things to culminate as they did" (Ibid).

As Vico explains, when man does not understand something, he formulates rules by beginning at the end he knows best, and thereby "makes them out of himself." Once he becomes secure in his understanding of the things he has made, he "*becomes them* by transforming himself into them" (Ibid, italics mine). In other words, having made himself the measure of all things he does not understand, he then attempts to understand himself in relation to the things he has already measured. For example, having trimmed a stick from nature to the size of his foot, he then uses that stick to measure the rest of himself in relation to the foot-measured stick. However, a *metaphorical measurement* such as this differs significantly from an *empirical measurement*, which comes much later, when quantitative concepts such as "a foot" become standardized. A metaphorical foot-length ruler, relative to the foot-size of the person doing the measuring, does *not* consistently measure twelve inches; rather, it suggests a more personalized—and is many ways, more meaningful—approximation. Accordingly, conclusions arrived at through poetic logic, such as those derived from astrological reasoning, can never serve precise ends or withstand the scrutiny of scientific standards. At the same time, however, the inherent ambiguity of astrological symbols renders them ideal tools for narrative creation, in which similar stories can be endlessly retold, relocated, and refashioned with different plots, different settings, and different themes.

C. Astrology as Symbolic Translation

1. Poetry, Astrology, and Symbolic Translation

Authors and astrologers both employ tropes in their praxis of poetic logic, but only astrology does so by necessity. The author of prose fiction may put tropes in the mouth of a character, use them to articulate the essence of a motif, or establish a tone of aesthetic elegance, but the story itself carries the author's message. Many language scholars before (and since) Vico view tropes as extraneous rhetorical flowers rather than vital branches of invention. By contrast, Vico insists that the first poetic nations, which communicated primarily through astronomical symbolism, employed tropes as "necessary modes of expression" (131:409). In fact, tropes "became figurative [only] when, with the further development of the human mind, words were invented which signified abstract forms and genera comprising their species or relating parts with their wholes" (Ibid). Thus, as Geneva notes, the astrologer's reliance on unspecific tropes led natural philosophers to the inaccurate "conclusion that astrology's destiny is related to poetry" (273):

> This conflict was echoed in the ferment of mid-seventeenth century England concerning the nature of language, and specifically in the quest for the development of a universal character and philosophical language. Astrologers were aware of translating from the celestial language of the Creator into human discourse. The relationship between these linguistic spheres was central to debates on the nature of language in the seventeenth century (272).

Most non-astrologers agree with Geneva that the "cross-rip which developed between an innate impulse to conceal and a demystifying effort to reveal ultimately engulfed astrology" (Ibid), dooming it to the Plain Language scrapheap of symbolic languages. Nonetheless, certain seventeenth-century astrologer-poets, such as John Dryden,

continued to use astrology, in conjunction with the equally discredited practice of invention, to compose comedic dramas.

2. Metaphorical and Symbolic Modes of Translation

In the seventeenth century, authors who employed astrological terms did so in two distinct modes of translation—metaphorical and symbolic—which, as Geneva notes, sometimes "occur in works by the same writer with little apparent confusion between the two modes" (264). Astrological *metaphors* function generically as instances of generalized figuration, whereas astrological *symbols* communicate specific characteristics of the persons, places, or situations they reference. Two examples, one representative of each mode, will demonstrate the distinction. Milton's description of the civil war in heaven, in terms of planets in malign aspect in *Paradise Lost*, exemplifies the metaphorical mode, with the planets representing Christ and Satan. The metaphors reveal nothing new about the religious characters, merely reiterate their inherent conflict:

> Among the constellations war were sprung
> Two planets rushing from aspect malign
> Of fiercest opposition in mid sky,
> Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound (VI: 313).

Milton's allusion to the "constellations" indicates that the "war" between Christ and Satan, symbolized by the "Two planets," takes place in heaven, rather than on earth. The nature of their "aspect," an "opposition," is "malign" in accordance with their opposing ideologies. Therefore, Milton characterizes it as the "fiercest" opposition, insofar as the disagreement between Christ and Satan it absolute. This reveals the astrological aspect as exact, not a degree more or less than 180 degrees. However, the planets are depicted as "rushing from" the aspect to avoid a premature collision of their "spheres," which would produce "jarring" consequences and "confound" their ultimate battle.

138

In illustration of the symbolic mode, consider the Prologue to Dryden's *The Wild Gallant*, a comedy published in 1663, in which he depicts two astrologers reviewing a chart "drawn for the hour and day [so as to] inquire [into] the fortune of his play" (4). The symbolic language the astrologers employ in their analysis illustrates both its highly technical nature and Dryden's intimate familiarity with its nuances:

> The curtain drawn discovers two Astrologers;
> The prologue is presented to them.
>
> 1 Ast. reads, A figure of the heavenly bodies in their
>   several Apartments, *Feb.* the *5th*, half-an-
>   hour after three afternoon, from whence you
>   are to judge the success of a new play, called
>   the *Wild Gallant*.
> 2 Ast. *Who must judge of it, we, or these gentlemen?*
>   *We'll not meddle with it, so tell your poet.*
>   *Here are, in this house, the ablest*
>   *mathematicians in* Europe *for his purpose.*
>   *They will resolve the question, ere they part.*
> 1 Ast: *Yet let us judge it by the rules of art;*
>   *First* Jupiter, *the ascendant's* Lord *disgraced,*
>   *In the twelfth house, and near grim Saturn*
>   *placed. Denote short life unto the play—*
> 2 Ast: *—Jove yet,*
>   *In his apartment* Sagitary, set
>   *Under his own roof, cannot take much wrong.*
> 1 Ast: *Why then the life's not very short, nor long;*
> 2 Ast: *The luck not very good, nor very ill*;
> Prolo: *That is to say, 'tis as 'tis taken still.*
> 1 Ast: *But, brother,* Ptolemy *the learned says,*
>   *'Tis the fifth house from whence we judge of*
>   *plays.*
>   Venus, *the lady of that house, I find*
>   *Is Peregrine; your play is ill-designed;*
>   *It should have been but one continued song,*
>   *Or, at the least, a dance of three hours long.*
> 2 Ast: *But yet the greatest mischief does remain,*
>   *The twelfth apartment bears the* Lord of
>   Spain;
>   *Whence I conclude, it is your author's lot,*
>   *To be endangered by a* Spanish Plot.
>   (Ibid, italics his).

Note, first, the stage directions for the first astrologer (First Astrl. reads.), which depict him as *reading* the symbols of an astrological chart as if they were actual words. In his opening line, the astrologer describes the chart as "A figure of the heavenly bodies in their several Apartments" (4: 13-14). Dryden uses the terms "figure" and "scheme" as synonyms for chart. The "heavenly bodies" reference the planets, while the "several Apartments" denote the signs rather than the houses, as some commentators have assumed, given the distinction the astrologers make between "Apartment" and "House" a few lines later. The second astrologer states that they are "the ablest mathematicians in Europe." According to William Bradford Gardner, the seventeenth-century term "mathematician" doubled as "a familiar synonym for astrologers in all European languages" (*Prologues and Epilogues* 188).

In proposing to judge the chart "by the *rules* of the Art," the first astrologer affirms Vico's description of astrology as a form of poetic logic, operating on the basis of subsumption and predication, not simply wild guesses. Having framed the purview and parameters of their "reading," the astrologers proceed to judge the probable fate of the play by synthesizing the symbols of the chart's most salient elements. Significantly, the narrator of the Prologue comprehends their judgments without any further translation, as evidenced by his response, and we can safely assume that many in Dryden's audience understood as well, given Lilly's phenomenal popularity. The same cannot be said of modern readers, however, for whom the humorous meaning would be lost without a fairly detailed interpretation.

In short, the first astrologer concludes that the outlook for *The Wild Gallant* does not bode well. But astrology is a form of *discourse*, so the question is far from settled. In

counterpoint to the first astrologer's remarks, the second astrologer argues that the chart

shows signs of success. After much debate, both agree that it is the "Author's lot, To be

endangered by a Spanish Plot" (5: 36-39). This statement presents an intriguing puzzle,

solvable only by those with knowledge of astrology and the plays that happened to be

running contemporaneously with the *Wild Gallant*. When the King's Theater first staged

the *Wild Gallant* on February 5, 1663, it followed Sir Samuel Tuke's (1633-1703) *The*

Adventures of Five Hours, a "Spanish plot" derived from Moliere and others, which

appeared just a few weeks earlier.

Paul M. S. Hopkins reports that Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) saw both plays and

"was as unhappy with [*Wild Gallant*] as he was delighted with *The Adventures*, writing

that it was 'ill-acted, so poor a thing as I ever saw in my life almost. The King did not

seem pleased at all'" (26). Dryden seems to have known the play would flop, but rather

than acknowledging his deficiencies in the matter, he cleverly employs fictional

astrologers to blame his secret twelfth-house enemies, the Spanish influences of a

competing play. Nonetheless, Dryden playfully insists that his British audience has a

patriotic duty to accept and appreciate the *Gallant,* warts and all:

> Not, though supply'd with all the wealth of Spain:
> This Play is English, and the growth of your own;
> As such it yields to English Plays alone.
> [The author] could have wish'd it better for your sakes;
> But that in Plays he finds you love mistakes:
> Besides he thought it was in vain to mend
> What you are bound in honour to defend,
> That English Wit (how e'r despis'd by some)
> Like English Valour Still may overcome.

D. John Dryden, Astrologer

Numerous writers have confirmed Dryden's status as an astrologer, including Dr. Johnson, Mark Van Doren (1894-1972), Gardner, Kenneth Young, and Edmond Malone. As *prima facie* evidence, nearly all cite a letter dated September 3, 1697, addressed to Dryden's son, Henry Erasmus, in Rome. In the letter, found among the Oxford papers of the English Astrologer and Alchemist Elias Ashmole (1617-1692), Dryden astrologically predicts the recovery of his eldest son, Charles, who had become dizzy and fallen from a ruined tower on the grounds of the Vatican:

> Towards the latter end of this moneth [sic], September,
> Charles will begin to recover his perfect health, according
> to his Nativity, which casting it my self, I am sure is true, &
> all things hetherto have happened accordingly to the very
> time that I predicted them" (Quoted in Gardner 1950 506).

Gardner calls the letter "Conclusive proof that Dryden actually believed in astrology," noting that his "allusions to judicial astrology in both his verse and prose writings extend from the date of his first published poem, 'Upon the death of the Lord Hastings,' in 1649 to […] the Fables, published in 1700, the year of his death, and thus indicate a life-long interest in the subject" (506). Likewise, Johnson confirms Dryden's interest in astrology in his *Lives of the Poets,* writing that,

> [Dryden] put great faith in the prognostications of judicial
> astrology. In the appendix to the *Life of Congreve* is a
> narrative of some of his predictions wonderfully fulfilled.
> […] He has elsewhere shown his attention to the planetary
> powers; and in his Preface to his *Fables*, Dryden has
> endeavored obliquely to justify his superstition, by
> attributing the same to some of the ancients. The letter,
> added to his narrative, leaves no doubt of his notions, or
> practice (VII: 327).

In the passage Johnson refers to from the Preface to the *Fables*, Dryden justifies

his practice of astrology as a poet and author, noting that "Chaucer was likewise an

astrologer, as were Virgil, Horace, Persius, and Manilius" (B3).Young, who vacillates at

times on the extent of Dryden's acceptance of astrology, nonetheless insists that, "For

Dryden, astrology was a science, and therefore quite separate from his religion" (210).

Edmond Malone, a late eighteenth-century biographer of Dryden, quotes the poet

Elisabeth Thomas's version of his prediction regarding Charles' health, and her opinion

that "As [Dryden] was a Man of versatile Genius, he took Delight in Judicial Astrology"

(Malone 217). Most telling, perhaps, Charles Wilson reprints a letter from Dryden's wife,

Lady Elizabeth Howard, the sister of Sir Robert Howard, in his *Memoirs of the Life,*

Writings, and Amours of William Congreve, Esq., in which she recounts Dryden's use of

astrology at the birth of their first son, Charles. It depicts the remarkable role astrology

played in Dryden's philosophy of life, meriting reproduction *in extenso*:

> When I was in labour of Charles, Mr. Dryden being told it
> was decent to withdraw, laid his Watch on the Table,
> begging one of the Ladies, then present, in a most solemn
> Manner, to take an exact Notice of the very Minute when
> the Child was born: Which she did, and acquainted him
> therewith. This pass'd without any singular Notice; many
> Fathers having had such a fancy, without any farther
> Thought. But about a Week after, when I was pretty hearty,
> he comes into my Room, My Dear, says he, you little think
> what I have been doing this Morning: nor ever shall, said I,
> unless you will be so good to inform me. Why then, cry'd
> he, He was born of an evil Hour; Jupiter, Venus, and the
> Sun, were all under the Earth, and the Lord of his
> Ascendant afflicted by a hateful Square of Mars and Saturn.
> If he lives to arrive at his eighth year, he will go near to die
> a violent Death on his very BirthDay, but if he should
> escape, as I see but small Hopes, he will in his 23rd year be
> under the very same evil Direction. And if he should, which
> seems almost impossible, escape that also, the 33rd and
> 34th year is—I fear I interrupted him here, O! Mr. Dryden,

what is this you tell me? My Blood runs cold at your fatal
Speech, recall it, I beseech you. Shall my Dryden Boy, be
doom'd to so hard a Fate? Poor Innocent, what has thou
done? No; I will fold thee in my Arms, and if thou must
fall, we will both perish together. A Flood of Tears put a
stop to my Speech, and thro' Mr. Dryden's comfortable
Persuasions, and the Distance of Time, I began to be a little
appeased, but always kept the fatal Period in my Mind
(Wilson 24-25, capitalizations his).

Whether due to Dryden's skill as an astrologer, pure luck, or a self-fulfilling

mindset on the part of Charles Dryden and his parents, the elder Dryden's

prognostications proved prescient. According to Lady Elizabeth's account, near the

young Dryden's eighth birthday, when she wanted to take Charles with her to spend the

summer vacation with her Uncle Mourdant, father Dryden insisted on taking the younger

Dryden with him to see his brother-in-law, the Earl of Berkshire. The Earl had planned a

hunting trip, but John, mindful of his own prediction of the astrological significations of

danger on his son's eighth birthday, insisted that his son stay at the Earl's residence,

assigning him a "double Exercise in the Latin tongue" to keep him from harm's way.

Nevertheless, while John was away hunting, a stag approached the house and alarmed the

Earl's servants, one of whom took Charles by the hand to go out and see what happened.

Dogs provoked the stag into leaping over the court wall and onto Charles, and young

Dryden spent six weeks in critical condition before recovering. Then, on Charles's

twenty-third birthday, the above-referenced incident involving his fall from a tower

occurred in Rome; again he recovered, but remained sickly thereafter. Finally, on his

thirty-third birthday, Charles, who had swum across the Thames twice with a friend,

drowned upon returning for a third time, fulfilling his father's astrological prediction

regarding his untimely end (Ibid 25-28).

Gardner concludes that "Dryden's belief in astrology has caused him to be severely criticized" (520), fulfilling Dr. Johnson's prediction that it would "do him no honour in the present age [that] he put great confidence in the prognostications of judicial astrology" (Hill 409). For Young, however, the fact that Dryden "knew William Lilly, the best known astrologer of his time," had left "horoscopes he cast for his sons," and accurately "forecast the death of a servingman at a relative's house" (37) makes him all the more interesting as a literary figure. Proposing that "All the mysterious side of [Dryden's] life and being […] was channeled off into his study of astrology" (16), Young suggests that "Astrology […] represents what we might call the romantic, and suppressed side of Dryden's nature" (37); all the more interesting, given the time in which he lived:

> There is another key to Dryden worth mentioning here: the fact that not only have ideas vastly changed since the seventeenth century, but also the *way* of thinking. The modes of scholasticism were still in operation and are visible in Dryden's work from the first to last, although he was a member of the Royal Society. One of the results of this was that the men of the seventeenth century, like the Elizabethans, could be at once astrologers (as Dryden was) and believers in experimental science, seriously interested in religious questions and at the same time keepers of mistresses and lovers of bawdy plays (xvi, italics his).

Nonetheless, Lady Elizabeth writes, in the same letter quoted above, that "Mr. Dryden, either through fear of being thought superstitious, or thinking it a science beneath his Study, was extremely cautious in letting any one know that he was a Dabler in astrology" (222). Likewise, Thomas tells Malone, "Notwithstanding Mr. Dryden was a great Master of that Branch of Astronomy call'd Judicial Astrology, there were very few, scarce any, the most intimate of his Friends, who knew of his Amusements that Way, except his own family" (217). Ultimately, Dryden may have been wise in not advertising

his penchant for casting charts, given the ridicule Dryden's most famous cousin, Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), subjected the astrologer John Partridge (1644-1714) to in 1708. In any case, Scholars who take into account Dryden's use of astrology put themselves in a better position to understand his work, not only in terms of the astrological allusions peppered throughout his poetry, prose, and translations, but also—and especially—with regard to his methods of composition.

E. Astrology as a Method of Literary Composition

As an author whose works include more translations, adaptations, and commentaries than original poems and plays, Dryden's essential genius consists in combining, reworking, and otherwise inventing new twists and perspectives on existing works. Far from marking him as an imitator—or, as Gerard Langbaine (1656-1692) mistakenly claims, a plagiarizer—Dryden stands as an innovator of new methods of adaptation, and a refiner of old forms. Widely acknowledged for having developed, along with Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery (1621-1679), the heroic play into "a new species of dramatic composition" (Clark 1929 70), Dryden deserves equal, if not more, credit for his development of humorous (as opposed to knowing or "biting") wit in his comedies.

In explicating Dryden's use of astrological invention as a method of literary composition, I have chosen *An Evening's Love, or The Mock-Astrologer*, as a representative text. First performed before Charles II and Queen Catherine by the King's Company at the Theatre Royal on Bridges Street, London, on Friday, 12 June 1668, the comedy was published in 1671 by Henry Herringman (1628-1704). Ironically, despite its name, the play has little to do with astrology; yet, it showcases Dryden's use of astrology as a heuristic tool. As perhaps the only Early Modern author to bring a truly practical and

146

nuanced knowledge of astrology to the process of literary creation, Dryden represents the master, if not the originator, of this obscure method of invention. Insofar as his method involves the rearrangement and reconfiguration of existing plots and texts, we begin by considering some of the sources and implications of his borrowings.

1. Dryden's Borrowings

In composing *An Evening's Love*, Dryden drew heavily on existing works as part and parcel of its innovation. But while he employed similar methods in composing his comedies as he had with his heroic dramas, they met with differing receptions. *The Indian Emperour*, *A Conquest of Granada*, and *The Indian Queen* all drew high praise for combining traditional epic tragedy with Orrery's heroic couplets in the creation of a new pseudo-epic language. According to William Clark in "The Sources of the Restoration Heroic Play," they elicited claims that Dryden had plagiarized the romances of the French novelist-dramatist Gauthier de Costes, Seigneur de la Calprenède (1610-1663) (58).

The accusations paled in comparison with those leveled at Dryden for his borrowings in *An Evening's Love*. Charges of plagiarism regarding *An Evening's Love* appear to have emerged after Pepys and his wife saw the play performed on June 20, 1668, in London, eight days after its opening. Already troubled by the play's bawdiness, Pepys writes that his wife noticed parallels with Madeleine de Scudéry's (1607-1701) *Ibrahim, ou l'Illustre Bassa*. Langbaine, far from being mollifed by Dryden's acknowledgement in the preface that he was indebted to Thomas Corneille's *Le Feint Astrologue,* pilloried Dryden for borrowing readily from Mollière's *Dépit amoreux* and *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, Quinault's *L'Amant Indiscreet,* and several others.

Clark maintains that Dryden did not borrow so much as fuse "the materials drawn from various sources, mainly alien, with an originality in imagination and in expression which set upon their compositions the unmistakable [English] national imprint" (63). George Robert Guffey, the play's textual editor in Dryden's *Works,* mediates the defense and criticism productively, suggesting that "The important question to ask about all this borrowing is whether Dryden succeeded in blending such disparate material into a unified comedy" (441). Guffey's answer identifies the underlying basis of his invention, the artful reconciliatory revision of oppositions and contrasts, observing that "no one but a critic who has approached *An Evening's Love* through its various sources can sense a disparity of styles" (Ibid) in the final product.

Dryden's best defense may be that he seems to have anticipated the criticism and accusations, boasting in the Prologue that, "I shall but laugh at them hereafter, who accuse me with so little reason; and withall condemn their dulness" (213). Indeed, Dryden invites his readers to read the play side-by-side with his sources, noting, "What I have perform'd in this will best appear by comparing it with those: you will see that I rejected some adventures which I judg'd were not divertising: that I have heightened those which I have chosen, and that I have added others which were neither in the French nor Spanish" (*Works*, X: 211). An examination of Dryden's imaginative fusion, reminiscent of Dürer's iconographic fusion, shows this to be the case, answering the charges of plagiarism, and highlighting Dryden's deployment of wit and imagination through astrological reasoning in his method of heuresis.

2. Redefinition of Wit as a Field of Reconciliation

Dryden's method of reconciling the disparate styles of various plot borrowings

showcases his astrological method of heuresis, comprised in part by an innovative

application of wit formulated not long before he wrote *An Evening's Love*, and in part by

his development of astrological dualities. Dryden's conception of wit, in his substitution

of characters and recombinatory plotting, marks a significant contrast to previous

conceptions in relation to style and figures. He inherits as his starting point, the wit of

Robert Davenport (1623-1639) and Cowley, which he develops in relation to the

rhetorical lineage of two other Englishmen, sixteenth-century rhetorician Thomas Wilson

(1524-1581) and seventeenth-century philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). As John

M. Aden notes in "Dryden and the Imagination: The First Phase," Davenport and Cowley

characterized wit primarily by delineating *what it is not*. Davenport insists that wit is not

"the Musick of words," not "Conceits," not "agnominations," not "alike tinkling of

words," nor the "grave telling of wonderful things" (32). Likewise, Cowley, who

attributed wit in a general way to "genius," devoted much of his "Ode of Wit," to

defining wit in terms of what "'Tis not" :

> 'Tis not to force some lifeless Verses meet
> > With their five gouty feet. […]
> 'Tis not when two like words make up one noise ;
> > Jests for Dutch Men, and English Boys. […]
> 'Tis not such Lines as almost crack the Stage
> > When Bajazet begins to rage.
> Nor a tall Meta'phor in the Bombast way,
> Nor the dry chips of short lung`d Seneca.
> > Nor upon all things to obtrude
> > And force some odd Similitude (*Poems* 18).

Dryden, unlike his immediate predecessors and contemporaries, attempts to define

wit in positive terms, answering and countering Cowley's well-articulated question—

"What is it then, which like the Power Divine / We only can by Negatives define?"—in terms of theory. As Lillian Feder observes, "Dryden was struggling [in his 1649 elegy, "Upon the Death of Lord Hastings,"] with two chief influences: the metaphysical, which he found in Donne and Cowley, and the Ciceronian, to which his poetic gifts were far better suited" (1273). By 1667, one year before writing *An Evening's Love,* Dryden colorfully articulated the distinction of the metaphysical and rhetorical modes of wit in his dedicatory preface to *Annus Mirabilis,*" identifying wit with the faculty of imagination in conjunction with memory as the storage place of *topoi*:

> The composition of all poems is, or ought to be, of wit, and
> wit in the poet, or wit writing, (if you will give me leave to
> use a school distinction) is no other than the faculty of
> imagination in the writer, which, like a nimble spaniel,
> beats over and ranges through the field of memory, till it
> springs the quarry it hunts after; or without metaphor,
> which searches over all the memory, for the species or
> ideas of those things which it designs to represent" (26).

Rather than associating wit with figures, tropes, or other literary devices, Dryden identifies it as a free-ranging, exploratory way of thinking. In "John Dryden's Use of Classical Rhetoric," Feder notes that Dryden "uses the term "invention" as Cicero and Quintilian use *inventio*: "Whereas it is true that the word had been applied to poetry long before Dryden used it, it is significant that Dryden, unlike medieval and Renaissance authorities, associates *inventio* with thought rather than with style" (1267). In particular, Dryden employs an effective, if unoriginal trope—that of a hunting dog—to make an original point, which few scholars seem to have picked up on.

In selecting the image of a "nimble spaniel" Dryden aligns wit with a familiar metaphor of composition. He was surely aware, for instance, of Robert Burton's (1577-1640) 1621 description of "running wit" in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, as "a ranging

spaniel, that barkes at every bird it sees, leaving his game" (13). And no doubt, Dryden

had read the pertinent passage in *Leviathan* (published 1651) in which Hobbes suggests

that "the consequence or train of imaginations" operates "in the same manner as "a

spaniel ranges the field, till he finds the scent" (3: 13-15). Karl Josef Höltgen catalogs

many such passages in his "Clever Dogs and Nimble Spaniels: on the Iconography of

Logic, Invention, and Imagination" (2000); however, as with other commentators who

cite Dryden's association of a spaniel with wit in passing, Höltgen focuses on the role of

the *dog* rather than that of the *field*. As we examine the inner working's of Dryden's

astrological method of invention, we find that the emphasis in the comparison he makes

ought to be placed on "the field of memory" rather the "nimble spaniel."

Two sixteenth-century references help us frame the role of the "field" in relation to

the "nimble spaniel" as Dryden conceives them: one in terms of rhetorical invention, the

other from the standpoint of poetry. Historians of heuresis will recognize the parallels

between Dryden's canine-in-a-field imagery and Wilson's vivid Old English description

of commonplaces in *The Rule of Reason* (1551), in which Wilson likens the use of *topoi*

to the "places" a hunter searches for a hare:

> A Place is the restyng corner of an argument, or els a marke
> whiche giueth warnyng to our memory what we maie
> speake probablie, either in one parte, or the other, upon all
> causes that fall in question. Those that be good hare finders
> will sone finde the hare by her fourme. For when they se
> the grounde beaten flatte round aboute, and faire to the
> sight: thei haue a narrow gesse by al likelihod that the hare
> was there a litle before. [...] So he that will take profite in
> this parte of logique, must be like a hunter, and learne by
> labour to knowe the boroughes. For these places be nothyng
> els but couertes or boroughes, wherein if any one serche
> diligentlie, he maie fynde game at pleasure... Therfore if
> any one will do good in this kynde, he must go from place
> to place, and by serching euery borough, he shall haue his

purpose undoubtedlie in moste part of them if not
in all (sig. J5v-J6r).

For Wilson, the nondescript hunter plays a secondary role, whereas the particulars

of the field, or "grounde," which has been "beaten flatte round aboute," merits careful

description. In it, "if any one serche diligentlie, he maie fynde […] by serching euery

borough […] his purpose undoubtedlie in moste part of them if not all" (Ibid). Thirty-two

years later, Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), in his 1583 *A Defence of Poesy*, extends

Wilson's concept of the field from the ground to the outermost bounds of the universe:

> Only the poet, disdaining to be tied to any such subjection,
> lifted up with the vigor of his own invention, doth grow, in
> effect, into another nature, in making things either better
> than nature brings forth, or, quite anew, forms such as never
> were in nature, as the heroes, demi-gods, cyclops, chimeras,
> furies, and such like; so as he goes hand in hand with nature,
> not enclosed within the narrow warrant of her gifts, but
> freely ranging within the *zodiac* of his own wit. Nature
> never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets
> have done; neither with pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-
> smelling flowers, nor whatsoever else may make the too-
> much-loved earth more lovely; her world is brazen, the poets
> only deliver a golden (13, italics mine).

Note Sidney's reference to the poet's faculty of invention as "freely ranging within

the *zodiac* of his own wit." This astrological reference to the ecliptic in the context of wit

and invention would not have escaped Dryden, who understood astrological symbolism

as the basis of its primary inventive purpose—that of prognostication and prediction—

particularly with regard to romantic love. Dryden's use of wit in repartee between his

character pairings in *An Evening's Love,* aligns their astrological symbolism with a field

of image patterns extending throughout the play as analogies of coupling; especially,

through dualities of war and peace and of hawking and hunting. Guffey identifies the

function of these couplings as providing the "unifying element[s] in the play, drawing

152

together the disparate strains of the plot: the problem of matching two English wits with two Spanish ladies and the story of the false astrologer" (450). In keeping with this coupling, Dryden establishes the heuristic tenor of the play in the Prologue, comparing the creative act of composition, or poetic begetting, to sex:

> WHEN first our Poet set himself to write,
> Like a young Bridegroom on his Wedding-night
> He layd about him, and did so bestir him,
> His Muse could never lye in quiet for him.
> (Prologue, *Works*, X: 214)

We find that Dryden's primary "field," as the range of his invention in *An Evening's Love,* consists of his assortment of characters he borrows and the astrological symbolism he assigns to them in crafting new themes and plots. The interactions between these elements emerge as dualities from their symbolic relatedness. As Ruth Salvaggio notes in *Dryden's Dualities*, "There is nothing unusual about finding double structures in Dryden. He loved debate and discourse, and his closed couplet verse naturally lent itself to parallels and juxtapositions of language" (7). Given Dryden's astrological background, which indelibly permeates his thinking, the dualities of *An Evening's Love* can be traced to his selection of planetary pairs, which he juxtaposed in weaving the story.

3. Dryden's Composition Method in *An Evening's Love*

As a method of composition, astrological invention applies astrological reasoning to traditional literary techniques in three primary stages: 1) translating characters, situations, and plots into astrological symbols; 2) rearranging and juxtaposing those symbols in terms of their derived astrological meanings; and 3) translating the astrological symbols back into their respective story elements. The astrological symbols constitute the heuristic *topoi* of his composition method, in which he "woos" both sources

and his audience, the dual "lovers" of his plays. The astrological ratios of the characters'

symbolisms reflect their intrinsic relation to the story's development; hence, Guffey

insists that Dryden's use of astrological symbolism is "clearly connected with the central

plot of the play" (451). Moreover, in keeping with the enthymematic relation of

Dryden's theory of wit in relation to a "field" of interaction, the relations, as unstated

assumptions, stand deducible from the circumstances in which the characters express

their roles and personalities.

a. Sources as Mistresses and Lovers

Metaphorically, Dryden's sources constitute the foreign "mistresses" he

figuratively makes love to in hopes of improving his domestic marriage with the audience

of the play. As Kramer notes, the foundations of this odd metaphor, wherein the

playwright, symbolized by a married man, engages in extramarital affairs to enhance his

sex life with his wife, symbolic of his own plays, requires that "Writing, reading, and sex,

[be] rendered interchangeable" (66). Specifically, in the Prologue and Epilogue of *An

Evening's Love*, writing and reading as sex acts "are the means to represent and

understand the actions depicted in the play, and are signs for one another" (Ibid). The

Prologue highlights the relation of a complacent husband to his wayward wife, or of

Dryden to his audience; the Epilogue depicts that of the unfaithful lover to his mistresses,

or of Dryden to his sources. This idea of dual lovers and infidelity carries over to his

three male-female character pairs, reflecting not only the Mars-Venus duality, but also

the fundamental male-female dichotomy that permeates astrological symbolism.

Within these contexts, as Guffey observes, "The relations of the wife-audience are

conveyed by suggestions of movement, weight, orgasm, and detumescence, sometimes in

traditional double entendres, sometimes in direct description of sexual intercourse" (449). In short, Dryden seeks to assure us that the affairs he enjoyed with his overseas sources have only made him a better lover at "home," that congress with his English audience has been improved by what he learned in congress with his foreign sources. Ordinarily, such justifications might be deemed secondary to the main thrust of the play, in keeping with Will Durant's (1885-1981) assessment that "The one basic idea in these [Restoration] comedies is that adultery is the main purpose and most heroic business of life" (315). But Durant also states that "Their ideal man is described in Dryden's *Mock Astrologer* as 'a gentleman, a man about town, one that wears good clothes, eats, drinks, and wenches sufficiently'" (Ibid) with a variety of lovers. Dryden chooses his lovers—his sources, situations, and characters—strategically to fulfill the comedic requirement of adultery in the play through strategic pairing of planets and signs.

Elsewhere in the preface, Dryden explains that his new concept of invention calls for each source "to be alter'd, and inlarg'd, with new persons, accidents, and designs, which will almost make it new" (*Works*, X: 212). As Richard Law explains, he achieves this end through "juxtaposed characters whose pronouncements and actions represent diverse points of view in opposition to one another," creating "coordinated incidents, characters, and discourses according to significant schemes" (396). Dryden calls such juxtaposition "the principle employment of the poet; as being the largest *field* of fancy, which is the principal quality requir'd him" (Ibid, italics mine). He associates the process with what the Ancient Greeks called a *poiétés* (ποιητής), or "maker-doer," rather than a simple poet. Accordingly, Dryden views himself as a poet-doer, or playwright-actor, in the larger play of literary creation, fathering progeny plays from productive scraps of

155

scraps, just as Jehova creates Adam as a progeny of dust, the earth representing the most

productive scrap material of the universe. The invention of new stories and characters

from preexisting scraps upholds Dryden's notion of wit, described in the preface to *Annus*

Mirabilis, as "the delightful imaging of persons, actions, passions or things" (Walker 26)

through juxtaposition and the recombination of selected source remnants.

These character remnants, as *topoi*, regulate the course of Dryden's invention,

allowing him to focus on their interaction, rather than the creation of an original plot from

scratch. In his dedication to Orrery's *The Rival Ladies*, Dryden suggests "that which most

regulates the fancy, and gives the judgment its busiest employment, is like[ly] to bring

forth the richest and clearest thoughts" (*Works*, VIII: 101). As Aden notes, we begin to

understand his method when we "begin to consider the mutations that take place as

Dryden assimilates the commonplace doctrine" (29) of classical invention into his new

field-based method of heuresis. Feder observes that, not unlike "Cicero and Quintilian,

Dryden distinguished between stylistic tricks and the colors which truly represent the

subject [to which he] applies the rhetoricians' standards and their very terms" (1269).

Taking the heuristic methods of the classical rhetoricians as his model, Dryden positions

the characters drawn from other sources as commonplaces, enabling him to convert them

into astrological symbols for thematic manipulation before redrawing them as new

characters whose revised personas and motivations lead to substantially different

timeframes, scenes, situations, and plots.

Subplots grow out of Dryden's character alterations and additions through a

combination of dyads and their respective equations, modeled after astrological

symbolism. Guffey calls this a "particular quality of wit," grounded "in an exchange of

apt metaphor and simile which even the servants have at their fingertips" (451). The witty

repartee between the characters evokes the planetary symbolisms intrinsic to the plot and

its contrivance, sparking an interaction of dualities that Aden identifies as "artistic

dualism" manifest through three dyads: thoughts and words; plot and writing; and plot

and language (28). These dyads emerge tellingly through an examination of Dryden's

symbolic manipulations of the play's main characters as astrological dualities.

b. Character Dualities as Astrological Symbol Sets

At the beginning of Act II of *An Evening's Love* we find Wildblood, a virile young

English gentleman in Madrid, speaking flirtatiously with the beautiful Donna Jacinta, the

Spanish daughter of Don Alonzo de Ribera. In discussing the cultural differences

between England and Spain in love and courtship, Wildblood alludes to the planets

associated with their two countries as a means of communicating their apparent

compatibility and his desire for her (233: 115-119):

> I am half afraid your Spanish Planet, and my English one
> have been acquainted, and have found out some by-room or
> other in the 12 houses: I wish they have been honorable.

Turning to Lilly's *Christian Astrology*, Dryden's astrological handbook, and hence

ours, we find Spain associated with Jupiter. England is associated with two planets,

Mercury and Mars, giving it a dual personality. The twelve houses Wildblood mentions

are those of an astrological chart, and the term "by-room" refers to an aspect between the

two planets. Lilly recognizes five aspects: An angle of 60 degrees constitutes a Sextile;

90 degrees, a Square; 120 degrees, a Trine; 180 degrees, a square, and 0 degrees, a

Conjunction. Of these, the square and oppositions bode ill, so when Wildblood wishes

"they have been honorable," he hopes that the planets signifying their countries are in

favorable aspect. Lilly calls a Conjunction a "Coition" (106), and refers to both the Sextile and Trine as "arguments of Love, Unity and Friendship" (Ibid) so the lovers are most likely hoping for a conjunction.

The sexually alerted imagination readily interprets "Spanish Planet" and "English one" as code words for their female and male genitals finding each other in some out-of-the-way nook of a large Villa. From a comedic standpoint, Wildblood's "wish" for them to be "honorable" amounts to pure irony. From the standpoint of astrological symbolism, Dryden achieves dramatic irony by aligning the romantic characters with the witty duality Mercury-Jupiter, rather than the traditional love pairings involving Mars and Venus, and the Sun and the Moon. The planetary duality of the feisty and witty Wildblood-Jacinta pairing shapes the plot in keeping with its astrological symbolism. As Dryden notes in the preface, "the design of [the play] turns more on the parts of Wildblood and Jacinta, who are the chief persons," (Aden 28) than on the parts of other two couples.

Wildblood represents the mental, shape-shifting Mercury, associated with England. According to Lilly, the planet can be "either Masculine or Feminine; […] for if in Conjunction with a Masculine Planet, he becomes Masculine; if with a Feminine, then Feminine" (77). Mercury also denotes "A troublesome wit, a kind of Phrenetic man, his tongue and Pen against every man, wholly bent to fool his estate and time in prating and trying conclusions to no purpose; a great liar, boaster, prattler, busybody" (Ibid). Jacinta represents the jovial and expansive planet Jupiter, associated with Spain. Lilly describes Jupiter as "Masculine, Choleric, [and] tenacious," but also "Honourable and Religious, of sweet and affable conversation, [and] wonderfully indulgent" (62-63). Combining the two, Dryden creates a witty and volatile relationship, not unlike the alternately warring

158

and peaceful seventeenth-century relationship between England and Spain, which negotiated a peace treaty in 1666. News of the treaty appeared in the *London Gazette* in May 1667, just four months before the debut of *An Evening's Love*.

In the course of another witty and irreverent exchange between Jacinta and Wildblood, in Act IV, Scene One, we find a reference to the treaty between Spain and England as a model for the reconciled would-be lovers, with mention of "strict Alliance" connoting a faithful marriage, "Navigation" implying fondling and disrobement, and "Leagues offensive and defensive" suggesting a plentiful indulgence in strategic sex as the "prime Articles" (780-786):

> *Jac.* The prime Articles between Spain and England
> are Seal'd; for the rest concerning a more strict Alliance, if
> you please we'll dispute them in the Garden
> *Wild.* But in the first place let us agree on the Article
> of Navigation. I beseach you.——
> *Beat.* These Leagues offensive and defensive will be
> too strict for us, Maskall: A Treaty of Commerce will serve
> our turn.

Guffey appropriately describes the pairing of Wildblood and Jacinta as one of *Hunting and Hawking* (448), referring to the wayward and lecherous behavior of the mercurial Wildblood toward the clever, albeit truth-seeking, Jacinta as Jupiter. Disguising herself as another women to expose his disloyalty and promiscuity, Jacinta repeatedly attracts and traps him in various settings. Each time, Wildblood exemplifies the negative tendencies Lilly attributes to Mercury as "constant in no place or opinion, cheating and thieving everywhere, […] frothy, of no judgment, easily perverted, constant in nothing but words and bragging" (78). By contrast, Jacinta acts in accordance with Lilly's positive tendencies of Jupiter as "a Lover of fair Dealing, […] hating all Sordid actions" (62), particularly dissimulation in romance. At a dance in Act III, Jacinta arrives

disguised as Lady Fatyma, a Muslim, and Wildblood pursues her as if he is romantically

unattached, despite having already pledged to marry Jacinta (III, i: 439-446):

> *Jac [disguised as Lady Fatyma].* But, in earnest, Do
> you love me?
> *Wild.* I, by Alha do I, most extreamly: you have Wit
> in abundance, you dance to a Miracle, you Sing like an
> Angel, and I believe you look like a Cherubim.
> *Jac.* And can you be constant to me?
> *Wild.* By Mahomet, can I.
> *Jac.* You Swear like a Turk, Sir; but, take heed: for
> our Prophet is a severe punisher of Promise-breakers.

The undercurrent of the irreconcilable religious rivalry between Muslims and

Christians looms implicit in the *Hunting and Hawking* duality as well, though Dryden

does not explore it beyond this scene. Jacinta, who falls in love with Wildblood at first

sight is not put off by Wildblood's antics. As Guffey observes, Jacinta, "having decided

on an ideal mate, tortures him for the rest of the play until he is willing to do anything,

even marry, to attain her" (*Works*, X: 451). Such actions befit those of a Jupiter

personality, whom Lilly describes as being "Magnanimous, [...] and Religious, Aspiring

in an honourable way at high matters" (62). Jacinta forgives him repeatedly, never

ceasing in her attempts to reform him (Ibid):

> *Jac.* Though Christendome can do nothing with you,
> yet I hope an African may prevail. Let me beg you for the
> sake of the Lady Fatyma.
> *Wild.* I begin to suspect that Lady Fatyma is no better
> than she should be. If she be turn'd Christian again I am
> undone.
> *Jac.* By Alha I am afraid on't too: By Mahomet I am.
> *Wild.* Well, well, Madam, any man may be overtaken
> with an oath; but I never meant to perform it with her: you
> know no oathes are to be kept with Infidels.

Whereas the Mercury-Jupiter duality of Wildwood and Jacinta symbolizes the

witty, irreverent, but reconciliatory interplay between England and Spain after their

treaty, the more traditional dualities involving Mars, Venus, the Sun, and the Moon correspond to characters symbolizing the tumultuous state of affairs between the two countries prior to their treaty. Given the nature of their astrological symbolisms, Bellamy and Maskall—Wildblood's two English Friends—and the two women they are courting, Theosida and Beatrix, make an odd foursome. The main issue among them is one of trust, in keeping with the prewar deception of England throughout the Spanish Plots. To ensure complication and cross-purposes, Dryden confounds traditional pairings, coupling the Mars character, Maskall, with the Moon character, Beatrix; and coupling the Sun character, Bellamy, with the Venus character, Theosida. Thus, we have the dualities Mars-Moon (Maskall-Beatrix) and Sun-Venus (Bellamy-Theosida), instead of the more typical dualities of Mars-Venus and Sun-Moon, which conventional astrological symbolism would suggest.

The symbolic imbalance creates conflict between the couples where it would not otherwise have existed. In the traditional pairings, the planetary counterparts create sustainable tension derived from symmetry. Mars the warrior mates with, but first chases after and quarrels with the beautiful Venus; the Sun, symbolic of a fatherhood, settles into a predictable rhythm with the Moon, a symbol of motherhood. Pairing the Mars-Warrior with the Moon-Mother, while also pairing the Sun-Father with the Venus-Lover, results in greater, more dynamic tension between the individuals in each couple, but also creates greater affinity between the non-coupled individuals. Consequently, when Beatrix shares a secret about Theosida with Maskall, it circulates back to Theosida through Bellamy, creating a messy four-way scandal involving a breach of confidence.

The story begins with Bellamy and Wildblood spotting and chasing after the Spanish targets of their affection, Theosida and Jacinta. Incidentally, but not surprisingly, the servants of Bellamy and Theosida—Maskall and Beatrix—take a liking to each other as well. In Act II, Scene One, Theosida confides in Beatrix that she has fallen for Bellamy, expecting her servant to keep it a secret. But Beatrix, in sharing intimacies with Maskall, lets it slip. Maskall shares the information with his master, knowing it will work to Bellamy's advantage. Predictably, Bellamy makes his knowledge of Theosida's affection known to her, and the blame ricochets back through Beatrix to Maskall when Theosida confronts Bellamy:

> *Theo.* I have now a Quarrel both to the Sun and
> Moon, because I have seen you by both their Lights.
>
> *Bel.* Spare the Moon, I beseech you, Madam, she is
> a very trusty Planet to you.
>
> *Beat.* O, *Maskall,* you have ruin'd me.

Bellamy, recognizing himself as the "Sun" Theosida refers to, attempts to convince her that her servant Beatrix, the "Moon," is not to blame, knowing that his servant, Maskall, would ultimately suffer the consequences via Beatrix's anger, for revealing her master's secret. Symbolically, even though Bellamy, as the Sun, is courting Theosida, as Venus, his astrological affinity with Beatrix, as the Moon, results in his coming to her defense. Bellamy's selflessness, which shows sensitivity and thoughtfulness for Beatrix's and Maskall's situation, accords with Lilly's description of Sun people as "having a great Heart [and being] very humane to all people, [as] one loving […] Magnificence and whatever is honourable" (70). By contrast, Beatrix immediately panics, turning on Maskall, and blurting out what amounts to a confession: "you have ruin'd me." Her actions accord with those Lilly attributs to Moon persons, as

162

"unsteadfast, wholly caring for the Present, Timorous, Prodigal, and easily Frightened"

(81). Ironically, it turns out that Bellamy has interpolated Theosida's symbolism beyond

her original intent, so his reply confuses her:

> *Theo.* Pray, Sir, expound your Meaning; for I
> confess I am in the Dark.
>
> *Bel.* Methiniks you should discover it by Moon-
> light. Or, if you would have me speak clearer to you, give
> me leave to wait on you at a Midnight Assignation.

In other words, Theosida intended "the Sun" to symbolize light and the truth, and

"the Moon" to symbolize darkness and deception, common astronomical metaphors in

Dryden's time. Bellamy explains his assignment of Beatrix to the Moon by advising

Theosida to discover the truth "by Moon-light," that is, by conferring directly with

Beatrix. However, the matter is far from settled. Maskall, as Mars, which Lilly describes

as "Bold, confident, [and] one that fights all things in [pursuit] of victory," quickly comes

up with a plan to exculpate himself and Beatrix. He hopes to Convince Theosida that

Bellamy is a great astrologer, and that Bellamy obtained information about her through

the stars, rather than from Beatrix, as Theosida suspects.

> *Mask.* For all your Noddings, and your
> Mathematical Grimaces, in short, Madam, my Master has
> been conversing with the Planets; and from them has had
> the Knowledge of your Affairs.
>
> *Bel.* This Rogue amazes me.
>
> *Mask.* I care not, Sir, I am for Truth; that will
> shame you, and all your Devils: In short, Madam, this
> Master of mine that stands before you, without a Word to
> say for himself, so like an Oaf, as I may say with
> Reverence to him—
>
> *Bel.* The Raskal makes me mad.
> *Mask.* —Is the greatest *Astolooger* in

163

Christendom.
Theo. Your Master an *Astrologer?*

Bellamy scoffs at the idea, protesting that he is *not* an astrologer, even though pretending to be one would extract him, Maskall, and Beatrix from the mess he has landed them in. Undeterred, Maskall insists that Bellamy is not only an astrologer, but "A most profound one." Theosida accuses Maskall of lying, and grabs Bellamy by the throat, threatening to choke him if he is not an astrologer. Beatrix, sensing a way out of her predicament, sides with Bellamy, praising his modesty. Finally, Theosida sides with Maskall as well, forcing Bellamy to play along with Maskall's deception:

> *Theo.* The more you pretend Ignorance, the more we are
> resolv'd to believe you skillful.
>
> [. . .]
>
> *Bel.* This Rogue will invent more Stories of me, than
> e'er were father'd upon *Lilly.*
>
> *Mask.* Will you confess then; do you think I'll stain my
> Honour to swallow a Lye for you?
>
> *Bel.* Well, a Pox on you, I am an Astrologer.

By the end of the scene, the roles and affinities of the four characters have been irrevocably altered. The romance dualities between Bellamy and Theodisa (Sun-Venus), and between Maskall and Beatrix (Mars-Moon) remain, but new alliances have been forged between the characters symbolizing traditional astrological dualities: Maskall-Theosida (Mars-Venus), and Bellamy-Beatrix (Sun-Moon). The two couples have bonded in a way that makes their respective romantic relationships, and budding four-way friendship, seem more complex and inevitable. The initial duality of the three English men and three Spanish Ladies—depicted as a Mars-Jupiter pairing, in keeping with the astrological symbolism of the two countries—has been tempered as well.

164

Consequently, once Wildblood and Jacinta overcome their mutual games of entrapment and misdirection, the way is cleared for the emergence of a much greater duality: The three couples find a common adversary in Jacinta's and Theosida's father, Don Alonso, who withholds his approval of their marriage. This new duality must now be resolved to accommodate the obligatory multiple-marriage of the comedy's end.

Dryden configures this collective duality with double planetary pairings that reconfigure the play's storyline, mapping the three couples collective to a Mercury-Jupiter duality, and the father to a Mars-Mercury duality. The happy couples, having reconciled and become engaged, now share the same symbolism Dryden used to represent Jacinta and Wildblood at the beginning, i.e., Mercury for England and Jupiter for Spain, symbolizing their peaceful relationship after the signing of the treaty. The girls' father, who now stands as the couples' collective enemy in opposing their weddings, personifies the two planets Lilly posits as the co-rulers of England. Therefore, the resulting quadruple planetary duality, Mercury-Jupiter + Mars-Mercury presages post-treaty difficulties for the two nations, should the marriages not take place.

With three marriages and the fate of future relations between England and Spain at stake, Don Alonzo takes center stage in the drama, as the one figure capable of resolving all the dualities by allowing the couples to marry. Dryden presents Alonzo as an overdetermined character, but two exaggerated traits, in particular, mark him as a difficult person to deal with. First, unlike Bellamy, who pretends to be an astrologer to get out of a bind, Alonzo is an actual, well-studied, amateur astrologer, much like Dryden. His vast knowledge of the subject comes to the fore when he challenges Bellamy's unwilling role as a stargazer, through a

165

series of poignant questions (II, i, 394-395). Alonzo begins with a trick question, which Bellamy inadvertently answers correctly:

> *Alon.* What Judgment may a man reasonably form from the trine
>   Aspect of the two Infortunes in Angular houses?
> *Bell.* That's a matter of nothing, Sir.

Guffey explains that Bellamy should have answered that, "Although the infortunes would threaten some disaster, the trine aspect is so beneficial as to change their potentially evil influence to good" (*Works* X: 472). Sensing that Bellamy may have lucked into an acceptable first answer, Alonzo tests him again, this time with a straight-forward, albeit more technical question (II, I: 408-413):

> *Alon.* Then I'll be more abstruse with him. What think you,
>   Sir, of taking the *Hyleg*? Or the best way of
>   rectification for a Nativity have you been conversant
>   in the *Centiloquium* of *Trismegistus*? What think you
>   of Mars in the tenth when 'tis his own House, or of
>   Jupiter configured with malevolent Planets?
> *Bell.* I thought what your skill was! To answer your
>   question in two words. Mars rules over the Martial,
>   and Jupiter over the Jovial; and so the rest, Sir.
> *Alon.* This every School-boy could have told me.

This time, Alonzo clearly reveals Bellamy as a fake, despite the mock-astrologer's protestations that "the terms are not the same in Spain as they are in England" and have been "alter'd since you studied them" (II, I: 425-430).

Alonzo's second defining trait is his inability to listen. Confident that he already knows what someone is about to say—and knows it better—he rarely allows anyone to speak more than three or four words before interrupting them, preemptively anticipating what they are about to say, all the while chastising them for not getting to the point sooner. This points to his association with Mars, which Lilly describes as "scorning any [who] should exceed him [and] contentious [as] one that fights all things" (67). Given his

166

association with both Mercury and Mars, Alonzo represents a brash figuration of

Dryden's English audience, his metaphorical "wife," for the benefit of whom he conducts

his "foreign affairs" with Spanish and French sources.

Guffey suggests Dryden devised Alonzo as a combination of both traits by

"working within the decorum of comic types" as "a pedant on the subject of astrology, an

incessant talker, and […] an ineffectual guardian of his husband-hunting daughters"

(442). These comments align with Lilly's astrological descriptions of a Mercury character

who is "seldom quiet" (52), "an excellent disputant, [a] searcher into all kinds of

Mysteries, curious in the search of any occult knowledge, [and] given to divination" with

a "troublesome wit, [and] wholly bent to fool his estate and time in prating and trying

nice conclusions to no purpose" (77).

The combination of Mercury and Mars suggests an aggressive, antagonistic,

disruptive thinker capable of random juxtapositional reasoning. Indeed, an implicit chaos

imbues everything Alonzo utters, a flitting subject-to-subject assemblage of ideas

characteristic of Llull's alchemical interplay of the elements. As if modeling this

technique, Dryden depicts Alonzo engaged in a tirade of impatience over Lopez's

inability to speak his message as quickly as he would like (though in truth, Alonzo's

perpetual interruptions cause the delay). In the following passage, he suggests the need to

explore bizarre contraries and the reversal of polarities, such as fish living on land and

mammals inhabiting water:

> If, I say, the prudent must be Tongue-ty'd; then let Great
> Nature be destroy'd; let the order of all things be turned
> topsy-turvy; let the Goose devour the Fox; let the Infants
> preach to their Great-Grandsires; let the tender Lamb
> persue the Woolfe, and the Sick prescribe to the Physician.

Let the Fishes live upon dry-land, and the Beasts of the
Earth inhabit in the Water (III, i: 373-370).

Alonzo's stirring of the semantic pot evokes Burke's "perspective by incongruity," the merging of categories through unlike perspectives. Alonzo's conflicting perspectives of the other characters affords him a unique, if distorted, perspective via the same type of oppositional pairings Dryden employs in his characterization. Given their mutual status as amateur astrologers, one might even speculate that Dryden modeled the character after himself, despite Alonzo's Spanish heritage. The image seems fitting: The proud poet-doer and disdainful father, standing above his progeny characters and sources, oblivious to outside protests about his adulterous affairs and turncoat borrowings, intent on directing everyone's destiny, both from within and outside the play, all the while anticipating future critics with a perverse and clever wit. The idea of Dryden inserting himself into the drama seems all the more apt, given the play's abundant astrological symbolism and unifying dualities, of which he was so fond.

CHAPTER V

CABALA, TROPING, FALLACIOUS STORIES, LANGUAGE CODES,

AND RIDICULE IN SWIFT

A. The Rhetoric of Cabala

1. Troping, Unorthodox Word Use, and Misuse

Cabala, as differentiated from the mysticism of *Kabbalah*, is a method of language

play in which authors transform word meanings through troping, unorthodox word use, or

the misuse of words in relation to a fallacious story. *Troping* (from the Latin *tropus*, "to

turn") denotes the process of forming figures of speech through "the use of a word or

phrase in a sense other than that which is proper to it" (OED 2011). *Unorthodox word use*

denotes the use of a word outside of its generally accepted context. For example, in *A

Tale of a Tub*, Jonathan Swift uses the word *belching* in the context of religious prophesy

(343). The *misuse of words* denotes dual usage of words, both literally and figuratively,

for the purpose of creating ambiguity, e.g., Swift uses the words *weight* and *gravity* in

reference to both a heavy physical object and to words connoting serious meaning (*A

Tale* 295). A *fallacious story* is one that relies on invalid logic to convey its message, and

typically features at least one instance of cabalistic invention.

a. Troping and the Troubadour Tradition

Troping became associated the word *cabala* through the Troubadour tradition of the

lyric poets of Provençal (*langue d'oc*) in Southern France from the eleventh to the

thirteenth centuries. According to William D. Paden in "Troubadours and History," the

Troubadours sang their poems in celebration of vassal knights known as *cheveliers* (157-

182). The French word *chevelier*, as Joseph Twadell Shipley demonstrates in *The

Origins of English Words, derives from the Latin word *caballus*, from which *cabala* stems, and connotes a "man on a horse, [in] devoted service of a married woman, as prescribed in the medieval circles of courtly love" (10). Shipley traces the word troubadour back to a combination of the French word, *trouvere* ("to find") and the English word *trope,* noting that word's "association with poetry and song came from the sense 'finder' of good words and lines" (418). The cabala, then, refers to a playful method of finding new meanings in existing words, or inventing new words, in the uninhibited manner of singing and dancing troubadours.

Use of the word *trope* as a verb, as in "troping," derives from its extended use in seventeenth-century English rhetoric and literature (OED 2011). The Scottish author Sir Thomas Urquhart (1611-1660), wrote in his 1653 prospectus for a universal language, *The Jewel* (*Ekskubalauron),* that he could have expanded his discourse "tropolegetically, by metonymical, ironical, metaphorical, and synecdochical instruments of elocution." John Dryden, in his comedy, *Kind Keeper* (c. 1679), has one of his characters, Limberham, quip to the aptly named Brain, "Will you leave your Troping, and let me pass?" (v.i.54, *Works* Vol. XIV, 72). In both examples, and as used throughout this chapter, troping refers as much to the irreverence and spontaneity of formulating a disorienting trope as to the trope itself.

b. Cabalistic Authors and the Occult Mode

The best and most prolific examples of cabala, as defined here, appear in authors of the Occult Mode, beginning—not insignificantly, perhaps—around the time of the death of the French satirist François Rabelais (1494-1553), and extending through about 1750. Cabalistic invention appears most frequently and pronouncedly in authors near the end of

the period, e.g., Sterne, Alexander Pope (1688-1744), John Gay (1685-1732), and especially in Swift. Beyond these authors, the use and discussion of cabala all but vanishes until the late nineteenth-century works of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), and the early twentieth-century writings of the pseudonymous alchemy writer Fulcanelli. Despite standing outside the timespan of this study, Nietzsche and Fulcanelli throw some light on the techiques of Swift and his contemporaries.

In his 1888 autobiography, *Ecco Homo*, Nietzsche calls his poems in *The Gay Science* "quite emphatically reminiscent of the Provençal concept of '*Gaya Scienza*'— that unity of singer, knight, and free spirit which distinguishes the wonderful early culture of the Provençals from all equivocal cultures" (1969 294). Nietzsche adopted the German equivalent, *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*, as the title of his 1882 collection of aphorisms, poems, and songs. In them, he references language play in terms of "singers," "knights," and "birds" (which he calls "free spirits"), identifying the twelfth-century French Troubadours as their inspiration. Since most troubadour songs featured chivalric themes, their performances typically featured some form of frolicking, a symphonic of the German word *fröhliche*, which means "gayness" and "folly." American historian Hayden White (1928-) sums up the probable intent of Nietzsche's word play in *Metahistory*: *The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, suggesting that Nietzsche's "supreme goal" was to "expose the illusions produced by what was, in the end, only a linguistic habit, to free consciousness from its own powers of illusion-making, so that the imagination could once more 'frolic in images'" (335). In short, Nietzsche sought to invent unique word-images in the manner of leaping horses, *cabalistically*.

Fulcanelli attempted to revive the study of both alchemy and cabala through his two obscure studies of Gothic cathedrals: *The Mystery of the Cathedrals*, published in 1926, and *The Dwellings of the Philosophers*, which appeared in 1929. While he may have intended these works as serious scholarship, I refer to them only in passing, in the manner of literary texts, given their lack of scholarly apparati, and persistent questions about the author's true identity. Fulcanelli's obscurity and background notwithstanding, he offers an intriguing metaphor for the linguistic operation of cabala in relation to the etymology of the word itself. Noting that *cabala* stems from the Latin word for the species "pack-horse" (caballus) rather than from the word for the genus "horse" (*Equus*), he suggests that a cabalistic word "carries a considerable weight, [as] the 'pack' and sum total of […] the heavy baggage of truth" (*DP* 464). Words, as signs, he suggests, "pack" a variety of etymologic, cultural, and symbolic significations, in addition to their primary meanings.

2. Cabalistic Occult Invention

In literary terms, the *vehicle* used to transfer new meaning to a cabalistic word or phrase takes the form of a phonetic identity or similarity, or a semantic parallel. A *phonetic identity or similarity* consists of a homophonic (same-sounding) or symphonic (similar-sounding) word, as determined by its assonance (rhyme or prosody) and resonance (range of sound). A *semantic parallel* occurs when words, symbols, or ideas signify similar objects or processes. The cabalistic word or phrases serves as the *tenor*, "packing" the vehicle's new meaning, and typically, a fallacious, silly, or outrageous narrative holds them together. The examples cited above from Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* illustrate the process well.

172

Swift uses the word *belching* unorthodoxly in the context of religious inspiration. The narrator tells an improbable story of how, in "their Mysteries and Rites, […] the Virtuoso's of former Ages" used an "Invention ascribed to Æolus himself," that consisted of releasing air from Barrels to achieve inspiration and prophesy. Eventually, the story goes, this invention led to the realization that "the sacred Æolus" could also obtain prophetic inspiration by delivering "his oracular *Belches* to his panting Disciples" (343). Insofar as the two "inventions" describe similar processes—gas passing though a barrel and gas passing through the human wind pipe—they comprise a *semantic parallel*, serving as the vehicle by which the additional meaning of "religious prophesy" becomes "packed" onto the cabalistic tenor word *belching*. Swift's fallacious anecdote, made all-the-more-memorable by its vulgarity, holds the pack-horse and its load together.

In misusing the words *weight* and gravity, as Maurice J. Quinlan notes in "Swift's Use of Literalization as a Rhetorical Device," Swift creates linguistic ambiguity "by contrasting the metaphorical and the literal significance of a term, in order to reveal an ironic disparity between the two meanings" (516). Swift's narrator explains the need for speakers to elevate their pulpits above their audiences, comparing words to bodies and applying the result to air, as a byproduct of speaking words:

> Air being a heavy Body, and therefore (according to the
> system of *Epicurus*) continually descending, must needs be
> more so, when loaden and press'd down by Words; which
> are also Bodies of much Weight and Gravity, as is manifest
> from those deep *Impressions* they make and leave upon us;
> and therefore must be delivered from a due altitude, or else
> they will neither chary a good aim, nor fall with sufficient
> force (295).

The words "Weight" and "Gravity" as applied to bodies falling from an "altitude" are homophonic with the same words as applied to ideas that make "deep *Impressions*" on

their listeners. These homophonies serve as paronomasiac vehicles by which the ambiguity of the double-meaning (*bodies* and *words*) is carried on the cabalistic tenor words of the same name. Again, Swift's outrageously fallacious story keeps the facetious meaning-as-rider mounted on the cabalistic word-horse.

B. Fallacies and Illogic

1. Fallacious Stories

Swift deemed the modern tendency to rely on structured, formal logic in lieu of artful reason, the height of hypocrisy: Far more noble, argues Swift, to coax the truth out of fallacious stories, than to camouflage falsities in a chain of valid syllogisms. Yet, when we formulate the argument of Swift's story about weight and gravity, we find it to be perfectly logical:

> **Syllogism:** Words leave impressions
> All things that leave impressions have weight and gravity
> *Therefore*, Words have weight and gravity

Logic assumes the consistency and fidelity of its terms; it has no way of differentiating between literal and figurative use, no mechanism for determining if a word is being used in an unorthodox way. Clearly, Swift knew this, and used it to his advantage. Unlike rhetoric, which studies the meanings and implications of words themselves, in addition to their persuasive effects, logic merely verifies their form. Specifically, a logician confirms that a particular pattern, established by Aristotle in his *Prior Analytics* (I.4-6), holds among a set of words as ordered. For example, the above syllogism is valid because the word "impressions" is the object of the major premise and the subject of the minor premise, while the conclusion combines the two terms that do *not* appear in both the minor and major premises. In *Jonathan Swift and the Anatomy of*

Satire, John M. Bullitt cites this passage as an example of Swift's "pompous illogic" (117) designed to condemn "what he thought to be the arbitrary and artificial conversion of what is literally true into something figuratively fraught with deep and hidden mystery" (114).

No doubt, Swift frequently derides the ignorant and dishonest, who unwittingly and deceptively conflate the literal and figural for purposes of propaganda and politics. But that practice does not seem to justify Bullitt's claim that Swift thought words and objects (or words as objects) were completely devoid of deep meaning and hidden mystery. Rather, as Swift demonstrates so graphically in his image of a "woman flay'd" (352) in the *Tale,* and in his unmasking of a maiden's skin-deep beauty in *Strephon and Chloe*, such mystery resides not in the superficial appearances of people and things, but in their intrinsic conveyance of "Sense and Wit" (547). For Swift, well-phrased *words,* whether produced by poets or uttered by Houyhnhnms, carry more weight and gravity than *things,* whether produced by the "projectors" of Lagado, or unearthed by Yahoos.

The following example, in which Swift uses false logic to indict philosophers' claims of proving their statements through syllogisms is especially ironic:

> First, it is generally affirmed, or confess'd that Learning
> *puffeth Men up*: And Secondly, they proved it by the
> following Syllogism; *Words are but Wind; and Learning is
> nothing but Words;* Ergo, *Learning is nothing but Wind*. For
> this Reason, the Philosophers among them, did in their
> Schools, deliver to their Pupils, all their Doctrines and
> Opinions by *Eructation*, wherein they had acquired a
> wonderful Eloquence, and of incredible Variety (342).

As Bullitt confirms, the passage exemplifies the "alternate use of a literal and a figurative meaning in the two premises" whereby an "absurd syllogism which Swift instances as one proof of the Aeolists' conception of learning as wind […] parodies false

logic" (Bullitt 119). While Bullitt correctly associates Swift's intentional abuse of logic as the primary source of his satire, the Dean also uses invalid logic when it suits his purposes, including fallacious enthymemes. Swift accused philosophers, theologians, and scholars who elevated Aristotle's logic as a pure vehicle of truth—while also diminishing rhetoric as its misguided step-sister—of playing an elaborate shell game.

Swift understood that Aristotle, who valued rhetoric on a par with logic, advocated the use of *all means of persuasion,* including fallacious enthymemes, in service of the truth. In his *On Rhetoric,* Aristotle states that "we are most fully persuaded when we consider a thing to [already] have been demonstrated" (1355a), suggesting that the best way to establish the *appearance* of logical validity is to use enthymemes. Insofar as "the whole business of rhetoric [is] concerned with appearances" (1404a) Aristotle even includes examples of *fallacious* enthymemes, advising rhetors that "it is possible to gain an advantage" (1202b) through the use of fallacies by "making the worse argument seem the better" (1402a), seemingly blurring the lines between rhetoric and ethics. George Kennedy, in the introduction to his translation of Aristotle's chapter on fallacious enthymemes, argues that "The main function of this chapter is not to teach how to compose fallacious enthymemes, though Aristotle's wording at times seems to imply that" (184). However, R. M. Eaton, in his *General Logic*, insists that what "Aristotle meant by an enthymeme [is] a rhetorical syllogism, which […] *contains* a fallacy" (94, italics mine).

Aristotle describes three types of enthymemes. The first type are those drawn from facts, designed to evince certainty as abbreviated syllogisms with their valid minor premises omitted. The second type, drawn from signs or probabilities, are inherently

176

fallacious because they defy proof. The third type, which Aristotle calls an *apparent*

enthymeme, contains an inherently "fallacious topic" (1401a), of which Aristotle

identifies nine species: 1) verbal style, 2) combination, division, or omission, 3)

exaggeration, 4) a non-necessary sign, 5) an accidental result, 6) affirming the

consequent, 7) taking a non-cause as a cause, 8) omission of when and how, and 9)

confusing the particular with the general. Swift wields all nine, in one way or another, in

various passages of the *Tale* and the *Travels*, but seems especially partial to the first

species, *verbal style*.

2. Swift's Disdain for Logic

According to John Earl of Orrery in his *Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr.*

Jonathan Swift, Swift "held logic and metaphysics in the utmost contempt" (7).

Moreover, in *A Tale of a Tub*, Swift ridicules and disavows Aristotelian logic, as

presented in "*Aristotelis Dialectica*, and especially that wonderful Piece *de*

Interpretatione, which has the Faculty of teaching its Readers to find out a Meaning in

every Thing but it self" (70). Nonetheless, Swift admired Aristotle as the intellectual

creator of the disciplines he disdained, calling him "the most comprehensive genius that

ever lived" in his *A Sketch of the Character of Aristotle* (Works XI), and "doubtless the

greatest master of arguing in the world" in his *Remarks Upon a Book (Works III* 114). As

Bullitt confirms*,* "not only was Swift acquainted with Aristotle's systematic treatises on

logic and rhetoric but he had also absorbed much of the training built on these treatises

[as] amply borne out by an examination of the rhetorical structure of much of his most

telling satire, [i.e., *A Tale of a Tub*]" (74). At the same time, Swift accuses Catholics and

177

other theologians and scholars of exploiting Aristotle's writings—particularly his *Analytics* and his *Rhetoric*—without fully understanding them (*Works III* 114).

Consequently, when Gulliver encounters the ghost of Aristotle (along with that of Homer) in Book III of the *Travels*, he notes the otherworldly disdain with which the Stagirite held subsequent authors who had misused his works. In particular, Gulliver reports that "*Aristotle* was out of all Patience with the Account I gave him of *Scotus* and *Ramus*, as I presented them to him; and he asked them whether the rest of the Tribe were as great Dunces as themselves" (Ibid). The word *dunce* derives from John Duns Scotus (165-1308), a scholastic theologian and commentator on Aristotle, known for his blind devotion to sophistry; Ramus, as noted earlier, sought with his Liberal Arts reforms to dismantle and reconfigure the entire structure of Aristotelian logic and rhetoric.

C. Progressions and Reorientations

1. Semantic Progressions and Dual Perspectives

Once an author such as Swift "tropes" a word or phrase to form new meanings through subtle semantic variations or ambiguity, subsequent tropes can build upon that new trope, forming a semantic progression. Sometimes the meaning of a distantly related trope differs wildly from its originator. Consider the progression Shipley records involving the same word from which the word cabala sprang, ranging from "chevel glass" to "horseplay." A *chevel glass* is "a large mirror on a 'wooden horse' with swivels and on wheels, permitting various views, especially, [for] a woman preparing her display for a formal function." Such a device was also known as a "hobby-horse" (10), and in Shakespeare's day, the word hobby-horse came to signify a prostitute, "whom any man may ride" (Ibid). By contrast, Laurence Sterne (1713-1768) uses the word *hobbyhorse* in

178

The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman, to express barriers in communication. Shipley also points out the linguistic symphony between the words *horse* and *whores*, from which, he asserts, we get the word *horseplay* (Ibid).

In progressions growing out of facetious writings such as Swift's, we can reasonably ask whether the acquired meaning (as the "rider" of a cabalistic "pack-horse") remains attached to a word or phrase outside the context of its fallacious story. Most likely, readers of Swift continue to deny religious meaning to the word *belching*, despite his tale about "the sacred Æolus," and likewise, remain cognizant of the difference between bodies and words in terms of *weight* and *gravity*. In both cases, the meaning acquired by the cabalistic words retain their points of reference only long enough for the reader to laugh and turn the page. Swift provides an analogy, remarkably similar to the one Cowley uses to describe his Pindaric odes, that may help explain why cabalistic troping produces such precarious semantic structures. In writing about the religious struggles of Banbury Saint in *The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit*, Swift tropes the words *flesh* and *spirit* in the sense of a horse and rider, depicting Saint's flesh and spirit engaged in

> a perpetual Game at *Leap-Frog* between both [the rider and horse]; and, sometimes, the *Flesh* is uppermost, and sometimes the *Spirit*; adding, that the former, while it is in the State of Rider, wears huge *Rippon* Spurs, and when it comes to the Turn of being *Bearer*, is wonderfully head-strong and hard-mouth'd (409).

The flesh, as the weaker of the two entities within traditional Christian doctrine, attempts to control the indomitable spirit, regardless of whether it plays the role of the rider or the horse. Swift's ambiguous use of a frog metaphor within a horse metaphor only adds to the ambiguity of the horse and rider. The difficulty in picturing either the

179

flesh or spirit retaining the role as rider, portrays the visual vagueness through which

ambiguous tropes transfer images and meaning. Yet, the image remains powerful enough

to serve its contextual purpose: The "word" and its tropological "meaning" engage in a

perpetual power struggle, precipitating a hermeneutic progression in which neither

interpretation can entirely prevail. The trope evokes a spirit-word dichotomy of Biblical

exegesis, similar to those which Swift portrays the brothers struggling with in the *Tale*.

As John McKenny aptly puts it, Swift's "subtle deployment of dual standpoints of author

and narrator creates a hall of mirrors" (2002) that dramatically distorts the orientation of

the reader. For Burke, such disorientations, as heightened instances of ambiguity,

represent opportunities for what he calls reorientations and conversions through "piety."

2. Piety, Disorientation, and Conversion

Burke discusses disorientation rhetorically, in *Permanence and Change,* as

pertaining to a secular form of *piety*. Such piety reflects a "yearning to conform with the

sources of one's being" as framed in the "first patterns of judgment" (71) during

childhood, providing each individual with a unique *orientation*. Through curiosity and

rebellion, one's initial orientation evolves into *disorientation* and *impiety*. According to

Burke, this "intermediate stage [between the search for piety and its invention] involves a

shattering or fragmentation, analogous to the stage of 'rending and tearing' (*sparagmos*)

in tragic ritual" (69). Parents and society typically view impious disorientation

negatively, but just as getting lost in a city sometimes provides a better understanding of

its layout than a map, disorientation serves a practical purpose, as a prelude to piety and

reorientation. The threefold process of orientation-disorientation-reorientation results in a

personalized "perspective by incongruity [...] got by the merging of categories once felt

to be mutually exclusive" (Ibid), through the process of identification.

In considering the factors that motivate such conversions, Burke sees Swift (along

with Nietzsche) as representative of the type of author whose piety determines their need

to write. Though Burke does not reference the scene explicitly, Swift's description of

how zealous Jack, a caricature of John Calvin in *A Tale of A Tub*, hastens to "*Strip, Tear,*

Pull, Rent, [and] *Flay off all*" (139) the gold lace and silver from his allegorical

birthright—ultimately shredding the entire coat itself—depicts his *sparagmos*.

Accordingly, Jack's symbolic tearing of his religious coat looms implicit in Burke's

description of an old coat as a symbol of Swift's impious misnomers that lead to a

conversion via rationalization. First, Burke makes reference to an old coat generically,

explicating its function in the process of conversion:

> The notion of perspective by incongruity suggests that one
> casts out devils by *misnaming* them. It is not the *naming* in
> itself that does the work, but the *conversion downward*
> implicit in such a naming. Has one seen a child trembling in
> terror at a vague shape in a corner? One goes impiously into
> the corner, while the child looks aghast. One picks an old
> coat off the clothes-rack, and one says, "Look, it is only an
> old coat." The child breaks into fitful giggles (133, italics
> his).

The conversion trends *downward* because it diminishes the value and meaning of

something otherwise disturbing—just as, Burke notes, Freud diminished and made

palatable his patients' sexual perversions by giving them legitimate names. A conversion

upward entails the magnification of something lacking grandeur or importance. For

example, Burke suggests that Nietzsche wrote *Zarathustra*, an allegory of a hermit who

refuses to become a messiah, as a way of aggrandizing and ennobling his own

181

commitment to solitude, irreverence, and a rejection of all values and standards. While

one could make the case that Swift pursued conversions in both directions in the *Travels*,

Burke argues that all of Swift's famous proportional distortions amount to

rationalizations downward:

> As for Swift: he too showed that he restlessly sought a
> technique of *conversion downwards*, some mitigating
> device which would enable him to call the monsters of his
> imagination old coats. As evidence that he felt this need, do
> we not have his simple reversal of relationship, from that of
> Gulliver big, Lilliputians little, to that of Gulliver little
> Brobdingnagians big? But the true nature of his ways is
> revealed in the "synthesis": Yahoos crude, Houyhnhnms
> refined. To look at all three relationships is to realize that,
> whatever their reversals of proportion in the literal sense,
> they were all *au fond* the same: the magnification of human
> despicability. (*Permanence* 135, italics his).

In *A Tale of a Tub*, which Burke appears not to have commented on, Swift depicts a

series of downward conversions through clothing-related metaphorical "investments,"

resulting in a long tropological chain of reorientations. At the highest level, Swift likens

the entire Universe to "a large *Suit of Coaths,* which *invests* every Thing" (304).

Specifically, "the Earth is *invested* by the Air; The Air is *invested* by the Stars; and the

Stars are *invested* by the *Primum Mobile*" (Ibid). Next, Swift describes the earth as

appearing in "compleat and fashionable dress," asking rhetorically, "What is that which

some call Land, but a fine Coat faced with Green? Or the Sea, but a Wastcoat of Water-

Tabby?" (Ibid). In doing so, he positions the universe, spanning from the earth to the

Primum Mobile, as the macrocosm in relation to humanity as the microcosm, which he

"dresses" next:

> To conclude from all, what is Man himself but a *Micro-Coat*,
> or rather a compleat Suit of Cloaths with all its Trimmings?
> As to his Body, there can be no dispute; but examine even the

> Acquirements of his mind, you will find them all contribute
> in their Order, towards furnishing to an exact Dress: to
> Instance no more; Is not Religion a *Cloak*, Honesty a *Pair of*
> *Shoes*, worn out in the Dirt, Self-Love a *Surtout*, Vanity a
> *Shirt*, and Conscience a *Pair of Breeches*, which, tho' a
> Clover for Lewdness as well as Nastiness, is easily slipt
> down for the Service of both? (304).

Swift takes great care in establishing the order of these five articles of clothing

and their corresponding attributes from "Religion" to "Nastiness," as converting

investments, ranging from that which services the spiritual concerns to that which

services the passions. The middle place is reserved for "Self-Love," symbolized by a

surtout—connoting both an English coat and the French word meaning "above all"—and

hence the outermost coat. Two ways proceed from this middle point: Self-love leads

through "honesty" (assigned to shoes, the bottoms of which provide an appropriate

heteronym for "soul," and also serve to stamp out "dirt" or lust) to "religion" and

salvation; alternatively, self-love by means of "Vanity" leads to a guilty "Conscience" by

means of "Lewdness" and damnation. Although a cloak typically goes over a coat, it

conveys the additional meaning of *disguise*, and therefore Swift does not consider it the

outermost garment; rather, he depicts the coat as symbolizing the soul, describing man as

> An Animal compounded of two *Dresses*, the *Natural* and
> the *Celestial Suit*, which were the Body and the Soul: That
> the Soul was the outward, and the Body the inward
> Cloathing; that the latter was *ex traduce*; but the former of
> daily Creation and Circumfusion. This last they proved by
> *Scripture*, because *in Them we Live, and Move, and have*
> *our Being*: As likewise by Philosophy, because they are *All*
> *in All, and All in every Part*. Besides, said they, separate
> these two, and you will find the Body to be only a senseless
> unsavory Carcass. By all which it is manifest, that the
> outward Dress must needs be the Soul (305).

In providing a metaphorical and allegorical meaning for each piece of clothing, Swift weaves and synthesizes the formerly severed fragments into a cohesively pious whole. Given their underlying relatedness, these reoriented fragments might be better represented as distinct ends of a cloth connected by semantic *folds,* than as separate and disparate terms. Folds disguise overlapping and interweaving, as symbolized by the threads that remain in the coats of the brothers after they remove the ornaments. Folds also imply the hiding of meaning, an act of revision, in which a trope becomes modified to obscure an original meaning. Swift presents the additions, folds, and mutilations of the coats of the brothers Peter, Martin, and Jack as metaphors and ciphers for their varying perspectives of their representative Christian sects, but they could just as easily stand in for any other set of related perspectives.

In Section II, Swift belittles the sacred criticism practiced by Peter as the "learned Brother" and "best Scholar" in his clever exegetical and linguistic analysis of their father's Will. Swift models Peter's criticism in the digression, "Concerning *Criticks*," by posing as the champion of Martin, while also showing the critic criticizing criticism. This self-referential deconstruction of the discipline's history of itself shows the folding and fragmentation wrought through over-intellectualization. Swift's parody of Peter continues in Section IV with his devising of the offices and doctrines of the Roman Church. Here, he likens the self-serving rationalizations of Peter, "Master of a high Reach, and profound Invention" (321) to a "Projector" in the manner of English scholar Richard Bentley (1662-1743), noting that "Many famous Discoveries, Projects and Machines, which bear great Vogue and Practice at present in the World, are owning entirely to Lord Peter's *Invention*" (318) of Catholic rules and regulations.

184

However, in Section V, the narrator-as-Peter speaks for his brothers, Jack and Martin, as well as himself in prescribing a reinterpretation of Ancient knowledge—including, by implication, that of the Bible—advocating "an universal System in a small portable Volume, of all Things that are to be known, or Believed, or Imagined, or Practiced in Life" (327-328). In short, a rewriting, or downward conversion, of Bible symbolism by means of cabalistic invention. Insofar as the *Tale* cleverly mixes serious writing, both witty and arcane, with satire and parody, it enacts cabalistic invention through perspectives of incongruity, wielding the resources of ambiguity. Kathleen Williams aptly characterizes the process in her essay, "Giddy Circumstance," as a tracing of loose threads and fragments, which can be pieced together only by taking Swift's

> plunge into the chaos of mindless experience, 'the unreality
> of the uncreating word' — the 'true No-meaning' which
> 'puzzles more than wit' [through which] our mad world is
> parodied and heightened to a point where we can no longer
> believe it to be sane; every fragment of the broken truth is
> shattered into still smaller, scintillating pieces, and only the
> barest and most casually indirect hints are given to help us
> in the task of fitting them together into their proper shape
> (Greenburg 694).

The process of "fitting them together" connotes the joining of imagination and reason through "sheer wit"—or occult invention—which Swift appropriately characterizes as "embroidery." Occasionally, however, when the pieces do not fit together, Swift depicts such fragmentation by finishing broken-off sentences with several rows of asterisks, as in the following passage:

> "So, in those Junctures, it fared with *Jack* and his Tatters,
> that they offered to the first view a ridiculous Flanting,
> which assisting the Resemblance in Person and Air,
> thwarted all his Projects of Separation, and left so near a
> Similitude between them, as frequently deceived the very
> Disciples and Followers of both.

185

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*   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *
Desunt nonnulla   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *
*       *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *
*   *
*   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *
*
*   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *
*
*   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *   (366).
```

The effect is jarring, reminding the reader that the form of *Tale* itself is

fragmentary. Far from presenting a face of unity, it unfolds in layers, splits off in various

directions through the use of footnotes, digressions, tangents, and then ends

conditionally—until such time as the narrator deems it necessary to "resume my pen"

(210). Any attempt at a detailed empirical reconstruction of past and present worldviews

represented in the *Tale* inevitably leads to madness, and that, Swift seems to be implying,

is the fate of the narrator, who is not likely to resume his pen anytime soon. Nonetheless,

Swift's study of humanity's fragmentary perspectives constitutes a more manageable

means of apprehending reality, a more faithful depiction of reality, than metaphysical

views claiming to offer us a glimpse of the whole. Thereby, Swift satirizes the delusions

of many seeming "certainties" and "stabilities" of meaning inherent in the artificial

"totality" of any metaphysical system.

D. Blinds, Codes, and Literalization

1. Literary Blinds and Mock-Epideictic

Inverse to the process of folding and fragmentation, Swift frequently makes use of

what might be called literary "blinds." A blind consists of misleading information,

knowingly included to keep readers lacking certain knowledge (or a certain perspective)

from piecing together and understanding a text. Swift borrows the method from writers of

alchemical manuscripts, whom be belittles throughout the *Tale*. As David Ovason

explains, an occult author employs a blind when he or she inserts "a word or phrase that

the reader imagines he or she has understood: in this way, the attention of the reader is

deflected away from the hidden meaning" (2002 130), and thus,

> The untrained reader, satisfied with his or her
> 'interpretation' of the blind, will pass on to the next word
> or phrase, leaving the real, or secret, meaning hidden intact
> and unread behind the blind. [Accordingly,] occult blinds
> were widely used in certain late-medieval arcane
> disciplines, such as alchemy, Rosicrucianism, and even
> poetry related to esoteric subjects. The consequence is that
> within such esoteric traditions there has developed a
> recognized discipline directed toward identifying and
> interpreting occult blinds (Ibid).

Swift inserts blinds using an especially deceptive form of irony known in the

sixteenth century as mock-epideictic. Traditional epideictic, one of the three primary

branches of rhetoric as defined by Aristotle (along with forensic and deliberative)

expresses either praise or blame. Mock-epideictic, therefore, expresses *false* or *insincere*

praise or blame. Agrippa used the technique to great benefit with the publication of his *Of*

the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of the Artes and Sciences in 1526, wherein he denounced all

the occult arts he would later explicate and praise in his *De occulta philosophia ibri tres*,

along with natural philosophy and virtually every branch of learning. As Eugene

Korkowski points out in "Agrippa as Ironist," the typical reader "is likely to gloss [the

Vanitie] as a wildly wavering statement, or perhaps as an injunction against intellectual

activity," but those in the know recognized it "as a masterpiece of ironic, spoofing, [and]

satirical wit" (594). Agrippa's derogatory passage on the "Lullius Arts" seems especially

telling in this regard. While admitting formerly to having "made sufficient large

commentaries upon [Llull's] art," in which he "seemed to praise it exceedingly" Agrippa

now calls it "rude and barbarous" declaring it "little differing from the logic" with which

Gorgias Leontiti "presumed to reason of everything" (Ibid). Thus, while using Llull's

methods to his own advantage elsewhere, Agrippa appears in the *Vanitie* to reject them.

As Korkowski explains, only those rare readers "versed in Renaissance modes of

paradox and irony, who find Agrippa mentioned, admired, and imitated in mock-

epideictic literature of the sixteenth century and afterward" would recognize it as such.

Once a "vigorous current" in Renaissance literature, the mock-epideictic mode typically

eulogized a contemptible subject, such as "the fly, the flea, 'nothing,' the ass, the red

herring, even the pox and the water-closet, but feigned vituperation made use of the same

ironic devices" (Ibid). The twist in Swift's mock-epideictic, setting it apart from the

relatively straightforward version used by Agrippa and others in the sixteenth century,

consists of his use of double irony. Georgia Albert explains the technique in terms of

classical rhetoric in her "Understanding Irony: Three Essays on Friedrich Schlegel,"

differentiating between traditional irony as *täuschung*, or deception—wherein the speaker

expresses something by saying the opposite—and double-irony, or "irony of irony"

(830-831), which deceives in another way. Whereas traditional irony immediately

distinguishes "between the initiates and the victims," allowing initiates to "take pleasure

in the delightful roguery of making fools" out of those not "in the know," double irony

turns the conventional model on its head, ensuring that "initiates do not have the last

laugh" in understanding the ostensibly "inside" knowledge (Ibid):

> [In fact,] it may well be that the joke is on them after all:
> the mere suspicion that "they themselves may be included"
> is enough for those who had "their pleasure" in the game to
> get angry in their turn. The reason for this is that it is not so
> easy to decide for or against the presence of irony. Those
> "in the know" may be themselves the object of the

> speaker's irony if, for example, he feigns irony to deceive
> them but is in fact perfectly serious […]. There is no way to
> stop this constant back-and-forth than a purely arbitrary
> choice, [and] all those who consider irony "deception,"
> whether they thought they were on the privileged side or
> not, are in for an unsettling experience (Ibid).

Accordingly, we can never be certain, when we are laughing at Swift's narrator in the *Tale*, that Swift is not laughing back at us—if, indeed, Swift was ever serious. Most believe we can confidently interpret everything Swift wrote as satire. But failing to leave our minds open to at least the possibility of double irony may cost us a richer perspective of his complex troping and ambiguous style. Clive Probyn rightly takes literary theorist Edward Said (1935-2003) to task for adopting an exclusionist approach to Swift in his "Blindness and Insight," arguing for more latitude and openness in the interpretation of Swift's author-persona textuality:

> Said occludes the primary relationship between the author
> and the work. He claims that Swift 'resists' this 'textualist'
> approach because the only way to understand his writing is
> by first recognizing him as an intellectual. His texts mean
> what they say at the moment they are saying it; he attacks
> what he impersonates, normally 'a style or a manner of
> discourse,' and what we are reading is always to be
> understood as writing, and writing by 'the most worldly of
> writers.' This argument is confusing, not least because it
> muddles any distinction we might draw between the author
> and the separately identifiable narrator of the text, and it
> raises the question of how the reader is to interpret his
> relation to both author and the persona. This argument also
> suggests that real intellectuals do not play around with
> textuality, that 'groundedness' and play are mutually
> exclusive (so much for Shakespeare, Cervantes, Fielding,
> Sterne, Mallarmé, Nietzsche, Borges, Fowles, Derrida,
> Calvino)" (74).

Deborah Baker Wyrick makes a similar claim with respect to Swift's word play, calling it a "textocentric trap," and arguing that "the bulk of made-up languages in

Gulliver's Travels have no secret meaning," and amount to "alphabetic nonsense" (82).

Insofar as the tentative conclusions of would-be decoders "rarely agree," Wyrick suggests

we need to give up the game altogether, for

> By trying to find such messages, we play into Swift's hands.
> He baits us by scattering throughout *Gulliver's Travels*
> artificial but decipherable words […] but the more we
> struggle to pull meaning from the words, the more confusing
> and recalcitrant they become. The only way to win this
> particular word game of Swift's is to stop playing, to see the
> trap and laugh at being caught filling these hollow verbal
> vessels with personal linguistic fantasies (Ibid).

Wyrick may be right about Swift's "alphabetic nonsense" and mischievous

intentions. But the same could probably be said of Joyce and other authors who revel in

word play; that they concocted and inserted meaningless words for the sole purpose of

leading their readers on a false search. If the goal of entering into a dialogue with such

authors is to "win," then Wyrick may have landed on the best strategy: simply refuse to

play. One could argue just as convincingly, however, that we have as much to gain as to

lose by reading such playful authors with at least a modicum of confidence in the

ostensible meaning of their texts, rather than simply dismissing them outright.

2. Language Codes and Double Paradox

Vaguely titled "A Voyage to Laputa, Etc.," and widely acknowledged to have been

written after Books I, II, and IV as an add-on, Book III of *Gulliver's Travels* provides a

rich source of Swift's language codes. Far from an afterthought designed to "fill yawning

gaps in the organization of the satire and in the development of Gulliver's character" as

John H. Sutherland describes it in "A Reconsideration of Gulliver's Third Voyage" (45),

Book III stands as a roadmap for deciphering the language codes and linguistic riddles

peppered throughout the *Travels*. As Burke observes in *A Grammar of Motives*, Book III

exemplifies elements of his literary-based system of occult heuresis, the Pentad:

> [T]he scene-agent ratio can be used for the depiction of
> character. To suggest that the Laputans are, we might say,
> "up in the air," he portrays them as living on a island that
> floats in space. Here the nature of the inhabitants is
> translated into terms of their habitation (8-9).

Ironically, and hence deceptively, Swift characterizes the citizens of Laputa as

completely devoid of the heuristic skills he employs in creating and describing them:

"Imagination, Fancy, and Invention, they are wholly Strangers to, nor have any Words in

their Language by which those Ideas can be expressed; the whole Compass of their

Thoughts and Mind being shut up within [Mathematicks and Musick]" (137). In Swift's

time, the term *Mathematicks* was synonymous with Astrology, a discipline his literary

cousin, John Dryden, used heuristically, but which Swift understood only in relation to

fateful pronouncements, deeming it mechanical and uncreative. Thus, the dim-witted,

absent-minded Laputans wear garments "adorned with the Figures of Suns, Moons, and

Stars" (132), "have great Faith in judicial Astrology," and "Their Apprehensions arise

from several Changes they dread in the Celestial Bodies" (137), both real and

astrological. Yet, as Whitehead, the twentieth-century co-author of *Principia*

Mathematica, reminds us in *An Introduction to Mathematics*, Swift "lived at a time

peculiarly unsuited for gibes at contemporary mathematicians. Newton's Principia had

just been written, one of the great forces which have transformed the modern world.

Swift might just as well have laughed at an earthquake" (3).

As Burke explains in illustration of the above-mentioned dramatistic ratio, Swift

depicts every detail of the Laputans' behavior such that "We observe the [scene-agent]

ratio in Swift's account of his Laputans when, to suggest that in their thinking they could

be transcendental, or introvert, or extremely biased, he writes: 'Their heads were all

inclined, either to the right or to the left; one of their eyes turned inward, and the other

directly up to the zenith [the point in the sky directly above them]'" (*Grammar* 10-11).

Swift wields even more inventiveness in naming the island and society of Laputa and

Lagado, openly inviting reader research and speculation into his language games:

> The Word, which I interpret the *Flying* or *Floating Island*,
> is in the Original *Laputa*; whereof I could never learn the
> true etymology. Lap in the old obsolete Language signifieth
> *High*, and *Untuh* a *Governor*; from which they say by
> Corruption was derived *Laputa* from *Lapuntuh*. But I do
> not approve of this Derivation, which seems to be a little
> strained. I ventured to offer to the Learned among them a
> conjecture of my own, that *Laputa* was *quasi Lap outed*;
> *Lap* signifying properly the dancing of the Sun Beams in
> the Sea; and *outed* a Wing, which however I shall not
> obtrude, but submit to the judicious Reader (135).

Swift's suggested division between *Lap* and *untuh*, rather than *La* and *puta*, along

with his submission of the matter "to the judicious reader" prompts exegesis. The most

common interpretation of Laputa is as *la puta,* spanish for "the whore," construing it, as

Greenburg and Piper do, as "a name for a people that has dealt so unnaturally with its

physical nature" (135n). This tells only half the story, however. First, the term "whore"

defines a person who regularly engages in sexual activity, not one who abstains from it,

as the Laputans do. Second, the most basic meaning of *puta*, as derived from the Latin

putus, is "pure." Therefore, Laputa also signifies "the pure," connoting a people too

preoccupied with abstract mathematical and musical thought to experience sexual urges.

Higher air has always been deemed more rarified and pure.

Swift may also be referring to the Roman goddess Puta, who presided over the pruning of trees—and by extension, the harvesting of his heuristic fruits. The Laputans' lowering of the floating island, when hovering over a rebellious city before the towers were built, depicts a pruning effect, depriving inhabitants "of the Benefit of the Sun and the Rain" and afflicting them "with Dearth and Diseases" (144). Arnobius of Sicca (284-305), an Early Christian apologist, provides the only known reference to Puta as a goddess, and Swift likely would have encountered him in his theological training. Given Swift's penchant for multiple meanings, he may well have intended all three references, *whore*, *pure*, and *pruning*, mischievously misleading readers and researchers with the more obvious possibility of *whore*.

While visiting Laputa, Swift also depicts Gulliver ridiculing Llull's combinatory method*,* writing about a machine invented by a professor, consisting of a 20-foot square device framing 256 cubes linked by wires, with 16 columns and 16 rows attached to 64 cranks. A different Laputan word appeared on each of the four viewable sides of the cubes; by rotating a row, random combinations occasionally formed intelligible sentences. The Laputan professor proudly explained how the contrivance allows "the most ignorant Person [to] write Books in Philosophy, Poetry, Politicks, Law, Mathematicks and Theology, without the least Assistance from Genius or Study" (173). While Swift revels in the type of incongruity the machine surely must have produced, he clearly did not approve of Llull's mechanical method of generating semantic incongruity, favoring the linguistically more creative cabalistic thinking.

In a similar fashion, Swift's satirical presentation of language in the Academy at Balnibarbi reflects and reacts to the linguistic changes of his time, the shift from a

taxonomic representation of words-and-things to a relational representation of speech-and-thought through reification. Ann Cline Kelly, in *Swift and the English Language*, sums up Swift's position vis-à-vis this language change well:

> Swift was opposed, on the one hand, to the "scientific," empirical definition advocated by Bacon and others in the seventeenth century because he believed that it conflated words with things, and he was also disturbed by the contemporary notion that meaning was related somehow to the particular operations of the human mind. Rejecting both of these ideas, Swift believed language was a historical entity that transcended both materialism and individualism (82).

In opposing Sprat's plan for Plain Language, which advocated an unadorned prose style devoid of all tropes and figures of speech, Swift understood the consequences of forging tight, specific links between *res* and *verba;* had Locke, Hobbes, and Sprat been successful in their attempt to purge language of tropes, they not only would have limited the range of traditional word meanings, but also would have diminished—if not eliminated—the tropological meanings of countless words used heuristically. Swift illustrates the lunacy of such rigid semantic linking in Chapter V, Part III of the *Travels*, with Gulliver insisting that, "Words are only *Names* for *Things*," in justification of "abolishing all Words whatsoever" (158). Accordingly, "it would be more convenient for all Men to carry about them, such *Things* as were necessary to express the particular Business they are to discourse on" (Ibid). While joking that such a practice might require one man to "carry a greater Bundle of Things upon his Back," Swift also demonstrates in *A Tale of a Tub* that one's understanding of a subject may be vastly expanded and accelerated via the *literalization of words*; consequently, he does not seem to intend the "great Advantage proposed by this Invention" entirely in jest.

3. Reification and Canting

For Swift, reification represents the starting point of a nuanced thought-and-language game. On one hand, Swift depicts the idiocy of replacing words with things, but on the other, he shows the heuristic value of literalizing words in the process of invention, not only through the extension of metaphors into allegories, but also in the semantic extension of roots etymologically and phonetically. The process consists of a three-part, self-consuming progression wherein Swift: 1) identifies a ridiculous and potentially dangerous project, such as the elimination of tropes and figures; 2) satirizes the project in a way that leads most readers to think he rejects it outright; and 3) develops a subtle remedial theme as a crosscurrent, such as the inventive benefit of literalizing words, thereby creating a *double paradox* that only those familiar with his methods recognize. Swift's literalization of canting structures the process in reverse, praising an activity most find annoying, advocating its usefulness, and then demonstrating its utter uselessness by literalizing an example.

In Section IX of the *Tale*, titled "A Digression Concerning Madness," Swift discusses canting, which *OED* defines as "speaking in a sing-song tone [or] whining" (2011), as the ultimate interplay of the senses, reason, and imagination:

> Cant and Vision are to the Ear and the Eye, the same that
> Tickling is to the Touch. Those Entertainments and
> Pleasures we must value in Life, are such as *Dupe* and play
> Wag with the Senses. For, if we take an Examination of
> what is generally understood by *Happiness*, as it has
> Respect, either to the Understanding or the Senses, we shall
> find all its Properties and adjuncts will herd under this short
> Definition: *That, it is a perpetual Possession of being well
> Deceived* (350-351, italics his).

Swift implies by his praise that canting is essential to human happiness, and any

attempt to curtail it would be a mistake. In the explanation that follows this passage, the

narrator delineates the "mighty Advantages Fiction [as deception] has over Truth" (351).

Canting constitutes the height of such deceptive use of imagination, insofar as it "can

build nobler Scenes, and produce more wonderful Revolutions than Fortune or Nature

will be at Expense to furnish" (Ibid). The fruits of the imagination, obtained through the

deployment of

> Artificial Mediums, false lights, refracted Angles, Varnish,
> and Tinsel" in the "*Play-House*" of the mind, stand "so far
> preferable [as an expression of] Wisdom, which converses
> about the Surface, to that pretended Philosophy which
> enters into the Depth of Things, and then comes gravely
> back with Informations and Discoveries, that in the inside
> they are good for nothing (Ibid).

In this context, Swift praises the senses, which "never examine further than the Colour,

the Shape, the Size, and whatever other Qualities dwell, or are drawn by Art upon the

Outward of Bodies" (Ibid). Yet, the senses deem themselves superior to reason, which

acts "officiously, with Tools for cutting, and opening, and mangling, and piercing" (Ibid).

To illustrate the stark contrast between the artistic, surface perspective of the senses and

the technical, in-depth perspective of reason, he presents the following graphic anecdote

and explication:

> Last Week I saw a Woman *flay'd*, and you will hardly
> believe, how much it altered her Person for the worse.
> Yesterday, I ordered the Carcass of a *Beau* to be stript in
> my Presence; when we were all amazed to find so many
> unsuspected Faults under one Suit of Cloaths: Then I laid
> open his *Brain*, his *Heart*, and his *Spleen*; But, I plainly
> perceived at every Operation, that the farther we proceeded,
> we found the Defects increase upon us in Number and
> Bulk. […] He that can with *Epicurus* content his Ideas with
> the *Films* and *Images* that fly off upon his Senses from the

Superfices of Things; Such a Man truly wise, crams off
Nature, leaving the Sower and the Dregs, for Philosophy
and Reason to lap up. This is the sublime and refined Point
of Felicity, called, the Possession of being well deceived;
The Serene Peaceful State of being a Fool among Knaves
(352).

The reference to clothing reiterates Swift's earlier trope (in Section II) wherein
"Man himself [is] but a Micro-Coat, or rather a compleat Suit of Cloaths with all its
Trimmings"; and the woman's flaying recalls Jack's decision (in Section VI) to "*Strip,
Tear, Pull, Rent*, [and] *Flay off all that we may appear as unlike that rogue* Peter *as it is
possible*" (355). Collectively, the references to clothes and flaying—as invested
conversions and fragmentation in relation to canting—become contextualized in *The
Mechanical Operation of the Spirit*, where Swift explains the correlation between the
senses and canting in relation to droning and reason "in the Language of the Spirit":

For it is to be understood, that in the Language of the Spirit,
Cant and *Droning* supply the Place of *Sense* and *Reason*, in
the Language of Men: Because, in Spiritual Harangues, the
Disposition of the Words according to the Art of Grammar
hath not the least Use, but the Skill and Influence wholly lye
in the Choice and Cadence of the Syllables; Even as a
discreet *Composer*, who in setting a Song, changes the
Words and Order so often, that he is forced to make it
Nonsense, before he can make *Music*. For this Reason, it
hath been held by some, that the Art of Canting is ever in
greatest Perfection, when managed by *Ignorance*: Which is
thought to be enigmatically meant by *Plutarch*, when he tells
us, that the best Musical Instruments were made from the
Bones of an *Ass* (408).

Having resolved to write about language "by way of Allegory," the narrator states
that "from hence forward, instead of the Term, *Ass*, we shall make use of *Gifted*, or
enlightened Teacher" (401). Inverting Swift's use of the term *ass* in the above passage,
and interpreting *Bones* as "words" in his comparison of liturgical eloquence to musical

composition, we might translate the final portion of the last line as follows: "[…] the best *sermons* were made from the *words* of an *enlightened teacher*." Yet, the narrator insists that the words spoken have less to do with the efficacy of the sermon than the manner in which the preacher speaks them; the effect of various sounds and their polysemic connotations have a greater impact on the listener then the terms and their meanings:

> NOW, the Art of *Canting* consists in skillfully adapting the Voice, to whatever Words the Spirit delivers, that each may strike the Ears of the Audience, with its most significant Cadence. The Force, or Energy of this Eloquence, is not to be found, as among antient Orators, in the Disposition of Words to a Sentence, or the turning of long Periods; but agreeable to the Modern Refinements in Musick, is taken up wholly in dwelling, and dilating upon Syllables and Letters. Thus it is frequent for a single *Vowel* to draw Sighs from a Multitude; and for a whole Assembly of Saints to so to the Musick of one solitary *Liquid*" (408).

Swift's literalization of the canting process begins with a spiritual orientation. Thus, the *Tale* narrator states that "The first Ingredient, towards the Art of Canting, is a competent Share of *Inward Light*" (408). Such light, as "a large Memory, plentifully fraught with Theological Polysyllables, and mysterious Texts from holy Writ" (Ibid), consists of compacting and burning "Leaves from old *Geneva* Bibles […] affirming, the Scripture to be now fulfilled, where it says, *Thy Word is a Lanthorn to my Feet, and a Light to my Paths*" (Ibid). Here Swift reifies the biblical metaphor of a lamp as knowledge (from Psalm 119:105), suggesting the crumpled paper on which the words are printed can literally be burned as a source of visual and spiritual light.

Taking this reification as a metaphor in its own right, we perceive the cabalistic process of transforming raw verbiage—letters and words—into new meaning through verbal alchemy as exegetical transmutation. The word *Lanthorn*, prior to morphing into

lantern, denoted a translucent horn in which oiled paper or other material was burned for illumination. In the seventeenth century, according to the *OED*, *lanthorn* also connoted "the old cry of the London bellman at night" and "one who empties privies by lantern-light" (2010). These meanings add texture to Swift's comparison of people susceptible to cant of "A Master Work-man" as people "who are disposed to receive the Excrements of his Brain with the same Reverence, as the Issue of it," demonstrating its vulgarity and uselessness.

4. Literalization and Debasement

Elsewhere in the same section, Swift refers to books as "united forces" in which "two rivals" challenge each other "to a comparison of books, both as to weight and number," focusing on their physical substance as entities rather than their intellectual power as a source of ideas. In *The Battle of the Books*, these forces engage in armed combat, pitting Ancient authors and their ideas against those of the Moderns. Similarly, the *Tale* narrator portrays illumination and insight as being derived from the actual consumption of words and paper, by distilling it into an elixir and "snuffing it strongly up your Nose," where

> it will dilate it self about the Brain (where there is any) in
> fourteen minutes, and you immediately perceive in your
> Head an infinite Number of Abstracts, Summaries,
> Compendiums, Extracts, Collections, Medulla's, Excerpta,
> quaedam's, Florigia's and the like, all disposed into great
> Order, and reducible upon Paper" (328).

While ridiculing the modern idea that the knowledge of great books can be assimilated through summaries and indexes in lieu of reading the books themselves, Swift also reifies knowledge as a consumable substance, warning against a drug-like inhalation of its essence as a replacement for normal scholarly mastication and digestion.

199

As a remedy to such an approach, we need only remember the narrator's announced intention in the *Tale* to "furnish Plenty of noble Matter for such [as are skilled in literalization], whose converting Imaginations dispose them to reduce all things into *Types*; who can make *Shadows*, no thanks to the Sun; and then mold them into Substances, no thanks to Philosophy" (361). Swift presents an excellent example of his heuristic method of literalization in Section III of the *Tale*, "A Digression Concerning Criticks," with reference to the literal and metaphorical meanings of the words *mirror*, *brass*, and *mercury*:

> A certain Author, whose Works have many Ages since been entirely lost, does in his fifth book and eighth Chapter, say of *Criticks*, that *their Writings are the Mirrors of Learning*. This I understand in a literal Sense, and suppose our Author must mean, that whosoever designs to be a perfect Writer, must inspect into the Books of *Criticks*, and correct his Invention there as in a Mirror. Now, whoever considers, that the *Mirrors* of the Antients were made of *Brass*, and *sine Mercurio*, may presently apply the two Principal Qualifications of a *True Modern Critick*, and consequently, must needs conclude, that these have always been, and must be forever the same. For, *Brass* is an Emblem of Duration, and when skillfully burnished, will cast *Reflections* from its own *Superficies*, without any Assistance of *Mercury* from behind (317).

After explaining the correlation between the writings of critics and mirrors "in a literal sense," the narrator then equivocates between the literal and metaphorical through the remainder of passage. He notes that reading the books of critics can correct a writer's invention metaphorically, "as in a mirror," but also that mirrors literally "were made of *Brass*, and *sine Mercurio*." As Quinlan points out, "*mercury* in Swift's time [also] was used metaphorically to mean 'wit or volatility of character,' [and] brass, as Johnson's dictionary shows, was then, as it is today, a metaphor for impudence" (517), i.e., brassy

insolence. Alchemically, brass, as an alloy of copper, also represents Venus, the glyph (♀) of which resembles a hand mirror; accordingly, it symbolizes both beauty and vanity astrologically. Moreover, the narrator calls brass "an Emblem of Duration" (being rust-proof) that can be "skillfully burnished," conflating the metaphorical and literal meanings in a single line.

Finally, notes Quinlan, "the unusual word *superficies* carries, in addition to the literal one [the surface, outer face, or outside of a thing], two suggested meanings—*superficiality* and also a pun on *feces*" (Ibid). The word's meaning, as "surface," derives, of course, from the Latin etymological relation of *super* as "on," whereas the *feces* pun stems from a cabalistic play on phonetics, as if *superficies* were spelled *superfeces*; moreover, the pun garners confirmation in the "Assistance of Mercury from *behind*" (Ibid, italics mine). Swift combines word play and literalization to conjure a memorable, if unpleasant, image of critics dropping *feces* on texts they damn, with those droppings being so shiny that they "cast *Reflections*" of their own vile thinking processes onto those of the authors they criticize.

Swift plays with many such Latin-derived terms in the *Tale*, including for example, the word *profound*. According to the *OED*, the classical word *profundus* originally denoted both "extending a long way down, deep, situated far below the surface," and "difficult to understand, abstruse, intense, absorbing" (OED 2010). In post-classical (thirteenth-century) Latin it came to mean "deepest or innermost part of something, chasm, abyss, depths of the sea," and the "innermost secrets or mysteries" (Ibid). Swift brings out these connotative references to subterranean depths and the sea as means of literalizing the term in relation to the relative depth of a writer's thinking:

> I have one Word to say upon the subject of *Profound*
> *Writers*, who are grown very numerous of late, and I know
> very well the judicious World is resolved to list me in that
> Number. I conceive, therefore, as to the Business of being
> *Profound*, that it is with *Writers* as with *Wells*. A Person
> with good Eyes can see to the Bottom of the deepest,
> provided any *Water* be there; and that often when there is
> nothing in the World at the Bottom besides *Dryness* and
> *Dirt*, tho' it be but a Yard and half under Ground, it shall
> pass, however, for wondrous *Deep*, upon no wiser a Reason
> than because it is wondrous *Dark (370)*.

Such literalizations may be called bi-lateral because they restore the literal meaning while also retaining the figurative. By contrast, one-way transformations, or conversions of metaphors into literal things—consisting, in effect, of the deconstruction of tropes— evoke more irony than do thing-to-metaphor conversions that characterize the construction of tropes. Consider, for example, the effect achieved through Swift's literalization of the terms *cloth* and *Philosopher's Stone* in his depiction of Jack's Calvinistic practices and beliefs. In reference to the Bible, Jack declares, "I will prove this very Skin of Parchment to be Meat, Drink, and Cloth, to be the Philosopher's Stone, and the Universal Medicine" (361); Jack then actualizes that claim by using the parchment "for a Night-cap when he went to bed, and for an Umbrello in rainy Weather" (Ibid). In alchemy, the Philosopher's Stone and Universal Medicine are interchangeable terms for the substance that transforms base metals into gold and affords its possessor eternal youth. Thus, Jack also literalizes the alchemical metaphor of the stone as medicine when he proposes to place "a Piece of it about a sore Toe, or when he had Fits, burn two Inches under his Nose; or if any Thing lay heavy on his Stomach, scrape off, and swallow as much of the Powder as would lie on a silver Penny" as "infallible Remedies" (Ibid).

E. Ridicule, History, and Schizophrenia

1. Ridicule and Social Criticism

In the *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, George Campbell presents ridicule as a useful outgrowth of wit and humor, defining wit as that which excites "in the mind an agreeable surprise" (8), and humor as the emotional response to highly effective wit. However, according to Campbell, not all humor is born equal, but accords with one of two opposing purposes: "either merely to divert by that grateful titillation which it excites, or to influence the opinions and purposes of the hearers" (20). Humor designed to evoke titillation or mere laughter Campbell deems *comical*, whereas that which influences opinions and purposes (and may or may not produce laughter) he calls *contemptuous*.

Ridicule, therefore, consists of the use of wit to produce humor that induces social contempt, as a subtle commentary on a falsity or misdeed to influence the opinion of the audience. Wit brings together seemingly disparate ideas in a pithy, maxim-like statement containing the conclusive seed of an argument with all its premises omitted. Humor subsequently occurs when the listener discerns the message as conforming to "the common tie of human souls, and thereby communicates the passion to the breast of the hearer" (15). This often occurs in the manner of a fallacious enthymeme, which distorts a shared, unstated assumption. Once the audience perceives that the enthymeme (as an abbreviated syllogism) stands upon a fallacious topic in illustration of falsehood or misconduct, it develops contempt for the object of their laughter. Therefore, as Campbell explains, witticisms that evoke ridicule must be artfully camouflaged by the rhetor:

> The assault of him who ridicules is, from its very nature,
> covert and oblique. What we profess to contemn, we scorn to
> confute. It is on this account that the reasoning in ridicule, if
> at all delicate, is always conveyed under a species of

disguise. Nay, sometimes, which is more astonishing, the
contempt itself seems to be dissembled, and the rallier
assumes an air of arguing gravely in defense of that which he
actually exposeth as ridiculous. Hence, undoubtedly, it
proceeds, that a serious manner commonly adds energy to the
joke. The fact, however, is, that in this case the very
dissimulation is dissembled (23, italics mine).

According to the standard assessment of the genre, satire delivers social criticism

through the well-aimed weapon of ridicule, its ultimate purpose being to shame certain

individuals or organizations (if not society as a whole) into improvement. Most view

Swift's intellectual absurdities and ironic paradigms in this light; but, in fact, Swift also

upholds human flaws as inevitable, incorrigible, and forgivable symbols of life. Gulliver,

Swift's best known character and would-be social critic, attempts to convince himself

throughout much of Book IV of the *Travels* that he and his ilk cannot properly be

compared to Yahoos, whom the Houyhnhnms distrust and despise. Yet, in spite of his

insistence in the final chapter, concerning his veracity as an author, that he writes "to

inform and instruct Mankind" (257), Gulliver ultimately deems humans a race comprised

not of virtuous beings, but of "docible Animals" (259), just as incapable of improving

themselves as the Yahoos:

When I thought of my Family, my friends, my Countrymen,
or human Race in general, I considered them as they really
were, *Yahoos* in shape and disposition, perhaps a little more
civilized, and qualified with the Gift of speech; but making
no other Use of Reason, than to improve and multiply those
Vices, whereof […] Nature allotted them (243).

Swift has been credited with honing satire into the ultimate form of social criticism,

but perhaps he must also be faulted, as Bullitt notes, for "elevating satire to a position

where it was independent of reason, [so that] it could be properly applied to any subject"

(78). As a peripheral, if not direct, consequence, "By the beginning of the eighteenth

century, satire, or ridicule, became recognized as both the most useful and most dangerous mode of rhetoric" (81); dangerous because it did not always serve its intended purpose, and useful because it could also provide cover for the covert conveyance of unpopular ideas and unorthodox ways of thinking. Swift found the symbolic, traditionally fallacious, enthymeme especially well-suited to this purpose. For the fallacious enthymeme "is refutative and its means is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the premise he wishes to deny. [Therefore,] it is the reader and not Swift who completes the argument" (95), rendering it the performative inventive vehicle *par excellence*.

In the Country of the Houyhnhnms, where reason finally seems to reign supreme, the Houyhnhnms remain so steadfast to honesty and "the unerring Rules of Reason" (251) that they ultimately become *unreasonable*. The Houyhnhnms' obsessive rationality culminates in Gulliver being given an ultimatum either to swim or sail back to where he came from or be treated as a run-of-the-mill Yahoo. Everything is black-and-white, subject to the strict laws of logic, insofar as "no Person can disobey Reason, without giving up his Claim to be a rational Creature" (253). Gulliver admires and accepts this pronouncement, despite his puzzlement that "in my weak and corrupt Judgment, I thought it might consist with Reason to have been less rigorous [given that] I could not swim a League [...]" (Ibid). The entire fourth book remains as troubling as it is puzzling, ringing painfully true at points, while missing the mark wildly at others. As with the narrator of the *Tale*, Gulliver wields the extremes of reason and unreason in defense of the middle, but one never knows where the boundaries lie. Gulliver's indictment of humanity as Yahoos provokes us to disdain ourselves at one moment, and defend ourselves at another. We cannot help thinking we are better than he makes us out to be in

some places, but far worse in others. But the aspect of human nature Swift captures so poignantly is the tendency of each of us to judge one another, as if that act somehow purged us of our shortcomings.

The ultimate consequence of such judging is hypocrisy, well demonstrated by Gulliver's refusal to wear the shirt offered him by the Captain who returns him to Europe, believing the shirt to have been defiled by contact with human skin. He admits that, "abhorring to cover myself with any thing that had been on the Back of a Yahoo," he wishes instead that the captain "would lend me two clean Shirts, which having been washed since he wore them, I believed would not so much defile me" (259). Yet, Gulliver boards the ship wearing clothes made from *skins of Yahoos*, the stench of which must have far exceed that of the Captain's clothes. Gulliver's descriptions of the Houyhnhnms tempt us to think of them as angels, given their seeming innocence and naiveté: strangers to lying and all forms of deceit, they live a simple life, virtually free from lust, gluttony, and other vices; moreover, they speak a limited nature-based language, a living book of symbols understandable only by those pure of heart. But the Houyhnhnms remain too reason-bound to be angelic; they lack the pathos that enable even caring humans to tolerate and reach out to their underprivileged counterparts. Instead, the Houyhnhnms make quick, cold judgments, segregating Yahoos in a manner reminiscent of southern U.S. states in the fifties, and failing to accommodate their special needs.

So what are we to make of Swift's use of satire in his depiction of the Houyhnhnms? No less than the other societies Gulliver visits in the *Travels*, the Houyhnhnms must be seen as caricatures, exaggerations of a specific type; in this case, excessively rational humans. In Burkean terms, conversions downward. The influence of

206

the Houyhnhnms on Gulliver—and by extension, on us—may, in fact, loom more insidious than intended. Their caricaturization exalts reason above emotion, sensibility, and intuition, producing an elemental imbalance akin to melancholy. If the society of the Houyhnhnms represents our goal as a race, if our evolution culminates in pure reason, our perceived progress is an illusion. Conversely, if we allow for double irony within Swift's satire as a product of his symbolic invention, a different interpretation emerges: Those who argue (with the best of "reasons") that humanity is most praiseworthy when most rational—that each step toward governance by logic rather than compassion is a step in the right direction—may actually represent a more ominous threat than those deemed deficient in reason. We have much to fear if progress prompts us to judge ourselves and others by unattainable standards, causing us to despise one another to the point of preferring rugged individualism and isolation over an imperfect society.

2. Love-Hate History of the Ancients and Moderns

A pivotal figure in the dispute between the Ancients and the Moderns, as evidenced not only by *The Battle of the Books*, but in nearly everything he wrote, Swift defies historical categorization. One could just as easily call him the last Ancient as the first Modern, for Swift reveled in playing both sides against the middle. In *A Tale of a Tub,* he defends Ancient learning against modern pretense and superficiality while ridiculing the Ancients for their superstitious ways of thinking; in *Gulliver's Travels* he satirizes modern arrogance and feigned progress while exalting modern satirists over Ancient secret societies. In fact, Swift never fully identifies himself with either side, save for the common ground he finds in irony and satire.

Perhaps better than any other author, Swift embodies the social and individual schizophrenia manifest in the intellectual quarrel waged near the end of the eighteenth century; a battle between those who saw the thinkers of Ancient civilizations as the touchstone of wisdom and those who claim superior progress and knowledge in the enlightenment. His *Tale* and *Battle of the Books* openly dramatize the intellectual conflict introduced by English statesman Sir William Temple (1628-1699) in his controversial essay, "Ancient and Modern Learning," as does Book Three of the *Travels*. In his essay, Temple, Swift's former employer, uses a pair of lasting, but now overused, metaphors to depict the standoff between the Ancients and Moderns. Newton adopted his suggestion that modern man represents a dwarf standing upon the "shoulders of giants," and Temple's comment that modern man saw by the reflected light of the Ancients remains a familiar refrain to metaphysical philosophers. Swift used both metaphors—midgets in the land of giants, and Ancient manuscripts burned for illumination—literally and figuratively in his satires, belittling both the Ancient and Modern views of knowledge. Rather than take sides, Swift adopts a synthetic perspective of the Ancients and Moderns, collapsing their disparate philosophies into a self-consuming no-man's land.

Both the *Tale* and the *Battle* represent dramatic enactments of this schizophrenia, or double vision; each depicts humanity clinging to the "dark" knowledge of alchemy, cabala, astrology, and magic, while reaching out toward the "light" of modernity, natural philosophy, and criticism. In each, the narrator seems unable to completely renounce the former, yet incapable of fully embracing the latter. John R. Clark describes the struggle in *Form and Frenzy in Swift's A Tale of a Tub* as a tug-of-war between "curiosity" and "credulity," in which the reader attempts to determine whether Swift positions his

narrator as one or the other—Modern or Ancient—but ultimately perceives "that the modern persona [of *A Tale*] embodies striking traits of both" (38, italics his). The narrator depicts a perversely bifocal perspective, torn between the two periods he parodies, imitates, praises, and satires, alternately espousing through curiosity, and rejecting through credulity, the respective doctrines and methods of each.

Swift's angst mirrors the historical and philosophical rift of his time, a deeper and more meaningful one than our postmodern *weltanschauung*. In the epic *Battle* between the books in St. James' library, wherein the respective authors personify arguments between Moderns and Ancients, Swift artfully avoids indicating which side wins. Rather, he suggests that the manuscript in which he tells the story has been mutilated at critical points preventing complete knowledge of the outcome. This fragmentation prefigures modernity's loss of totality, a perceived inability to see and comprehend the truth that earlier generations believed available to them. The *Battle* reiterates a common theme of the *Tale,* that those who believe one side superior to the other become subject to a type of madness that stifles clear thinking. Arguably, this tragic fate befalls Swift near the end of his life, when, according to Will Durant (1885-1981), in his refusal to embrace Modernity, "Definite symptoms of madness appeared" around 1738. By 1741, guardians took full charge of Swift's affairs, and in 1742, "he suffered great pain from the inflammation of his left eye, which swelled to the size of an egg; five attendants had to restrain him from tearing out his eye [and] he went a whole year without uttering a word" (362). In the end, Swift's life stands as a testament to the transitional age his enigmatic writings portray.

3. Swift's Answer to Cowley: A Schizophrenic Conclusion

Swift stands decidedly opposite Cowley, who seemed at home in his time, not only embracing but also synthesizing symbolic and proto-scientific realities. Cowley had an unmistakable influence on Swift, who, by all accounts, failed miserably in his attempts to emulate Cowley's Pindaric odes. In the *Battle*, Swift portrays Cowley as the most noble of the Modern poets, pitting him against Pindar in a courageous if hopeless lance-and-sword fight. Appropriately, Pindar slices Cowley in half, representative, no doubt, of Cowley's attempt to accommodate both the Ancients and Moderns; and perhaps expressing Swift's envy-tainted opinion that Cowley's imitation odes merited only half the praise of Pindar's. Yet, despite portraying Pindar's personified book as calling Cowley's book a "dog," Swift shows great respect for Cowley elsewhere, furnishing him a "shield that had been given Him by *Venus*" (Swift 249, italics his) in praise of his *Mistress* love poems. Once Pindar manages, "with a mighty stroke," to "cleft the wretched Modern in twain" (250), Venus claims Cowley's lower half, washes it "seven times in *ambrosia*," and sticks it thrice with a "Sprig of *Amarant*," before transforming it into a dove, and then harnessing it to her chariot. In contrast to the high praise bestowed upon Cowley's lower body, Swift displays fierce disdain for his upper half, which "lay panting on the Ground, to be trod in pieces by the horses feet" (250).

The scene involving the upper body encodes an exceptionally clever and alchemical reference to Cowley's own description of his Pindarics in "The Resurrection," as "a hard-Mouth'd Horse [that] flings Writer and Reader too that sits not sure" (183), with the "feet" alluding to the roughness of their meter. A similar reference to this Pindaric appears in the *Tale* narrator's admission, in "A Digression on Madness," that he

is "a Person, whose Imaginations are hard-mouth'd, and exceedingly disposed to run away with his Reason, which I have observed from long Experience, to be a very light Rider, and easily shook off" (Swift 355). Swift's reference to a person "disposed to run away with his Reason" as "a very light Rider, and easily shook off," characterizes not only the tenuous relation between the acquired meanings of Swift's cabalistic words, but also the double meanings of Cowley's mix't witticisms.

As the *Tale*'s narrator notes, perhaps even speaking for Swift, "even I my self, the Author of these momentous Truths, am a Person [of such temperament]; upon which Account, my Friends will never trust me alone, without a solemn Promise, to vent my Speculations in this, or the like manner, for the universal Benefit of Human kind" (355). Here, couched in terms of the cabala, we find a restatement of Swift's most telling sentiment—depicted figuratively in the fourth book of the *Travels* in his distinction between Houhynhnms and the Yahoos, and stated more explicitly in a letter dated September 29, 1725, regarding his extreme dislike for humanity in contrast to his affable love of individuals:

> I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities,
> and all my love is toward individuals: for instance, I hate
> the tribe of lawyers, but I love Counsellor Such-a-one, and
> Judge Such-a-one: so with physicians—I will not speak of
> my own trade—soldiers, English, Scotch, French, and the
> rest. But principally I hate and detest that animal called
> man, although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas, and so
> forth. (Scott XVII-4).

Perhaps more than any other text, this passage explains Swifts Janus-like view of life, his inability to reconcile humans with humanity, their beauty with their ugliness, their past with their future. Unlike Cowley, he could neither bridge the ever-widening gap between the Ancients and Moderns, nor align himself definitively with one side or the

other. Swift's indecision characterizes the great abyss of his writings, marking civilization's historic point of no return, which Titus Burckhardt calls the "intellectual dis-equilibrium" of humankind. Swift's recognition of Cowley as the midway point in the *Battle,* symbolic of all the dichotomies he resisted, underscores his intent to destroy the bridges between them.

Historically, Cowley paid the ultimate price, falling through the cracks of history as a poet too scientific for the metaphysical school and too metaphysical for the moderns. By contrast, Swift's schizophrenic refusal to compromise earned him lasting fame, a consolation for his madness, perhaps, which continues to dazzle, disturb, and provoke those who attempt to cross back over the one-way bridge that eventually materialized in the philosophy of Descartes and his followers. Occult invention, as the hallmark of Occult Mode authors such as Chapman, Shakespeare, Donne, Cowley, Dryden, and Swift, represents one of a few remaining vehicles in which to revisit their uniquely transitional time in our intellectual history, a time when the brightest thinkers regularly traversed the bridge both ways.

APPENDIX

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220

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