

EARLY MODERN IMAGINATION

“THE WORLD IN MAN’S HEART”: THE FACULTY OF IMAGINATION
IN
EARLY MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE

By

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ABSTRACT

No evaluation of the Renaissance—its culture and texts—is complete without understanding early modern imagination. Yet many modern critics have understated or misunderstood the imagination’s importance to the English Renaissance. Misconceptions arise, in part, because our current understanding of imagination has been influenced by Romantic theorists, whose definitions of imagination differ radically from early modern beliefs about the functions and capabilities of the faculty. A comprehensive study of early modern imagination is therefore essential. This thesis undertakes the timely task of analyzing the significance of Renaissance definitions and characteristics of imagination as they are posited in early modern philosophical and medical texts. To early modern English theorists such as Francis Bacon, Robert Burton, and Margaret Cavendish, the physical location of imagination determines its function and significance, its potentially dangerous autonomy is a constant threat, the imagination can disastrously or advantageously influence the body, and it can justify textual novelty and creativity. Studying imagination is incomplete without understanding its expansion in literary texts, for in poetry, drama, and fictional narratives, authors self-consciously employ and debate the characteristics of imagination philosophers, physicians, and theologians were earnestly debating. In *The Temple*, George Herbert crafts his poetry and his text to metaphorically display and debate the physical position of imagination in the brain. Richard Brome’s play, *The Antipodes*, questions the autonomy of imagination. Can the imagination be controlled, Brome asks, and by what? *The Unfortunate Traveller*, Thomas Nashe’s prose narrative, fleshes out early modern considerations of the imagination’s impact on the body of the imaginant and others. Francis Quarles’s *Emblemes* illustrates—literally—Renaissance debates about imagination’s influence on originality and creativity. For, in their literary texts, early modern authors use their contemporaries’ theories of imagination to justify and test their relationship with, and responsibility to, God, their readers, and themselves.

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INTRODUCTION

Early Modern People Imagined

Perhaps Theseus says it best when he famously orates in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
 Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
 More than cool reason ever comprehends.
 The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
 Are of imagination all compact.
 One sees more devils than vast hell can hold:
 That is the madman. The lover, all as frantic,
 Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt.
 The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
 Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
 And as imagination bodies forth
 The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
 Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
 A local habitation and a name.
 Such tricks hath strong imagination
 That if it would but apprehend some joy
 It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
 Or in the night, imagining some fear,
 How easily is a bush supposed a bear!
 (5.1.4-22)

Theseus's description of imagination's power and practitioners is certainly one of the most well known summaries of the faculty of imagination in early modern English literature. He assigns great creative force to the imagination or fantasy, and he delegates imagination to the control of poets (after madmen and lovers). Moreover, for all the force he attributes to it, his portrayal of imagination is hardly complimentary.¹ Yet his description and opinion of imagination, for all its fame,

¹ Critics, with good reason, pay close attention to Theseus's speech, debating whether Theseus's voice is Shakespeare's, and if Theseus is describing *A Midsummer Night's Dream* itself. According to Kenneth Burke, the speech contains "grand lines, but they are Theseus' lines, not Shakespeare's. For they contain no mention of the astounding rationality he brought to his trade as a playwright. They are not the recipe for Shakespeare. Shakespeare was all that, and more" (308). Robert Dent compares the speech to imagination in the rest of the play: "Theseus' speech introduces the words 'image', 'imagine', 'imagination', and 'imagining' to the play. But of course

is only one of the voices in the English Renaissance debating the imagination's value as a mental and bodily power, and a literary tool.

Writing a dissertation about the imagination is, in one sense, impossible, for the task is self-destructive. Placing imagination as the central focus of a dissertation means that I must reason about imagination and force imagination into a rational framework. Is imagination then destroyed by reason? Should I even continue, or are all efforts to quantify and qualify the imagination impossible? Should I end before I begin? Even if the task is difficult, many people have considered the role and characteristics of the human imagination. Lodi Nauta and Detlev Pätzold cautiously write, "Imagination is a topic that can be approached from many different angles and be pursued in equally diverse directions" (ix). They continue, however, to explain why imagination, for all its breadth and complexity, must be studied: "It plays a crucial role in almost all domains of human life or even— as one may argue— animal life in general" (ix). Richard Kearney agrees: "Since the beginning, imagination has been acknowledged as one of the most fundamental, if concealed, powers of humankind" (*Poetics of Imagining* 1). Grandly, Andrew Welburn opines: "Imagination is our concrete hold on the richness of experience" (3), adding that "Imagination enables us to enter into the very texture of another mind, as well as our own experience" (10).² Studying imagination is especially essential in any discipline exploring literature and art, for "Imagination in its highest form is said to be the creative faculty of the mind, the department engaged in framing new images and conceptions, things and ideas hitherto unknown and previously nonexistent" (Kelley and Sacks ix). Analyzing the history of imagination, which means the history of how people have considered and characterized the faculty of the imagination, is especially necessary to any understanding of the imagination and of its place in culture. As J.J.A. Mooij posits: "The concept of imagination has a history which is very relevant to its present meaning and use. We have to appreciate how imagination was thought about in the past in order to understand how we think about it in the present" (2). Yet for all its importance, a thorough study of early modern characteristics and uses of imagination as a faculty in the brain that impacts mind, soul, body, and literary production has yet to be completed.

Comprehensively studying the early modern imagination is essential because modern critics have understated or misunderstood the importance of imagination to the English Renaissance. Misconceptions arise, in part, because

it does not introduce the concepts involved. As we have already seen, and as Theseus reminds us, much of the play has thus far concerned the role of imagination in love" (124).

² For more on the important role of the imagination, see Martin Gosman, "Imagining the Necessary: Italian Artists and the Road to Fame in Late-Medieval and Early Modern Times," *Imagination in the Later Middle Ages and Early Modern Times*, edited by Lodi Nauta and Detlev Pätzold (Leuven: Peeters, 2004) 115-134 and Olaf Pluta, "On the Matter of the Mind: Late-Medieval Views on Mind, Body, and Imagination," *Imagination in the Later Middle Ages and Early Modern Times*, edited by Lodi Nauta and Detlev Pätzold (Leuven: Peeters, 2004) 21-34.

our current thinking about imagination, deeply influenced by Romantic thinkers, differs radically from early modern ideas about the function and capabilities of the faculty. Once we recognize a distinct, Renaissance imagination, we can readily identify it in texts more various than most modern critics would allow, including devotional literature and philosophical treatises. We can also recognize the unique characteristics of early modern imagination, characteristics that ignore modern distinctions between science, art, philosophy, and religion. To English Renaissance thinkers, for example, the physical location of imagination determines its function and significance, its potentially dangerous autonomy is a constant threat, the imagination can disastrously or advantageously influence the body, and it can justify textual novelty and creativity. In order to understand Renaissance imagination, clearly a vital task, I will begin, as I should, by closely reading early modern English philosophical, psychological,³ and medical texts, for such texts contain clear, although often contradictory, definitions of the imagination. Studying imagination would be incomplete, however, without understanding its use and expansion in literary texts, for in poetry, drama, and fictional narratives, authors self-consciously employ the characteristics of imagination philosophers, physicians, and theologians were earnestly debating. In their literary texts, early modern authors use their contemporaries' theories of imagination to justify and test their relationship with, and responsibility to God, their readers, and themselves.

Although understanding the nature of imagination is essential to any study of the period, many modern critics have ignored or downplayed the importance of the faculty in early modern England. Yet there is certainly no lack of current scholarly debates about the imagination: philosophers, critics, scientists, and theologians have produced a flurry of books, articles, essays, and musings about the faculty. Many modern texts struggle to define and characterize the imagination as a cognitive ability. What is the connection between imagination, perception, and creativity, they ask.⁴ Other texts examine the relevance of theories of imagination developed by thinkers in the past, but they rarely look at early modern philosophers, focusing instead on poets and philosophers such as

³ There was no field of psychology in the early modern period except for the literal meaning of 'psychology' as the study of the soul. I find the modern terms 'psychology' and 'psychological,' meaning the study of the mind, useful vocabulary nonetheless for my dissertation, for they categorize early modern texts that wholly, or in part, investigate the workings of the human mind.

⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Imagination: A Psychological Critique*. trans. Forrest Williams (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962); John Kekes, *The Enlargement of Life: Moral Imagination at Work* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); and Colin McGinn, *Mindsight: Image, Dream, Meaning* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004) are three examples of such texts.

Immanuel Kant, William Blake, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge.⁵ Other books use “imagination” as a term that means “worldview” or “psyche,” such as in “sociological imagination” or “cosmopolitan imagination.”⁶ My purpose is different: I seek to trace the history of imagination as a mental faculty affecting action, including literary endeavours, for, as Penelope Murray notes, “The history of imagination is the history not simply of a word, but of a category of mental activity whose definition and interpretation has varied very greatly from age to age and from author to author” (xii-xiii). There are a number of major critical texts on the history of imagination, particularly Murray Bundy’s *The Theory of Imagination in Classical and Mediaeval Thought* (1927), James Engell’s *The Creative Imagination: Enlightenment to Romanticism* (1981), Richard Kearney’s *The Wake of Imagination: Toward a Postmodern Culture* (1988), Eva Brann’s *The World of the Imagination: Sum and Substance* (1991), and John Martin Cocking’s *Imagination: A study in the history of ideas* (1991). Each of these critics fails to give Renaissance imagination its due. Bundy’s text, while pioneering and still valuable, was published in 1927, and it does not reach the Renaissance. Kearney discusses classical and medieval conceptions of imagination at length, but then jumps ahead to consider imagination in the eighteenth century! He mentions the early modern period only when writing briefly about “transitional movements.” Brann leaves a similar gap in her work, for when she traces the history of the philosophy of imagination, she moves from “Chapter II: Medieval Writers,” to “Chapter III: Modern Writers.” She includes a limited discussion of Renaissance philosophy, but she lumps it together with her description of Medieval thinkers. As well, the only English philosopher she includes is Francis Bacon, ignoring the multitude of different English voices debating imagination in the Renaissance. Cocking analyzes imagination in the Renaissance in great detail in his work, but he focuses on the Italian and the French Renaissance, leaving out the English. Engell deliberately begins his history of imagination with the Enlightenment, for, he writes baldly, “The Enlightenment created the idea of the imagination” (3), and continues, writing about the Middle Ages and Renaissance, “There was comparatively little psychological penetration into exactly how the mind recreates and builds within itself a picture of the world, or why genius in art is more than technical superiority” (11). The English Renaissance is conspicuously absent from the

⁵ See, for example, I.A. Richards, *Coleridge on Imagination* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1935); Bernard Freytag, *Imagination in Kant’s Critique on Practical Reason* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); and Nelson Hilton, *Literal Imagination: Blake’s Vision of Words* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

⁶ For further reading, see C. Wright Mills, *Sociological Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959); Donald R. Kelley and David Harris Sacks, eds, *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric, and Fiction, 1500-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Leon Edel, *Henry James and the Cosmopolitan Imagination* (New York: New York University, 1967).

major critical works on the history of the imagination, making the study of the faculty of imagination in the early modern period all the more urgent.

Although early modern English imagination has been bypassed by major surveys of the philosophy of imagination in history, some modern critics of the Renaissance debate imagination, but often in a limited or limiting way. To suggest that there has been no scholarly attention paid at all to early modern imagination in England would be a rank overstatement, but the work that has been done is often brief or narrowly focused.⁷ Moreover, most of the work that has been done on imagination in the early modern period deals with conceptions of the monstrous and ideas of pregnancy,⁸ and although some critics have summarized medical, psychological, and philosophical treatments of early modern imagination, most of their focus is on French and Italian thinkers.⁹ Other modern critics refer to imagination, but do not analyze in detail any definitions of it; instead they describe how imagination was used in the Renaissance for a specific purpose. Todd Butler's *Imagination and Politics in Seventeenth-Century England*, for example, emphasizes how imagination was used in political writing. He pays some attention to the definition of imagination, but does not place early modern writers of medical, psychological, and philosophical treatises in conversation with each other in order to trace the nuances of the characteristics of Renaissance imagination. Moreover, many critics emphasize a leeriness about and downright condemnation of imagination in early modern texts. Elizabeth Heale, for instance, briefly examining early modern psychological and rhetorical texts, writes that imagination "was considered easily corrupted by both the senses and the humours, leading to the misregulation of the body's humoral economy and the overthrow of reason" (130). She continues, "Verse was often blamed for corrupting the imagination, especially of youth, with its vivid and seductive images and fictions"

⁷ For an excellent description of early modern imagination and faculty psychology, see William Rossy, "Imagination in the English Renaissance: Psychology and Poetic," *Studies in the Renaissance* 5 (1958): 49-73. As well, Margaret R. Hicks pays close attention to early modern psychology in her book, *Honor Conflicts and the Role of the Imagination in selected plays by John Fletcher and Lope de Vega* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990). Both works are excellent resources, but need expansion.

⁸ For example, see Simon Reynolds, "Pregnancy and Imagination in *The Winter's Tale* and Heliodorus' *Aithiopika*," *English Studies* 5 (2003): 433-47, and *Marvels, Monsters, and Miracles: Studies in the Medieval and Early Modern Imaginations*, eds. Timothy Jones and David Springer (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2002).

⁹ See, for instance, Grahame Castor's *Pléiade Poetics: A Study in Sixteenth-Century Thought and Terminology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964) and Suzanne Kooij, "Poetic Imagination and the Paradigm of Painting in Early-Modern France," *Imagination in the Later Middle Ages and Early Modern Times*, edited by Lodi Nauta and Detlev Pätzold (Leuven: Peeters, 2004) 77-94. For an especially thorough reading of non-English thinkers on imagination and faculty psychology, see E. Ruth Harvey, *The Inward Wits: Psychological Theory in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (London: The Warburg Insitute, 1975).

(130). Stephen Greenblatt, in his consideration of theological treatises, writes that early modern theologians were concerned with denying “the contaminating presence of the imagination—of human making—in [their] own beliefs” (113). He argues that imagination was associated with novelty and human creativity apart from God, and was therefore seen as something in addition to, and even opposed to, biblical truth. Greenblatt and Heale are only two examples of the many critics¹⁰ who apply an uncomplicated definition of imagination in order to bypass closely examining how early modern thinkers evaluated the imagination as a faculty that affects the understanding, influences perception, and promotes creativity. When modern critics state that Renaissance writers rejected the imagination, they cut short further discussion and they limit the analysis of the faculty to a false dichotomy: the imagination is either bad or good. As I will clearly demonstrate, Renaissance authors recognize both the dangers and the benefits of the imagination, but I will not conclude my argument there. Instead, I will continue, as did early modern thinkers, to debate both the nuanced nature of the imagination as a mental faculty and also its influence on literary texts.

One of the reasons for the absence of, or incomplete attention to, early modern definitions of the faculty of imagination is the disparity between current and Renaissance understandings of the faculty. Our classification of “imagination” has been greatly influenced by Romantic notions. After explaining the conflation of poetry and imagination in the Romantic period, Susan Gallagher and Roger Lundin describe the continuing impact of the Romantics: “The justifications that Keats, Coleridge, and Dickinson offer for poetry are typical of the defense presented on behalf of literature in the western world for the last two hundred years” (xix). Modern critics often employ eighteenth-century and especially Romantic ideas of imagination, which have received immense scholarly attention. It is almost impossible to approach imagination in the early modern period with a clean slate or a palette uncoloured by romanticism and later ideas of imagination,¹¹ and I do not attempt to do so. Instead, I will now deliberately compare the Renaissance imagination to the Romantic imagination in

¹⁰ For examples of critics who posit that early modern theorists denounced the faculty of the imagination, see Michael Macdonald, *Mystical Bedlam: Madness, Anxiety, and Healing in Seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Lawrence Babb, *The Elizabethan Malady: A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642* (East Lansing: Michigan-State University Press, 1965); and J. Paul Hunter, “Protesting fiction, constructing history,” *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric, and Fiction, 1500-1800*, edited by Donald R. Kelley and David Harris Sacks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 298-317, especially p. 307. Another critic, Patrick Grant, assumes that all early modern scholars will share his view of Renaissance imagination. He writes, “It is generally known that during the later Renaissance a strong English empirical tradition in philosophy, extending from Bacon through Hobbes to Locke, insisted so firmly on the exact description of things that it held imagination gravely in suspicion as a distorter of clear knowledge” (86).

¹¹ Peter Mack agrees: “It is almost impossible for us to think about imagination without drawing on theories and associations which are alien to early modern ways of thinking” (60).

order to highlight the disparity of the definitions of the mental faculty and its actions.

According to the Romantics, the imagination creates another world as an escape from this one. Coleridge, for instance, writes that imagination “dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate; or where the process is rendered impossible, yet still, at all events, it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially *vital*, even as all objects (*as* objects) are essentially fixed and dead” (1663). To Coleridge and his contemporaries, the real world is “dead,” but the imagination can create a new, living world that is more valuable than the physical, flawed world. George Byron echoes Coleridge’s belief in the creative power of imagination when he writes in “Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage,”

The Beings of the Mind are not of clay:
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence: that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these Spirits supplied,
First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void. (4.5.1-9)

The physical world is “dull” and “mortal,” writes Byron, but the imagination—“The Beings of the Mind”—creates a “more beloved existence.” This Romantic characteristic of imagination would seem very foreign to early modern authors. In the Renaissance, the imagination recombined data it received from the five senses, and it was therefore strongly tied to the physical world. Thomas Hobbes is especially vehement on this point: “Whatsoever . . . we conceive, has been perceived first by sense, either all at once, or by parts; a man can have no thought, representing any thing, not subject to sense. No man therefore can conceive any thing, but he must conceive it in some place” (31-2). Every thought, according to Hobbes, must first come from the outside world, through the senses. The imagination cannot create a world that is separate from, and certainly not superior to, physical existence. Rather than generating a separate reality, as the Romantics philosophized, imagination in the Renaissance expressed the natural world.

Because they believed the imagination, controlled by a poet, could create a new, perfect, innocent world, the Romantics also deified the imagination and the poets who employed it. Their descriptions of imagination, poetry, and poets invest them with godlike powers: “[A poet, a wielder of imagination] rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them” (Wordsworth 1502). Percy Bysshe Shelley, after he assigns the power of imagination to poetry, emphasizes its omnipotence: “Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the

centre and circumference of knowledge” (1794). Coleridge also extravagantly praises the force of the imagination: “[The poet] diffuses a tone and spirit of unity that blends and (as it were) *fuses*, each [faculty of the human soul] into each, by that synthetic and magical power to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination” (1668). According to the Romantics, the imagination is a divine creator under the control of a genius poet, and the imagination replaces God. “Not so!” early modern thinkers would reply, for Renaissance philosophies of the imagination emphasized the imagination as a gift from God that should not replace, but rather lead a person towards him. Thomas Wright, when he introduces his book explaining the passions and their dependence on the imagination, explains his purpose for writing: “My desire is the good of my Country; the effect, every man’s prudent carriage; the last end, the glory of God, whereunto all our labours must tend and all our actions be directed. And therefore to him let these little sparks be consecrated to kindle the fire in his most holy Temple” (85). Wright does not assign any glory or power to himself, for he writes for the good of his country and for the praise of God. Henry Vaughan not only dedicates *Silex Scintillans* to Christ, but he also writes that his poetry comes first from God. In “The Dedication,” he describes God’s involvement in his creativity:

Some drops of thy all-quickenning blood
Fell on my heart; those made it bud
And put forth thus, [ie. his poetry], though Lord, before
The ground was cursed, and void of store. (5-8)

Renaissance writers, both of treatises and of poetry, not only dedicate their imaginations to God, but place God as the source of their creation. Even when early modern authors do not explicitly name God in their considerations of imagination, their work is always saturated with underlying Christian principles. Debora Shuger emphasizes that Protestantism “supplies the primary language of analysis. It is the cultural matrix for explorations of virtually every topic: kingship, selfhood, rationality, language, marriage, ethics, and so forth. Such subjects are, again, not masked by religious discourse but articulated in it; they are considered *in relation to* God and the human soul” (6). Judy Kronenfeld agrees: “In its efforts to embrace models of polyvalency, poststructuralist historicism may fail to observe the degree to which both radical and conservative political possibilities are grounded in Reformation Protestant religious and social ideology as a whole” (*King Lear* 7). Although Romantic poets may have replaced God with the imagination, Renaissance thinkers placed the imagination, as they did all facets of their understanding, in a Christian context. They considered imagination as a gift from God that they, correspondingly, could use to praise God and determine his impact on their lives. Renaissance comprehensions of the imagination, therefore, differ significantly from familiar, Romantic notions of the character and force of the faculty.

Defining “imagination” in early modern thought

Once we recognize the differences between Romantic and Renaissance understandings of the imagination, we can focus on the nature and significance of the distinct early modern view of the faculty. Simply because Renaissance thinkers did not allot divine characteristics to the imagination does not mean that the idea of imagination is not as important to the early modern period as it is to other eras. Bypassing imagination in the Renaissance, or seeing it as an element in a transitional movement, fails to see that ‘imagination’ and its synonymous or related terms such as ‘fantasy’ and ‘conceit’ are more pervasive than modern critics allow. Indeed, although not as prevalent as in Romantic literature, the word ‘imagination’ does appear in many early modern texts.¹² Moreover, early modern writers often refer to the imagination by different names. The title of one 1642 text, “A Discovery of the great fantasie, or Phantasticall conceitednesse. That is to say, of the antichristian blindnes of those, that out of a meer false imagination and phantasticall conceitednesse, do hold themselves to be Christians” highlights the various terms early modern writers used for the faculty; ‘Imagination’ is synonymous with “Phantasticall Conceitednesse” and “Fantasie.” When early modern theorists introduce the concept of imagination in their texts, they commonly begin with a short and broad definition of imagination, before describing its location, power, function, and effects. Following that format, defining ‘imagination’ and its related words—‘fancy,’ ‘conceit,’ ‘fantasy’—already begins to illuminate early modern attitudes towards imagination. Moreover, even the presence of a definition, as well as its complexity, is revealing, demonstrating whether or not imagination was ‘taken for granted’ and how passionately an author felt about his or her definition of imagination in opposition to another author’s. A study of the terminology of imagination identifies both the general ideas that surrounded imagination, and the debates in which imagination participated.

Early modern theorists do not assume that their readers have a simple or even single conception of ‘imagination’ as a philosophical term describing an action of the mind. Instead, they continually define and redefine the imagination, giving examples of its activities. Francis Bacon defines imagination by its actions: “Imagination . . . may at pleasure join that which nature hath severed, and sever that which nature hath joined” (*The Advancement of Learning* 80). Thomas Hobbes disagrees, stating instead that imagination is the mental remnant of an

¹² I have included a selection of instances of ‘imagination’ and its variants that occur in canonical English Renaissance texts: In *Henry V*, the prologue urges the audience, “let us, ciphers to this great account,/ On your imaginary forces work” (Prologue 18-19). “My imagination/ Carries no favour in’t but Bertram’s” (1.1.81-82), Helena tells the Countess in *All’s Well that Ends Well*. Pyrocles says in Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia*, “the workings of the mind I find much more infinite than can be led unto by the eye, or imagined by any that distract their thoughts without themselves” (50). John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* often speaks of the imagination: “Galileo, less assured, observes/ Imagined lands and regions in the moon” (5.262-263).

object we have experienced with our senses: “This *decaying sense*, when we would express the thing itself, I mean *fancy* itself, we call *imagination*” (24). Margaret Cavendish’s definition of imagination is different yet again, for she calls the “Fancy” “a voluntary creation or production of the Mind, ...[one of the] effects, or rather actions of the rational part of Matter” (*Blazing World* 152-153). Indeed, the prevalence of terms and definitions of imagination demonstrates the importance and urgency of the faculty in the early modern period.

In his popular text, *A Treatise of Melancholy* (1586),¹³ Timothy Bright, a physician and clergyman,¹⁴ writes about imagination and the terminology of ‘imagination,’ ‘conceit,’ and ‘fantasy,’ that surrounds and supports it. Bright’s treatise is “both a medical and theological work” (Heffernan 23), so his conclusions about imagination are not just physical descriptions, but moralized arguments. Bridget Lyons disagrees with Carol Heffernan’s conclusion, writing that “The aim of the *Treatise* is always primarily informative” (145), but since Bright is writing about a controversial and highly debated subject, his writing, even if primarily informative, is necessarily contentious. Moreover, Bright outlines cures for melancholy and discusses the nature of the soul, but his descriptions are more than that—they are spiritually instructive and morally imperative. Because his text discusses melancholy, Bright’s dealings with imagination are with the disrupted and diseased kind. For example, he writes about an unnatural humour that

For the most part is settled in the spleane, and with his vapours
anoyeth the harte and passing up to the brayne, counterfetteth
terrible objectes to the fantasie, and polluting both the substance,
and spirits of the brayne, causeth it without externall occasion, to
forge monstrous fictions, and terrible to the conceite, which the
judgement taking as they are presented by the disordered
instrument, deliver over to the hart, which hath no judgement of
discretion in its self, but giving credite to the mistaken report of the
braine, breaketh out into that inordinate passion, against reason.
(102)

¹³ Heffernan writes that Bright’s *A Treatise of Melancholie* “became popular enough for three editions, two in 1586 and a third in 1613” (125).

¹⁴ For biographies of Bright, see Jonathan Gil Harris, *Sick Economies: Drama, Mercantilism, and Disease in Shakespeare’s England* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), particularly chapter 5: “Plague and Transmission: Timothy Bright, Thomas Milles, *Volpone*,” and Page Life, “Bright, Timothy (1549/50–1615),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) Online edition. Ed. Lawrence Goldman. Jan. 2008. 25 Jan. 2010.

Bright mentions ‘fantasy,’ the word he assigns to the faculty of imagination, and ‘conceit’ and ‘monstrous fictions.’ ‘Monstrous’ addresses the prodigious fear brought about by melancholic images, but ‘conceit’ and ‘fictions’ emphasize the ability of the brain to create novelty. The brain makes conceits¹⁵ without external occasion, so although Bright elsewhere makes connections between the senses and the imagination, his text here makes note of the lack of correspondence between imagination and external stimuli. The imagination operates independently of the senses, Bright argues, so it can create without the senses’ involvement. He fortifies his argument when he writes about sleep, questioning “the images of outward things, which hang in the common sense presented to the fantasie, or offered of the memorie, which inward senses are alwayes watchfull when the outward take rest: how then commeth it to passe, that we can not in like sort fancie being awake?” (118). The common sense is the first faculty in the brain to decipher data from the five senses. Robert Burton provides this definition: “[By the common sense] we discern all differences of objects; for by mine eye I do not know that I see, or by mine ear that I hear, but by my common sense, who judgeth of sounds and colours: they are but the organs to bring the species to be censured” (1.1.2.7.159). The common sense divides the raw data from the outward senses into their separate categories—visual, oral, tactile, and olfactory—before sending on that data to the imagination to be combined and organized. Bright, in his consideration of dreams,¹⁶ extends his argument for the autonomy of the imagination, for he implies that imagination is not always second to the senses, and it is therefore impossible to make a simple one-to-one accord between the senses and the imagination, for the imagination can work without the senses operating. To say that the senses become internal when the outward senses are asleep is not a good enough explanation for the presence of dreams, Bright contends.

Bright’s arguments about the definition of imagination reveal the complexity of considerations of the faculty of imagination, for his ideas resonate with points raised by some authors and contradict others, as we shall see. As Adam Kitzes persuasively argues, Bright was especially concerned with the ability of language—particularly English—to define melancholy and the parts of the mind: “For Bright, melancholy can be known precisely to the extent it can be spoken about; and it can be spoken about precisely because English can be manipulated to a stable system with clear categories and classes of objects” (56). The definition of melancholy and imagination, in English, is not merely necessary

¹⁵ The word “conceit” emphasizes the importance of imagination in the brain in the early modern period, when the word could mean “concept” or “understanding” at the same time as “wit,” “fancy,” or “imagination.”

¹⁶ Bright is far from the only early modern author to connect dreams and imagination. Burton writes about dreams in *Anatomy of Melancholy*, especially pp. 159, 253-258, and Hobbes connects the two in *Leviathan*, p.25.

for a comprehensible discussion of the brain, but, to Bright, it is essential also as a demonstration of the difficulty and urgency of precise definitions. The language that Bright uses to describe imagination is as much about language itself as it is about imagination and melancholy. Bright, although he searches for a clear, concise definition, does not simplify imagination, for the number of different names that Bright uses to describe imagination and his assertions about imagination's interaction with other parts of the brain highlight complex attitudes and beliefs towards imagination, conceit, fantasy, or fictions, in Bright's text and in the early modern period.

In *The Passions of the Mind in General* (1604), Thomas Wright places and defines 'imagination' in another context. Wright's text studies the source, characteristics, and consequences of the passions, and he includes imagination's interaction with the passions: "We know most certainly that our sensitive appetite cannot love, hate, fear, hope, etc. but that by imagination or our sensitive apprehension we may conceive" (112). Wright introduces a new term for imagination: "sensitive apprehension." In the following chapter, Wright continues, "our sensitive apprehension hath her seat in the brain (for we all prove that in understanding we especially bend the force of our soul to the former part thereof)" (114). The sensitive apprehension, therefore, is part of the brain, which Wright describes: "For as the brain fitteth best, for the softness and moisture, to receive the forms and prints of objects for understanding, even so the heart, endued with most fiery spirits, fitteth best for affecting" (114). The sensitive apprehension resides in the soft and moist brain, which receives forms and prints of objects for understanding. Imagination, according to Wright, is connected to the senses—is sensitive—and is the place on which the senses imprint images in the brain, allowing us to apprehend the world around us, making imagination "sensitive apprehension." Like other authors, Wright links imagination or sensitive apprehension with understanding, and like Philip Sidney, who writes that a tale can "[plant its] image in the imagination" (102), Wright uses the image of imprints on the brain.

Timothy Bright's and Thomas Wright's definitions are not solely representative of the period, however, for the word 'imagination' had many other early modern connotations. Protestant preacher and lecturer William Perkins, in his *A Treatise of Mans Imaginations* (1607), sets forth a definition different yet again. Perkins dwells on the sinfulness of humanity and the possibility of its reform.¹⁷ Perkins defines imagination in his first chapter, meditating on Genesis 8: 21, in which God assures Noah that he will never again send a global flood:

¹⁷ Bryan Spinks notes, "it is in Perkins also that we find the beginning ... of concern for the godly conscience, and the rise of English casuistry. Thus, *A Case of Conscience*; *A Discourse of Conscience*; *A Treatise of Christian Equitie*; and *A Treatise of Man's Imagination* are some examples" (25). Although Spinks underestimates the complexity with which Perkins handles conscience, especially in connection with imagination in *A Treatise of Mans Imaginations*, he correctly identifies the text's overall moral reformatory tone.

“the Lord said in his heart, I will henceforth curse the ground no more for mans cause: for the imagination of mans heart is evill, even from his youth” (Geneva Bible). After defining “heart” in Genesis 8:21 as “the *understanding facultie* of the soule, whereby man useth reason: which S. Paule calleth *the spirit of the minde*,” (19), Perkins cites imagination as the tenor of the reasoning mind, calling it “the frame, or framing of the heart” (19). He expands: “Where by *thoughtes or Imaginations* can nothing else bee meant, but that which is devised and plotted in the thoughts of mans heart” (20), continuing unequivocally, “But our minde and understanding the fountaine of our thoughts, is by nature sinfull [...] and therefore the thoughtes that come from thence must needes also bee corrupt: Mans imagination stands in thoughts; the understanding deviseth by thinking” (22). Perkins makes a number of associations in his definition, such as ‘thoughts’ and ‘imagination,’ and ‘mind’ and ‘understanding.’¹⁸ Understanding, which is strongly influenced by imagination, is sinful and flawed, for the understanding works through imagination. Indeed, Perkins continually barrages the reader with reminders of the wickedness of imagination. Yet if human understanding is corrupt, how can people realize their own inability to understand correctly? Perkins is aware of this paradox, for his text, which primarily outlines the evil of imagination, also includes the possible rehabilitation of imagination, for the text’s subtitle proclaims that the text shows man’s “naturall evill thoughts,” “His want of good thoughts,” and “The way to reforme them” (A1). Even in his denunciation of imagination, a denunciation common to many early modern authors, from John Webster in *The Duchess of Malfi*, to John Milton in *Paradise Lost*,¹⁹ Perkins exhibits a layered understanding of the faculty and its possible consequences.

¹⁸ Early modern distinctions between ‘mind’ and ‘brain’ are complex and beyond the scope of this dissertation. Oversimplified, the brain is a physical organ located in the head while the mind is a much more elusive entity. It is both material and immaterial, and can reside in the brain and in the rest of the body. Margaret Cavendish, for example, in her poem “Similizing the Minde,” writes that the mind operates within the brain: “The *Mind’s* a *Merchant*, trafficking about / The *Ocean* of the *Braine*, to find *Opinions* out” (143). For excellent summaries of both early and late Renaissance considerations of the distinction between the mind and brain, see Olaf Pluta, “On the Matter of the Mind: Late-Medieval Views on Mind, Body, and Imagination,” *Imagination in the Later Middle Ages and Early Modern Time*, edited by Lodi Nauta and Detlev Pätzold (Leuven: Peeters, 2004) 21-34, and Robert G. Frank, “Thomas Willis and His Circle: Brain and Mind in Seventeenth-Century Medicine,” *The Languages of Psyche: Mind and Body in Enlightenment Thought*, Clark Library Lectures 1985-1986, ed. G.S. Rousseau (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) 107-146.

¹⁹ In Webster’s play, Ferdinand asks his brother the Cardinal to distract him from imagining his sister: “Talk to me somewhat, quickly, / Or my imagination will carry me / To see her in the shameful act of sin” (2.5.38-40). Webster decries imagination because it allows the dastardly Ferdinand to lewdly fantasize about his sister. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton repeatedly equates the imagination with Satan. In Hell, Satan sits high enthroned, “His proud imaginations thus displayed” (2.10). When Satan whispers filth and fear into Eve’s ear while she sleeps, he sits next to her, “Assaying by his dev’lish art to reach / The organs of her fancy and with them forge / Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams” (4.801-803).

Francis Bacon's preoccupation with imagination and its terminology permeates *The Advancement of Learning* (1605). In the second book, Bacon describes the triple distribution of human learning, which he defines as corresponding "to the three parts of man's understanding" (67), of which imagination is a part. Bacon's word choice is careful, and it indicates the way in which he wants his readers to consider imagination and the mind, for he lists imagination as a part of understanding, rather than a means to truth. He does not allow his readers to draw a simple dichotomy between imagination and truth, for imagination, he argues, cannot be defined solely as a means to truth or a source of lies. Instead, he considers it more useful to think about imagination as a contributor to understanding, for imagination is one of the means by which people understand, think about, and perceive the world around them. Bacon does not dismiss imagination, for as Carson Bergstrom argues, to Bacon, "the imagination is no longer synonymous with fantasy or the unreal but involves experience, observation, and contemplation, and produces a useful social good" (94). Bacon calls understanding "the seat of learning" (67), and draws correspondences between the seats of learning and the parts of understanding: "history to his memory, poesy to his imagination, and philosophy to his reason" (67). The direct link between imagination and poesy allows readers to draw conclusions about the faculty of imagination based on what Bacon later writes about poesy. Bacon emphasizes such a possibility when he states, "Poesy is a part of learning in measure of words for the most part restrained, but in all other points extremely licensed, and doth truly refer to the imagination" (80). Although Bacon, in the *Essays*, calls imagination "images of the mind" (23), when he discusses poesy and imagination in *Advancement* he speaks only about words. Bacon makes a distinction between images and words, but he also acknowledges their connection through hieroglyphs.²⁰ When Bacon argues that imagination and poesy are related to parables, he writes, "and as hieroglyphs were before letters, so parables were before arguments: and nevertheless now and at all times, they do retain much life and vigour, because reason cannot be so sensible, nor examples so fit" (81). To Bacon, words and images are inseparable, and imagination is implicated in both. Bacon makes another distinction when he asserts that imagination, "being not tied to the laws of matter, may at pleasure join that which nature hath severed, and sever that which nature hath joined, and so make unlawful matches and divorces of things" (80). Bacon's short definition of imagination contains titillating possibilities: because imagination is outside the laws of physical nature, it can combine things that nature does not combine, and can make "unlawful matches." Bacon makes imagination opposed to nature, for imagination has the power to counteract nature's arrangements and laws. When Bacon defines imagination, he does so only in relationship to other things: imagination is a part of understanding,

²⁰ For a detailed description of hieroglyphs in early modern English thought, see Ernest B Gilman, *Iconoclasm and Poetry in the English Reformation: Down Went Dagon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

tied to poetry, separate from matter, and contrary to nature. Bacon implies that imagination can only be defined and understood as it acts or as it affects other, measurable forces.

Bacon also presents a number of different definitions of the faculty of the imagination in his *Essays* (1625), some of them seemingly contradictory.²¹ Their very diversity portrays the variety of ideas about imagination in the early modern period; not only did authors disagree about the definition of imagination, but one author's work can contain a number of views. Bacon's considerations of imagination have long been subject to intense critical scrutiny,²² for, as Butler writes, "On its surface, Bacon's confidence in his own methodology and results appears designed precisely to eliminate the fanciful and imaginary from the progress of natural philosophy" (17). Yet, Butler continues, "Bacon's view of the imagination ... appears in his writing not as a static mental faculty but as a powerful mechanism that might both enhance and subvert authority" (19). Because he is concerned to curtail and contain the power of imagination, Bacon takes special care to define and debate the faculty. The diversity of definitions demonstrates the rich debate surrounding imagination in the period. In *Essays*, Bacon assigns a value to imagination in his first essay, "Of Truth." Immediately after he writes, "a mixture of a *Lie* doth ever adde Pleasure" (7), Bacon includes "Imaginations" (7) in a list of pleasing lies inside men's minds. Later in the essay, Bacon again casts aspersions on imagination, for he justifies naming poetry "*Vinum Dæmonum*," (7), the wine of the devil, because "it filleth the Imagination" (7). By using the word "*Dæmonum*," he could be suggesting that imagination is even connected to demonic forces. Bacon, however, distances himself from such an argument, for he ascribes the term "*Vinum Dæmonum*" to "One of the Fathers," who named poetry such "in great Severity" (7). Nevertheless, Bacon makes a clear correlation between imagination and lies and between imagination and poetry, associations that he emphasizes to varying degrees in the rest of the *Essays* and in *The Advancement of Learning*. In another essay, "Of Parents and Children," Bacon adopts a different tone when he makes reference to imagination. He writes, "Surely a Man shall see, the Noblest workes, and Foundations, have proceeded from *Childlesse Men*; which have sought to expresse the Images of their Mindes; where those of their Bodies have failed" (23). "Images of their mind" is terminology for imagination, for Bacon has

²¹ Stanley Fish writes about the variety of the entire text of *Essays* rather than just Bacon's definitions of imagination and explains that instead of placing 'scientific' material in the body of the text, Bacon's "primary concern is with the *experience* that form provides, and, further, that this experience, rather than the materials of which it is composed, is what is scientific about the *Essays*" (81).

²² For a balanced debate on Bacon's attitude towards the faculty of imagination, see the dated, but still useful article by Eugene P. McCreary: "Bacon's Theory of Imagination Reconsidered," *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 36.4 (1973): 317-326. McCreary argues that Bacon both admired and disapproved of imagination, for although he admitted its potential, he despised its dangerous autonomy.

already located imagination inside the mind in “Of Truth.” He therefore assigns a similar value to imagination as he does to children, for whom imagination can be a replacement.²³ Then, when he concludes that “the care of Posterity, is most in them, that have no Posterity” (23), he gives further weight to imagination. Instead of associating imagination merely with poetry and lies, Bacon connects it as well to history and the crafting of a historical narrative.

Robert Burton, perhaps because imagination is so important to his discussion of melancholy, provides a comprehensive and compact definition in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1651). He introduces imagination in his section entitled, “Of the inward senses,” of which he says there “are three in number, so called because they be within the brain-pan, as common sense, phantasy, memory” (1.1.2.7.159). All three inward senses share certain characteristics: “Their objects are not only things present, but they perceive the sensible species of things to come, past, absent, such as were before in the sense” (1.1.2.7.159). Burton wants his readers to understand, before anything else, that the three inner senses, common sense, fantasy, and memory, are connected to time, and they work with data that comes from the outward senses, the five senses. When Burton’s readers first encounter imagination, then, the faculty is part of a team composed of members with a similar purpose. Once he establishes its collaborative position in the brain, Burton more narrowly defines imagination as a separate entity: “Phantasy, or imagination, which some call estimative, or cognitive ... is an inner sense which doth more fully examine the species perceived by common sense, of things present or absent, and keeps them longer, recalling them to mind again, or making new of his own” (1.1.2.7.159). His initial characterization of imagination does not condemn or caution against the imagination, as does Perkins’s description.²⁴ Instead, Burton’s definition is packed with information about the name, role, and creative power of imagination, and it also equates two different terms for the faculty—‘fantasy’ and ‘imagination.’ ‘Fantasy’ and ‘imagination’ have Greek and Latin roots, Eva

²³ Bacon’s reference to progeny is reminiscent of early modern associations between imagination and pregnancy. For further discussions of imagination and conception, see such works as Simon Reynolds, “Pregnancy and Imagination in *The Winter’s Tale* and Heliodorus’ *Aithiopika*,” *English Studies* 5 (2003): 433-447, and Caroline Bicks, *Midwiving Subjects in Shakespeare’s England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).

²⁴ Not all critics would agree that Perkins’s and Burton’s definitions are dissimilar. According to Ronald George Thompson, Burton’s and Perkins’s understandings of imagination are alike: “the corrupt imagination, joined to the unreliable senses, is the chief defect inherited from the Fall, the instrument through which the devil insinuates gross deceptions into the psyche, and the source of each and every case of melancholy that Burton treats with serious intent” (42). Thompson argues that Burton views the imagination only negatively. According to Thompson’s interpretation, then, Burton’s definition of the imagination is similar to Perkins’s, which is clearly hostile to the imagination. Thompson does not take into account, however, all the positive—even if only potentially positive—characteristics Burton assigns to the imagination. His description of Burton’s formulation of the faculty of the imagination does not represent Burton’s own multi-faceted approach to the imagination.

Brann, summarizing classical and early modern definitions of imagination, identifies: “*Phantasia* is a verbal noun that is ultimately derived from the verb *phainesthai*, which means ‘to bring to light,’ ‘to make shine out,’ ‘to appear,’ especially ‘to make appear before the soul’; and more immediately from *phantazesthai* (whence ‘phantasm’), a verb used specifically for the having of memories, dreams, and hallucinations” (21), while “*Imagination* is formed on the word ‘image’ (from *imaginem*, acc. of Latin *imago*). Thus the imagination is originally the faculty for having or making images” (18). Burton, however, does not make a distinction between fantasy and imagination, but lists them as the same faculty, with the same temporal power and creative force.

While Bright, Wright, Perkins, Bacon, and Burton grapple with the role, purpose, and qualities of the imagination, Thomas Hobbes, in *Leviathan* (1651), permits no debate or discussion in his description. He acknowledges the importance of imagination by addressing it almost at the beginning of his text, and he continues to repeat his definition to ensure that readers do not forget or misinterpret his description. He writes in section 1.2:

And this is it, the Latins called *imagination*, from the image made in seeing; and apply the same, though improperly, to all the other senses. But the Greeks call it *fancy*; which signifies *appearance*, and is as proper to one sense, as to another. IMAGINATION therefore is nothing but *decaying sense*; and is found in men, and many other living creatures, as well sleeping, as waking. (23)

Hobbes makes short work of fine distinctions in terminology: “imagination” is Latin, and “fancy” is Greek, and the differences between the two are so slight as to be unimportant. Hobbes’s conclusion is abrupt and faintly derisive, for he includes “therefore” after an argument of one sentence length. Imagination is hardly worth debating, Hobbes suggests. Moreover, he prefaces his description of the imagination with “nothing but,” another dismissive phrase. Yet he cannot ignore the importance of imagination in the early modern period, for he continually repeats his definition and gives examples to underscore his point. Hobbes may be dismissive of imagination, but he cannot dismiss it. Indeed, as Todd Butler writes, “In Hobbes’s basic model of faculty psychology the imagination operates as a potentially powerful force for order, for in escaping the continuing impressions of external sensory experience imagination provides the means of defining—of ordering—one’s experiences in the world” (161). Faculty psychology is a branch of psychology that characterizes the brain by the discrete faculties—sense, imagination, memory—within it. Although the imagination cannot extend beyond the physical world, it is essential to the understanding of that world. Hobbes is forced to add to his first definition of imagination by describing the “decaying sense.” He gives an example: “After the object is removed, or the eye shut, we still retain an image of the thing seen, though more obscure than when we see it” (23). Hobbes’s description of imagination is thereby

not novel: the imagination receives and retains an impression of data from the senses, but the impression becomes increasingly less concrete and clear. The faculty of imagination can only hold sensory data for a short amount of time, and the further away in time the imagination is from the first sensory impression, the more obscure the mental image becomes. Hobbes thus reiterates the connection between imagination and time that Burton outlines in his text.

Rather than creating a distinction between imagination and memory, as Burton does, Hobbes equates the two: “This *decaying sense*, when we would express the thing itself, I mean *fancy* itself, we call *imagination*, as I said before: but when we would express the decay, and signify that the sense is fading, old, and past, it is called *memory*. So that imagination and memory are but one thing, which for divers considerations hath divers names” (24). To Hobbes, the terminology surrounding the different parts of the mind is too complex; imagination and memory are the same faculty, he argues, just with different titles. He continues: “Again, imagination [is] only of those things which have been formerly perceived by sense, either all at once, or by parts at several times” (24). He uses the word “again” to erase any idea that his readers might have that the imagination can create on its own, for it can only use images from the sense.²⁵ Nevertheless, Hobbes allows, imagination can be compounded: “From the sight of a man at one time, and of a horse at another, we conceive in our mind a Centaur. ... It is a compound imagination, and properly but a fiction of the mind” (24). Hobbes lessens the importance and significance of compound imagination when he uses the word “but” to imply that compound imagination is insignificant. It is but a fiction of the mind, and nothing more, containing no consequences and causing no action, Hobbes argues. At the same time, Hobbes assigns great value to imagination, but only as he defines it: “The imagination that is raised in man, or any other creature endued with the faculty of imagining, by words, or other voluntary signs, is that we generally call *understanding*; and is common to man and beast” (27). To understand, realize, or perceive their surroundings, people need to use their imagination, for it pieces together sensory data. Like Bacon, Hobbes asserts that understanding is a continuation of imagination, and imagination is essential to understanding.

In the next section of his text, Hobbes tweaks his definition of imagination again and expands the meaning of the word. In “Of the Consequence or Train of

²⁵ Although Hobbes repeats his assertive definition often in the text, he still cannot control his readers. His readers’ autonomy is apparent even after a scan of scholarly criticism on Hobbes. Michael Oakeshott, for example, writes, “Hobbes’s style is imaginative, not merely on account of the subtle imagery that fills his pages, nor only because it requires imagination to make a system. His imagination appears also as the power to create a myth. *Leviathan* is a myth, the transposition of an abstract argument into the world of the imagination” (15). Oakeshott does not use ‘imagination’ as Hobbes defines it. Indeed, Hobbes wants to emphasize that his theory is not ‘imaginative,’ but is based solely in the sensory world. His definition, therefore, is essential to his textual endeavour.

Imaginations,” Hobbes writes, “By *Consequence*, or TRAIN of thoughts, I understand that succession of one thought to another, which is called, to distinguish it from discourse in words, *mental discourse*” (28). To Hobbes, thinking is imagination, and the mind works by stringing together thoughts and images from the imagination into a “mental discourse.” Imagination is not just one of a number of different kinds of thoughts that result from a certain faculty in the brain, but the word stands in for the functioning of the brain. James Engell applies great philosophical significance to Hobbes’s two chapters on imagination: “Our sense of reality, understanding, and continuity of experience, according to Hobbes, are formed when the mind pieces together and combines images, accruing them and seeking meanings for ‘trains of imaginations’” (13). Although Engell properly emphasizes the centrality of imagination to *Leviathan*, he overstates Hobbes’s enthusiasm for the faculty of imagination. Even after broadening his understanding of ‘imagination,’ still Hobbes emphasizes its limitation, for it can only work with sensory data from the physical world. Hobbes clearly states, “Whatsoever we imagine is *finite*. Therefore there is no idea, or conception of any thing we call *infinite*. No man can have in his mind an image of infinite magnitude; nor conceive infinite swiftness, infinite time, or infinite force, or infinite power” (31).²⁶ Again, Hobbes is vehement on this point: the imagination comes only from the senses, and it cannot create more than is in the senses. As important as imagination is to Hobbes, it is simply²⁷ a reflection of the physical world.

Margaret Cavendish’s *Blazing World* (1666), a fictional utopian text, opposes Bacon’s view of the relationship between imagination and matter.²⁸ Cavendish writes at the end of the text, in the epilogue to the reader, that the blazing and philosophical worlds are “framed and composed of the most pure,

²⁶ If Hobbes argues that people cannot imagine infinity, can they imagine God? For a further discussion of this question, although with little emphasis on imagination, see Paul D. Cooke, *Hobbes and Christianity: Reassessing the Bible in Leviathan* (London: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1996).

²⁷ The word “simply” is important here. To Hobbes, the imagination can only recombine and it can only decay—it cannot create new. And, if it does recombine different ideas from sensory input, that process is but a fiction of the mind, and is of less worth than simple imagination, which is the bringing to the mind of an object that the person has seen or perceived in some way before.

²⁸ Yaakov Mascetti insists that Cavendish’s delight in imagination is fueled by her desire to differentiate herself from male scientists. He argues, “Her literary imagination and fanciful interpretations of scientific concepts were at once an acceptance and a refusal of contemporary philosophical language-games, and an answer to the cosmos conceived by male thinkers, where exertion and endurance of force were the essential bases for material and social interaction” (9). In his effort to demonstrate that Cavendish’s use of imagination forwarded feminist aims, however, he overstates seventeenth-century male writers’ distrust and rejection of imagination as a legitimate facet of learning and understanding.

that is, the rational parts of Matter, which are the parts of my Mind, which Creation was more easily and suddenly effected, then [sic] the Conquest of the two famous Monarchs of the World, *Alexander* and *Cæsar*" (250). The parts of her mind, which include imagination, are not distinct from the laws of matter, as Bacon contends, but they are the "most rational parts of matter." She does not separate nature and imagination, and matter and imagination; rather, she contends that her mind has the most pure matter, and therefore, her world "matter"s. Indeed, Cavendish makes a pun of "matter," arguing that her thoughts are part of matter, and that they matter—are consequential and concrete. Gabrielle Starr agrees: "In Cavendish's drive towards understanding the utility of imagination and its creations, she insists the field of imaginative utility is not phantasmatic; fancy, coming from the brain, partakes of the materiality of the brain. It is always embodied, and changes our bodily experiences" (299). As well, by punning, Cavendish exemplifies her creative imagination and demonstrates the wittiness of the "parts of [her] mind." Because the parts of the mind are composed of matter, Cavendish argues that imaginative worlds are real and tangible in the mind. She then also encourages her readers to form their own imaginary worlds if they desire, and place themselves as heads of their new worlds: "they may imagine themselves such, and they are such; I mean, in their Minds, Fancies or Imaginations" (251).²⁹ She, like Perkins, refers to imagination in the plural, using the word to describe the images and fantasies created in the mind. Inasmuch as "imagination" and "mind" are inseparable, so Cavendish makes no distinction between the faculty and the resultant images and thoughts. According to Cavendish, therefore, imagination is vital to understanding the world, and to the formation of matter and meaning.

Cavendish's *Poems and Fancies* (1653) is a rich vein of ideas about imagination, and mining it continues to produce gems of literary fancy. Although it, unlike treatises such as Burton's and Bacon's, is a fictional work, it still finds its place among medical, psychological, and philosophical works on imagination because the text is a self-conscious exploration of the brain and its functions. The work is not only imaginative; it is about imagination. Cavendish draws connections between the imagination and many other faculties or entities: the senses, the soul, and the reason, for example. Some of the relationships she outlines are readily apparent, but many are ambiguous and partially hidden. For instance, in her poem, "Nature calls a Councell, which was Motion, Figure, matter, and Life, to advise about making the World," Cavendish writes, "But yet the *Minde* shall live, and never dye; / We'le raise the *Body* too for company" (4). Rather than referring to the soul as immortal, which was a much more common

²⁹ Angus Fletcher writes, "Cavendish displays a lack of concern not only for the subjects of her imagined realm, but also for her audience as well" (136). He argues that Cavendish is unconcerned with her reader, but her insistence that readers be satisfied with her world or imagine their own could be an example of both her disregard for and her encouragement of her readers.

early modern argument,³⁰ she emphasizes the everlastingness of the mind. In two lines of poetry, then, Cavendish not only elevates the mind, but makes a connection, if not an equation, between the mind and the soul. As well as underscoring the value of the mind, Cavendish also focuses attention on the products of the mind. In her poem “Of Loose Atomes,” she defines the origin of fancy when she writes, “In every *Braine loose Atomes* there do lye, / Those which are *Sharpe*, from them do *Fancies* flye.” (10). Fancies—imagination—result from the movement of atoms in the brain. Moreover, imaginative atoms are “sharp,” clever, aware, and potentially painful, and they cause fancies to “flie” from them. Imagination is not a gentle and smooth faculty; rather it is, according to Cavendish, abrupt and forceful.

Cavendish’s understanding and representation of imagination is richly nuanced, for in another poem, “The Motion of Thoughts,” Cavendish stresses the difficulty in defining and even finding the source of thoughts and imaginations. The speaker narrates,

My *Thoughts* then wondring at what they did see,
Found at the last themselves the same to bee;
Yet was so small a *Branch*, perceive could not,
From whence they *Sprung*, or which waies were begot. (41)

The speaker’s thoughts cannot find their origin, so thinking about thoughts is limiting, for thoughts, on their own, cannot discover their own nature. To discuss the attributes of thought, Cavendish personifies them, giving them the characteristics of matter, just as she does in *Blazing World*. She by no means deifies thoughts or imagination, however, for she also pokes fun at her own attempts to understand the brain. In her poem, “Of a Travelling Thought,” she writes an allegory of “A *Thought*, for *breeding*, [who] would a *Travellour* be, / The severall *Countries* in the *braine* to see” (190). This adventurous thought “*Strong imagination* ...[gets] to ride” (190) and then travels through the brain where he encounters such obstacles as “*deep errorrs*,” (190), “*great fear*,” (190), and “*Great Colledges* ... to *breed up fools*” (191). Finally the thought encounters “*great Disorder*” (192), who casts him out of the brain. When the thought returns home, he is no longer on “strong imagination”; rather, he rides “upon an *Asse*” (192). Trying to explore the brain by means of thoughts and imagination can result in miserable, albeit amusing, failure, Cavendish warns. Elsewhere, she continues to highlight the ‘reality’ of thoughts. They cannot be dismissed because they have form and create consequences. In the poem, “It is hard to beleive [sic], that there are other Worlds in this World,” Cavendish directly addresses the corporeality of fancies. The speaker writes at the conclusion of the poem,

³⁰ Thomas Browne, for example, writes that souls “outlive death by the privilege of their proper natures” (43).

As *Incorporeall Spirits* this *Fancy* faines,
 Yet *Fancy* cannot be without some *Braines*.
 If *Fancy* without *Substance* cannot bee,
 Then *Soules* are more, then *Reason* well can see. (44)

Cavendish continues to struggle with the physical nature of fancies, for she contends that fancy cannot be completely incorporeal, but it has to arise from the brain. Common to Cavendish's plethora of definitions of imagination and fancy is the process by which she crafts those definitions: by conceits. The brain, she tells her reader, is like an oven or a garden.³¹ By means of such similes, and many more, she demonstrates that she and her readers can understand the brain only through images and fancies. Like Burton, she implies that a person can only define 'fancy' by fancy or its near synonym, imagination. Cavendish's poetry revolves around her belief that the brain can only be described metaphorically, and people can only understand it—even if dimly—by imagination, a product of the brain.

The physician Thomas Willis's anatomical text, *Five Treatises* (1681), introduces another difficulty with the terminology and the understanding of imagination in the early modern period, for his work highlights the changing understanding of the faculty of the imagination. *Five Treatises* was published almost one hundred years after Bright's *A Treatise of Melancholie*, and it treats the imagination strictly as a physical, psychological entity rather than as a theological, philosophical, or moral one. Willis, whom D. Christopher Gabbard names "a Restoration-era English physician who founded the field of neuroanatomy" (379), desired to consider the brain from a physical rather than a philosophical point of view, for he "believe[d] that systematic anatomy of the brain ... would illuminate ... the nature of senses and the faculties of the soul" (Frank 108).³² Robert Martensen, when describing Willis's highly successful career as a physician and lecturer, highlights his preoccupation with "neuroanatomy and neurology" ("Willis, Thomas"), for Willis sought to understand the brain, mostly by means of dissection. In the preface to his third treatise, exploring the anatomy of the brain, Willis writes that he "should Comment on the Offices of the Senses, both external and also internal, and of the Faculties and Affections of the Soule, as also of the Organs and various provisions of all these" (53). Willis, although his treatise is about the organ of the brain, writes about the faculties and sections of the soul, thereby emphasizing

³¹ Cavendish describes the mind in such poems as "Natures Oven" ("The *Braine* is like an *Oven*, hot, and dry, / Which bakes all sorts of *Fancies*, low, and high" (128)) and "Similizing the *Braine* to a Garden" ("The *Braine* a *Garden* seemes, full of *Delight*, / Whereon the *Sun* of *Knowledge* shineth bright" (136)).

³² For more on Willis's biography, see J. Trevor Hughes, *Thomas Willis 1621-1675 : his life and work* (London: Royal Society of Medicine Services, 1991).

imagination's primary connection to the soul rather than to the brain. Imagination, then, because it is a faculty and has an organ, is a physical entity within the body, but it is also a faculty of the spiritual soul. To Willis, the difficulty in defining imagination is determining the process by which imagination may be found. He reveals: "I had thought of some rational Arguments for that purpose, and from the appearances raised some not unlikely Hypotheses, which (as uses [sic] to be in these kind of businesses) at length accrued into a certain System of Art and frame of Doctrine" (53). Willis is dissatisfied with his hypotheses, or rather, with the procedures by which he has come to his hypotheses, and admits, "Thinking on these things seriously with my self, I awaked at length sad, as one out of a pleasant dream; to wit, I was ashamed that I had been so easie hitherto, and that I had drawn out for my self and Auditors a certain Poetical Philosophy and Physick neatly wrought with Novity and Conjectures" (53). He is ashamed and displeased that he thinks about imagination by means of imagination. He had, he writes, "delineated the Head of a Man, not after the form of a Master, but at the will of a bold Fancy and Pencil; and had followed not that which was most true, but what was most convenient, and what was rather desired than what was known" (53). Willis's preface seems to challenge Cavendish's implication that imagination is necessary to understand the faculty of imagination. Yet *Five Treatises* is an anatomical text and Willis's preface precedes a description of his dissections of the brain, so he is consciously searching for imagination in the physical matter of the brain. For Willis, then, thinking about imagination is not enough; he needs to find it physically. Willis introduces his readers to the problem of thinking about the body and soul. Can a person, he questions, think about thinking, for the very process of thinking affects understanding. Can a person define an action by or while engaging in the action? While Willis investigates the definition of imagination, he also questions the process by which a person can compose such a definition.

Clearly, one single definition of imagination in the early modern period is not possible, nor is it even desirable. Early modern "imagination" is enveloped by a cloud of synonyms, such as fantasy, fancy, conceit, or sensitivity. Every synonym carries different connotations—some negative, some positive, most too complex to be assigned such a dichotomous value. If 'imagination' itself is difficult to define, the same is true for its synonyms. Even the very fact that each author who discusses imagination includes a definition demonstrates that no single, uncontested definition of imagination existed in the early modern period, and every person who wrote about imagination had to re-define it. Indeed, Cavendish argues that fancy must not be restrained, and its lack of definition is one of its essential characteristics. The context and purpose of the text in which an author discusses imagination also affects its basic definition. Hobbes, for example, places imagination in a text about the practicality of the politics of a commonwealth, so he wants to emphasize the utility and physicality of imagination. Imagination, then, affects and is affected by many different facets of early modern life and it calls upon many different sets of terms and ideas from

Galenic medicine and from Christianity, for example. A general study of imagination, while worthwhile and necessary, will never be acceptable without particular focus on imagination in a single text, poem, or line. The broad and thorough understanding of “imagination” leads to the augmentation, contradiction, and expansion of the definition of imagination in works of imagination, including literature.

Characteristics of the early modern imagination

Constructions of the nature of the imagination as a faculty in the brain are nuanced and highly contested in the early modern period. In order to analyze Renaissance explanations and uses of the characteristics of imagination, I will begin each chapter by carefully reading early modern philosophical, psychological, medical, and theological texts. In particular, I focus on Michel de Montaigne’s *Essays* (1580), Timothy Bright’s *A Treatise of Melancholie* (1586), Thomas Wright’s *The Passions of the Mind in General* (1604), William Perkins’s *A Treatise of Mans Imaginations* (1607), Francis Bacon’s *The Advancement of Learning* (1605) and *Essays* (1625), Robert Burton’s *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1651), Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan* (1651), Margaret Cavendish’s *Poems and Fancies* (1653) and *The Description of a New World, Called the Blazing World* (1666), and Thomas Willis’s *Five Treatises* (1681). These texts contain significant, but often opposing, definitions and uses of imagination. I have included a list of additional early modern English texts that debate the nature of imagination—in similar terms to the texts I focus on in the body of my dissertation—in Appendix 1. I explore the texts in chronological order, with the exception of *A Treatise of Mans Imaginations* and Bacon’s *Essays*, which I have reversed to keep my analysis of Bacon’s texts together. Studying the texts chronologically highlights the constant change in theories of the characteristics of the imagination.³³ At the same time, I do not wish to imply that theories of the imagination ‘progressed’ or ‘evolved’ from the mid-sixteenth century to the late seventeenth-century, for later theories of the imagination certainly are not better or more correct than earlier definitions.

A study of the nature of imagination in the Renaissance in England should begin with treatises because they are the texts that contain explicit definitions of the faculty. One modern critic, Peter Mack, suggests that while most studies of imagination focus on it as a psychological tool, to explain the rhetorical power of imagination, imagination must be examined in texts on rhetoric: “the rhetorical tradition of discussing imagination, transmitted to the Renaissance by Quintilian,

³³ Although the scope of this dissertation does not allow me to analyze it in great detail, I do not want to downplay the fact that theories of the imagination were influenced by, and in turn influenced, cultural, social, and political changes in early modern England and the rest of the world. My focus instead remains primarily on the impact of the physical imagination on early modern literary texts.

enabled Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Francis Bacon to describe relationships between poetry, the imagination, emotional manipulation and rhetoric” (59-60). I argue, however, that the ties between poetry and imagination arise out of beliefs about the physical, spiritual, and mental nature of imagination. Early modern theorists did not think of imagination in connection with poetry alone, for understanding imagination was essential to understanding the health of the body, mind, and soul. Because of its characteristics—its position, its autonomy, its power over the body, and its inventiveness—the imagination pervades Renaissance philosophical works, and I begin my analysis of imagination with such texts.

Defining imagination simply through early modern treatises would be incomplete. Renaissance writers not only debated the nature of the imagination, but also used the imagination in their literary texts, employing, testing, and augmenting the definitions their contemporaries were creating. Understanding early modern theories of the nature of the imagination gives us insight into the literary productions of the period, and I therefore begin each chapter by exploring a characteristic of imagination through philosophical, psychological, and medical texts, but I end each chapter by charting that characteristic as it influenced and was influenced by Renaissance literature.

In chapter 1, I focus in detail on the physical position of imagination within the brain. I scrutinize psychological and philosophical texts on the nature of imagination, noting the differing arguments particularly between Wright and other treatise writers. Whatever their definition of imagination, Renaissance theorists always assign a physical location to the faculty. The position and form of the faculty determines and explains its function and significance. The very physicality of the imagination in the early modern period already indicates one of its features. The imagination is not an intellectual, untraceable idea; rather it has a form that is measurable. It is a part of the physical makeup of a person, and therefore present and active in all people, not just poets. When Robert Burton first defines the imagination, he specifies its position: “His organ is the middle cell of the brain” (1.1.2.7.159). Thomas Willis agrees, locating the imagination in the centre of the brain: “The Imagination is a certain undulation or wavering of the animal Spirits, begun more inwardly in the middle of the Brain, and expanded or stretched out from thence on every side towards its circumference” (91). The imagination’s position determines its function in the brain, for its centrality facilitates its interaction with the organs around it; the common sense in the front, and the memory or the reason behind. Because imagination is central in the brain, its function is also central to the activity of the brain: “For sense sendeth over to imagination before reason have judged: and reason sendeth over to imagination before the decree can be acted” (Bacon, *Advancement of Learning* 116). All thoughts must therefore travel through the imagination, making it essential to every action of the brain. The physical location of imagination, as understood by Renaissance theorists, explains the significance of the faculty to the early modern period, for all thinking was mediated by the imagination. I then explore in the rest of chapter 1 how the corporeal location of imagination appears in George

Herbert's *The Temple* (1633). I concentrate on certain poems in order to argue that Herbert uses the tripartite structure of the brain to organize his poetry and to appeal to the mediatory role of the imagination. Understanding how early modern thinkers characterized the nature of imagination is more than an intellectual treasure hunt; it affects how we read and consider literary texts of the same period.

In chapter 2 I pay close attention to the Renaissance insistence on the supremacy of reason over the imagination. Because the location of the imagination gives it such power in the brain, controlling the faculty is essential to early modern authors. Imagination desperately needs mastering because, of all the faculties in the brain, "The phantasy alone is free" (Burton 1.1.2.7.160). The imagination could act, Renaissance thinkers feared, with dangerous autonomy, and could overcome the reason, which, as Burton writes, is "his commander" (1.1.2.7.160). Burton summarizes the power struggle between imagination and reason: "in men [imagination] is subject and governed by reason, or at least should be" (1.1.2.7.160). In their descriptions of imagination, Renaissance philosophers emphasize the desire of the imagination to throw off the constraints of reason, thereby adversely affecting the *imaginant*.³⁴ If the fantasy runs free, early modern writers fear, it can cause nightmares, heresies, and "counterfet goblins" (Bright 103). According to Thomas Nashe, "when with any other sickness or malady the faculties of our reason are enfeebled and distempered" (*The Terrors of the Night* 211), the devil, through the imagination, overwhelms the mind with panic and melancholy. When reason tempers imagination, the mind works in equilibrium and peace, but Renaissance writers repeatedly accentuate the consequences of an imagination on the loose. Modern critics of the period, such as Greenblatt and Heale, have rightly identified early modern fears of an autonomous imagination, but they stop there. Instead, imagination's need for control is only one of its characteristics in the early modern period, and its definition and significance extend far beyond its potential menace. In chapter 2 I use Richard Brome's *The Antipodes* (1640) to explore how Brome challenges reason's control. His play debates the restorative power of the imagination and the very possibility of restraining the faculty. His play does not leave his readers with the satisfied assurance that reason can, or even should, dominate imagination. Instead, Brome challenges the dichotomy of reason and imagination, and he complicates the formula that treatise writers propose.

One of the motivations for the Renaissance's stress on ruling over imagination was the imagination's conflation with the body. According to early modern thought, the body deeply influences the imagination, and the imagination can extensively affect the body. Montaigne gives examples to demonstrate the close correspondence between brain and body: "We sweat, we tremble, we turn

³⁴ The Oxford English Dictionary states that the word "*imaginant*," which means "one who imagines; an imaginer," is now rare. The word was mainly used, according to the OED, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in works such as Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*. Because the word originates in the very works I am studying, I resurrect it in my dissertation.

pale, we flush, beneath our imagination's impact; deep in our feather-beds, we feel our bodies shaken by its onslaughts, sometimes almost to the point of death; and fervent youth grows so heated in its sleep that it satisfies its amorous desires even in dreams" (37). The imagination changes the state of the body of the imaginant. Yet imagination's power can even proceed from the mind and body of the imaginant to another's body. Burton calls the trans-body power of imagination, the "forcible imagination": "The forcible imagination of the one party moves and alters the spirits of the other" (1.2.3.2.257). Bacon also emphasizes the bond between one person's imagination and others' bodies, even creating a new term for their interaction: "Fascination is the power and act of imagination intensive upon other bodies than the body of the imaginant" (*Advancement* 115). The imagination, then, can literally move other people to action, and it is therefore a powerful and persuasive force that has clear physical consequences on the material body, consequences that are transferable from one person to another. In chapter 3, then, after I examine the union between body and imagination as proposed by Renaissance physicians and philosophers, I read Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594) to see how he fleshes out the discussion. Nashe's text is scattered with bodies—dismembered, tortured, pleased, and diseased. His text describes, in gory detail, the intimate link between body and mind, and he also uses bodies as a metaphor for the power of the imagination. His stimulation and discussion of the imagination is every bit as complex as the early modern association between mind and body.

Because imagination has powerful manipulative control over the body and mind of those who encounter it, early modern authors carefully debate its function in literature. When transmitted through text, imagination can reach any number of readers, and can negatively or positively influence their minds and bodies. As they debate the role of imagination in writing, Renaissance philosophers question whether or not imagination can create new ideas and objects. Can imagination create anything new, or can it only recombine sensory images it gathers from the five senses? As well, early modern authors ask, who especially uses the imagination? Romantic poets would not even ask if imagination could create newness: "Language is arbitrarily produced by the Imagination and has relation to thoughts alone" (Shelley 1789). Renaissance writers, however, were not so assured. Hobbes denies that the imagination can produce any thoughts beyond what it observes in the natural world: "Whatsoever we imagine is *finite*" (31). Burton is more tempered: "Phantasy ... is an inner sense which doth more fully examine the species perceived by common sense, of things present or absent, and keeps them longer, recalling them to mind again, *or making new of his own*" (1.1.2.7.159, my emphasis). Burton allows that the imagination can produce novel images and ideas, and he asserts that fantasy is the special tool of artists: "In poets and painters imagination forcibly works, as appears by their several fictions, antics, images" (1.1.2.7.159). No Renaissance thinker takes for granted the creative power of imagination, for they all debate how, and to what extent, the imagination can foster newness and originality. Chapter 4 leaves behind the

grotesquery of *The Unfortunate Traveller* and focuses instead on Francis Quarles's *Emblemes* (1635). I investigate imagination's ability to produce inventiveness and innovation by reading Burton *et al*, and then test their conclusions against Quarles's emblem book. Does Quarles deny imagination's capacity to create newness, or does he agree that he, as a poet, can, as Burton states, "make new of his own" (1.1.2.7.159)? Closely reading Quarles's text also allows me to draw together my conclusions from previous chapters, for *Emblemes*, as a devotional work, deals with spiritual matters also debated in *The Temple*; his text, like *The Antipodes*, struggles with the restraint of imagination; and his picturae visualize the bond between imagination and the body.

I focus on these literary texts in particular because they represent a broad reading sample of early modern writing. They are also not usually considered part of the canon of imagination—if there even is such a thing. I have purposefully avoided a detailed study of *The Faerie Queene* and *Paradise Lost* because I wish to demonstrate that imagination is prevalent in and important to any text in the early modern period, no matter how obscure or seemingly unrelated to imagination. By choosing to examine some texts of devotional poetry, I complicate and unsettle simple definitions of early modern imagination by locating it in a genre in which, according to modern critics who assert that imagination was considered dangerous and unscriptural in early modern thought, it should not be acceptable. I also examine drama and a fictional travel narrative to explore how various genres can and do use imagination distinctly, and how they take advantage of different possibilities. I believe that no evaluation of Renaissance literature is complete without understanding early modern imagination, for "to study the imagination of a society is to go to the heart of its consciousness" (Le Goff 6).

CHAPTER ONE

Finding Imagination: George Herbert's *Temple* and Imagination's Location

To early modern writers, the imagination is a physical organ as well as an intellectual or creative power or force. An essential part of imagination's definition and characteristics in the early modern period is its location. I focus on physical placement simply because early modern authors who write about imagination do the same.³⁵ Francis Bacon, Robert Burton, and Thomas Willis all contend that the imagination occupies only the centre of the brain, nestled between the common sense in front and the memory or the reason behind. Unlike the majority of his contemporaries, Thomas Wright, however, intriguingly keeps the imagination in the front of the brain, creating an intriguing contrast to the majority of his contemporaries. While the imagination may have a fixed location in the brain, it is certainly not static. Indeed, descriptions of the physical imagination include many references to motion, either motion of the imagination itself, of the brain, or of the fluids that travel to and from the imagination. That movement, according to early modern theorists, makes the imagination dynamic and forceful. To many early modern thinkers, locating and characterizing imagination within the brain and body describes not only its role, but also, I argue, its actual and metaphorical relationship to other parts of the brain and body, and its allegorical significance to works of early modern literature.

In order to explore the impact of the physical location of imagination on a literary text, I will turn to George Herbert's *The Temple*. According to critics of early modern imagination, such as Elizabeth Heale and Stephen Greenblatt, whom I cited in my introduction, devotional poetry should be the last place to find examples of any positive mention or use of the faculty of the imagination. Nevertheless, the imagination, according to early modern definitions, is consciously present and stimulated in a variety of different genres and used for various purposes, whether for entertainment, political satire, scientific reporting, or even Protestant meditation, as in George Herbert's devotional poetry. The organization of *The Temple* and the poems it contains, as we shall see, bears clear resemblances to the arrangement of the brain as described by philosophical and

³⁵ Their positioning of imagination is partially based upon Medieval conceptions of imagination, but Medieval thinkers place the imagination in more than one part of the brain, while most Renaissance theorists assign only one location to the imagination. According to Murray Bundy, Medieval theorists wrote that "in the front cell or ventricle [of the brain] is imagination, affording a meeting place for separate sensations" (179), while "in the middle of the head is a faculty, or a group of faculties, dealing with the materials handed over by imagination" (182).

psychological theorists of the early modern period. To demonstrate that Herbert's is not the only text that can be read as a metaphorical blueprint for the brain and the imagination, I will also briefly discuss the layout of *Silex Scintillans*, written by one of Herbert's greatest admirers, Henry Vaughan. Reading *The Temple* and the poems within it as a literary representation of the faculty of the imagination as posited by early modern theorists creates implications for the power and nature of language, for Protestant uses of images, and for an interpretation of the structure of Herbert's text.

Unlike Robert Burton and others, as we shall see, Thomas Wright in *The Passions of the Mind in General* does not locate imagination in the centre of the brain, between the senses and the memory or reason. Rather, he places imagination in the front of the brain, which affects its actions:

First, then, to our imagination cometh by sense or memory some object to be known, convenient or inconvenient to Nature, the which being known (for *Ignoti nulla cupido* ["What is unknown none desires"])³⁶ in the imagination, which resideth in the former part of the brain (as we prove when we imagine anything), presently the purer spirits flock from the brain by certain secret channels to the heart, where they pitch at the door, signifying what an object was presented, convenient or inconvenient for it. The heart immediately bendeth either to prosecute it or to eschew it, and the better to effect that affection draweth other humours to help him. (123)

Wright allows that imagination must have some data from the sense or memory even though it is not in physical contact with both. In turn imagination also affects sense and memory, but it is located in the front part of the brain, "as we prove when we imagine anything." His is scant proof; imagination is in the forefront of the brain because it is vital as the first response to memory and sense. Imagination then influences the heart, and is thus connected to and interacting with the entire body, for, as Thomas Sloan identifies, "As a faculty of apprehension, the imagination is the major mediating force between the body and the mind" (43). While the imagination is in the front of the brain, the impact of imagination proceeds throughout the body. Moreover, Wright specifically emphasizes the word "border" when he discusses the actions of souls to demonstrate that imagination not only mediates between the brain and the body, but it also acts as a conduit between the external world and the internal workings of the body and brain: "Three sorts of actions proceed from men's souls: some are internal and immaterial, as the acts of our wits and wills; others be mere external and material, as the acts of our sense (seeing, hearing, moving, etc.); others stand betwixt these two extremes and border upon them both" (94). Wright contends that children's

³⁶ Ovid, *Art of Love*, 3.397.

minds operate on that “border” “because they lack the use of reason and are guided by an internal imagination” (94), and therefore imagination makes up the border between internal understanding and external action.

In order to identify and define the location or the quality of imagination, Wright employs a number of metaphors. Imagination, he writes, possesses gates:

For whatsoever we understand passeth by the gates of our imagination, the cousin german to our sensitive appetite; the gates of our imagination, being prevented, yea, and well nigh shut up with the consideration of that object which feedeth the passion and pleaseth the appetite, the understanding looking into the imagination findeth nothing almost but the mother and nurse of his passion for consideration; where you may well see how the imagination putteth green spectacles before the eyes of our wit to make it see nothing but green, that is, serving for the consideration of the Passion. (128)

Of the several images found in this passage, Wright uses the image of the gate to emphasize the fortitude of imagination; imagination can lock something inside itself, and the gates of imagination can be shut behind an object or image so that the object will completely inhabit the imagination and be imprisoned within it. Hence, the imagination causes obsession when an object remains for a long time, always in front of the eyes of the person whose imagination is affected. To Wright, the imagination influences the understanding—“the eyes of our wit”—so that through imagination the understanding sees through the colouring of the passion. He personifies understanding, making it doubly “see,” first “looking into the imagination” and then “see[ing] nothing but green.”³⁷ The object “which feedeth the passion and pleaseth the appetite” is “the mother and nurse of [the understanding’s] passion,” and the imagination itself is “cousin german to our sensitive appetite.” When he personifies the understanding, the imagination, and the object trapped within imagination’s gates, Wright creates a familial relationship between them, emphasizing the close bond tying the imagination to the appetites and passion, which in turn affect understanding. All understanding begins in the imagination, and thus Wright places it in the forefront of the brain. The understanding takes action, but that action is stimulated and influenced by the gates of the imagination, which controls every aspect of a person’s interaction with the material world. Imagination can literally or metaphorically colour how we understand our surroundings. Objects restrained in the imagination, even if they do not constantly appear before the bodily eyes of the imaginant, can affect the person’s eyes of wit, the understanding. Wright then reiterates his point when

³⁷ Philip Sidney writes that the soul has powers of sight which can be possessed by poetry: “[The poet] yeeldeth to the powers of the minde an image of that whereof the Philosopher bestoweth but a wordish description: which dooth neyther strike, pierce, nor possesse the sight of the soule so much as that other doth” (95).

he describes a cloudy imagination which “interposeth a mist” (128), spreading out like a fog to affect our judgment and our senses.

Later in the text, Wright again uses the image of gates to explore the nature of the imagination, but he develops it in a different direction:

The vehemency of the passion continueth the force of our imagination, because whatsoever passeth by the gates of our senses presently entereth into the court of our imagination, where the sensitive appetite doth entertain it. Therefore, seeing all passions cause some sense or feeling more or less in the body so long as they endure, the imagination likewise representeth to the understanding so long the object of the passion, and, as a deceitful Counsellor, corrupteth his Judge. (129)

Again, the imagination, the senses, and the sensitive appetite are closely interacting. His metaphor fashions imagination as a court wherein an object is entertained, and the gates that allow objects into the imagination are the senses. The “vehemency of the passion” causes an object to remain long in the court, because the passions affect the body, which in turn contains and influences the senses, which act as the gates of the imagination. Wright again adjusts his metaphor when he calls imagination “a deceitful Counsellor” which corrupts the understanding, “his Judge.” If the imagination is the court of the royal judge (the understanding) then when an object remains in that court at length, the imagination corrupts the judge, which should be advised by honest counsellors. The physical nature of the brain allows an object to remain in it, for as I described in the introduction, the brain is soft and moist, perfect for imprinting. The softness and moisture of the brain assists the imagination to retain images and ideas, for they stick to the brain, and the imagination can easily retain the imprint of objects that have passed by the gates of the senses, and use that imprint to corrupt the understanding.

Francis Bacon writes extensively about the location of the faculty of imagination in *The Advancement of Learning*. He describes the mind as a network of communication and cooperation: “And generally let this be a rule, that all partitions of knowledges be accepted rather for lines and veins than for sections and separations; and that the continuance and entireness of knowledge be preserved” (102). Imagination should not be considered separate from reason and memory, for all knowledge, of which imagination is a part, should be taken as a whole. Bacon extends his argument, however, and asserts that body and mind, which includes imagination, cannot be separated from each other: “The humours and affects of the body do alter or work upon the mind; or again, ... the passions or apprehensions of the mind do alter or work upon the body” (103-104). Although Bacon sees the mind and body as a network working in combination, he calls for a better understanding of the relationship:

But unto all this knowledge *de communi vinculo* [of the common tie], of the concordances between the mind and the body, that part of inquiry is most necessary, which considereth of the seats and domiciles which the several faculties of the mind do take and occupate in the organs of the body; which knowledge hath been attempted, and is controverted, and deserveth to be much better inquired. (105)

Bacon proposes something beyond a simple correspondence between the organs and faculties. Rather, he questions whether, or if, faculties of the mind actually locate their “seats and domiciles” in different “organs of the body.” It is possible, Bacon muses, that the mental faculties could be diffused throughout the whole body. Imagination, then, as one of the faculties, would also physically and metaphorically interact with the rest of the body, and Bacon’s location of imagination reveals its centrality, but also shows its body-mind interconnectivity.

Besides his contemplation on the possible unity between body and mind, Bacon affirms the cranial location of imagination most often assigned by early modern theorists. Bacon situates imagination between the faculties of sense and reason, and he assigns an important role to imagination’s situation in the brain:

For sense sendeth over to imagination before reason have judged:
and reason sendeth over to imagination before the decree can be
acted. For imagination ever precedeth voluntary motion. Saving
that this Janus of imagination hath differing faces: for the face
towards reason hath the print of truth, but the face towards action
hath the print of good; which nevertheless are faces,

Quales decet esse sororum [Such as sisters’ faces should be].³⁸

Neither is the imagination simply and only a messenger; but is
invested with, or at least wise usurpeth no small authority in itself,
besides the duty of the message. (116)

Imagination is between sense and reason—note Bacon’s “reason” rather than Wright’s “memory”—and because of its position, it must act as the mediator between the two faculties fore and aft.³⁹ Nothing can enter the reason without first

³⁸ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 2.14.

³⁹ According to early modern thinkers such as Wright and Burton, the three sections in the brain are the common sense, the imagination, and the memory, but to Bacon, the common sense, the imagination, and the reason comprise the brain. Early modern philosophers like Burton never deny that reason is part of the brain—a very important part—but they do not always assign it a single faculty. When Bacon emphasizes reason rather than memory as the third organ, he wants to highlight the importance of reason as judge and moderator over the rest of the brain.

traversing the imagination, and nothing can proceed from the reason without passing through the imagination once again. Bacon emphasizes the significance and centrality of the imagination:

The knowledge which respecteth the faculties of the mind of man is of two kinds; the one respecting his understanding and reason, and the other his will, appetite, and affection; whereof the former produceth position or decree, the latter action or execution. It is true that the imagination is an agent or *nuncius* [ambassador], in both provinces, both the judicial and the ministerial. (116)

Acting as a messenger between sense and reason, the imagination is involved in all the processes of the brain, and partakes in the body's actions and the brain's understanding. For Bacon, imagination's location does not make it simply a passageway; rather, it is an ambassador invested with power as it can and does affect the message.

Like Bacon, Robert Burton pinpoints the location of the organ of imagination as the "middle cell of the brain" (1.1.2.7.159). He assigns an "organ or seat" (1.1.2.7.159) to each of the three faculties in the brain—the common sense, the imagination, and the memory—because, according to Burton and his contemporaries, each faculty was a corporeal body in the brain. Before Burton describes imagination's inner-cranial setting, he emphasizes that the brain is its locality. He cannot let his readers take for granted that the imagination is in the brain, or is a process of the brain, for other authors do not situate imagination solely in the brain, or at least do not locate the network of imagination in the brain alone. To Burton, because imagination is the middle of the brain, it interacts with the two parts before and behind it—the common sense in front and the memory behind. The imagination, then, is a conduit between the common sense and the memory, and any traffic through the brain must travel through the faculty of the imagination. Burton emphasizes that imagination is both a divisive and unifying faculty because it lies in the center of the brain—while it separates common sense and memory, it also facilitates communication between the two and unites them.

Margaret Cavendish tackles the question of the location of imagination, or more generally, the position of thoughts, in her poem, "The Reason why the Thoughts are onely in the Head." She begins by describing the sinews:

The *Sinewes* are small, slender *Strings*,
Which to the *Body Senses* brings;

Todd Butler also acknowledges Bacon's emphasis on imagination's central position: "Wariness and fascination exist side-by-side in Bacon's readings of the imagination, as the faculty's mediatory role between reason and the passions grants it a profound yet often ill-directed influence over the course of human action" (19). Chapter 2 will explore the interaction between reason and imagination in more detail.

Yet like to *Pipes*, or *Gutters*, hollow be,
 Where *Animall Spirits* run continually.
 Though they are small, such *Matter* do containe,
 As in the *Skull* doth lye, which we call *Braine*. (42)

She considers the senses and the thoughts, brimming with animal spirits, proceeding outward from the brain throughout the body. Animal spirits are the liquid “sent through the body from the brain via the sinews to initiate movement; in the other direction they carry sense-impulses via the sinews to the brain” (Newbold 36). They are vital to the operation of the body and mind, for they “move the whole body and are the media of sensation, whose operations properly, but not necessarily, are under the control of reason” (Newbold 36). Cavendish also links, like Bacon, the mind and the body, for the senses are carried along to the brain through the body by sinews. She considers, for example, the connectivity of the heel and the brain: “If any one doth strike the *Heele*, / The *Thought* of that, *Sense* in the *Braine* doth feele” (42).⁴⁰ The same network of senses, intensely concentrated in the brain, causes the brain to be the source and generator of thought. Cavendish demonstrates the importance of the sinews in a literary experiment. She wonders what would happen if the heel had as many sinews and as large a sensory network as the brain:

For had the *Heele* such *quantity* of *Braine*,
 Which doth the *Head*, and *Skull* therein containe;
 Then would such *Thoughts*, which in the *Braine* dwell high,
 Descend downe low, and in the *Heele* would lye. (42)

The difference between the brain and the heel is therefore of quantity rather than of quality. Yet the location of the brain is still important, for Cavendish makes it significant that the brain is in the head, the highest part of the body. Because they are at the top of the body, the thoughts of the brain are exalted, rather than lowly, which they would be if they were in the heel. Moreover,

⁴⁰ The image of head and heel displays the complexity of Cavendish’s poetry. It is possible that Cavendish uses the image of the heel not only because it is physically at the opposite extreme of the body from the brain, but also because of its biblical and literary significance. After the Fall, God curses the serpent and tells him that the offspring of Eve “will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Gen 3:15, NIV). When Cavendish refers to striking the heel, she may be attributing to the brain the ability not only to perceive physical sensation, but also to identify the difference between good and evil. Moreover, head and heel imagery is a common metaphor in early modern drama to describe the relationship between ruler and ruled. Menenius, for example, calls a citizen in Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus* “the great toe of this assembly” (1.1.153), and Prospero asks Miranda in *The Tempest*, “My foot my tutor?” (1.2.472). When Cavendish asserts that the brain cannot be in the heel, she seems to uphold early modern social order. Yet the poem itself upsets that order, for Cavendish demonstrates that she—the heel—contains great quantity of brains.

[The heel] wants both *roome*, and *quantity* no doubt.
 For if a *Sinew* could so much *Braine* hold,
 Or had a *Skin* so large for to infold,
 As in the *Skull*, then might the *Toe*, or *Knee*,
 Had they an *Opticke Nerve*, both *heare* and *see*. (42)

Not only does the brain need a large quantity of sinews, but it also has special features, such as the optic nerve, not repeated anywhere else in the body. Cavendish therefore concludes humorously, “Had *Sinewes roome*, *Fancy* therein to breed,/ *Copies of Verses* might from the *Heele* proceed” (42). Not only does she supplement her argument by making the opposite absurd, but as soon as she mentions fancy and poetry, she also alludes to imagination. The imagination must come from the brain, and because the brain is situated at the top of the body, the imagination, like the brain, holds exulted thoughts and is not low like the heel. Her poetry, Cavendish argues, which arises from imagination, is likewise worthy and illustrious. Her poems have a large capacity for thought, and are enfolded—convoluted and complicated—like the brain. Indeed, Cavendish focuses so much on the senses—especially sight and sound—in her poetry that she metaphorically gives her poetry an optic nerve. Cavendish demonstrates the location of imagination by means of a metaphor and a witty experiment, a competition between the heel and the brain, which she bolsters with concrete, physical data about the anatomy of the brain. She then uses imagination, which she has constructed by metaphor, as a metaphor for her book of poetry. The location of imagination is therefore central—literally—to her understanding of imagination, but also to the utility of imagination in her text.

Thomas Willis, in his *Five Treatises*, focuses extensively on the location of the faculty of imagination. He situates imagination in the centre of the brain, but instead of referring to imagination as an organ, he, like Cavendish, relates imagination to the movement of animal spirits. Imagination, according to Willis, is “a certain undulation or wavering of the animal Spirits, begun more inwardly in the middle of the Brain, and expanded on or stretched out from thence on every side towards its circumference” (91). Willis, like Burton, associates imagination with the middle of the brain, but he does not bind it there, for the influence of imagination reaches to all parts of the brain. Imagination’s source is the centre of the brain, and its position gives it power and importance, for as the middle part of the brain extending out to every other section of the brain, imagination is essential to the brain *in toto*. Willis emphasizes the importance of imagination’s position when he describes the different functions of the brain. The brain is the

origine and fountain of all motions and conceptions. But some Functions do chiefly and more immediately belong to the substance of this, and others depend as it were mediately and less necessarily upon it. Among these, which of the former sort are

accounted the chief, are the Imagination, Memory, and Appetite.
(91)

When he cites the most vital parts of the brain, he lists imagination first, even though it is not in the first or front position of the brain; it is in the middle. Willis also discusses imagination first in his listing of the chief functions of the brain. Indeed, when he goes on to describe memory, he prefaces his description with “on the contrary” and then continues: “the act of Memory consists in the regurgitation or flowing back of the Spirits from the exterior compass of the Brain towards its middle” (91). Willis thus defines memory by comparing and contrasting it to the faculty of imagination and demonstrates that the location of imagination gives it a central position that allows it to define the other faculties in the brain.

Willis’s considerations on imagination and its location certainly did not go unchallenged. His main detractor, Humphrey Ridley, in his 1695 text, *The Anatomy of the Brain*, an account of his experiments dissecting the brain, disputes Willis’s conclusions. Ridley, apparently trying to verify Willis’s observations, writes, “I must confess, that ... I have not been able, by the best enquiry I could make either into Brains dissected whilst fresh, or when boiled in Oyl, to discover any such actual configuration or disposition of Parts, as we find so formally delineated by [Willis and other anatomists]” (190). Ridley asserts that thinking about imagination as a faculty in the brain physically separate from memory and common sense does not coincide with what he uncovers in the dissected brain. Yet his ridicule of Willis’s theorizing does not stop Ridley from making his own philosophical statements about the brain. He may mock the unsubstantiated conclusions of people like Willis, but Ridley himself opines about the connection between the brain and the soul without observing a soul in the dissected brain: “So neither do I see any necessity thereof [dividing the brain into common sense, imagination, and memory], seeing we may much more easily, and to the self-same ends and advantages, look upon the Soul as one internal principal Sensative Faculty” (191). The “internal Sensative Faculty” is the “whole medullary part of the Brain” (191), which consists of a network of “fibrils” (191) and “vaculas” (191) which communicate with each other and the external senses. This single faculty, which Ridley also names the “*Common Sensory*” (191), “executes or performs those different Functions commonly going under the aforesaid Names of *The Common Sense, or Simple Apprehension, Imagination, Judgment, and Memory*” (191). Ridley’s conception of a single brain, divided by function rather than by discrete organs, begins to depart from earlier definitions of the physical structure of the brain, and more closely resembles modern perceptions. Nevertheless, although Ridley ostensibly bases his argument in scientific observation, he uses the rhetoric of philosophy to demonstrate his point. Especially telling is the order of his argument about the faculty and the powers of the brain, for he begins by citing the ends and advantages of considering the soul and the brain in a certain way. For Ridley, the brain’s processes result from interconnection—a web of sensory data, common sense, imagination, judgment,

and memory. He cannot find separate faculties in the brain, so he argues for a unified soul and a unified brain that work completely in tandem with the body and five senses.

Although the imagination, according to most early modern theorists, is located in the centre (or the front) of the brain, the imagination is not static; rather, it is constantly in motion, which has great consequences for the use and value of imagination in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature. In his *Essays*, Bacon uses grand and expansive language to refer to the movement of the mind. Indeed, he correlates the mind of man to the movement of the universe when he writes in “Of Truth:” “Certainly, it is Heaven upon Earth, to have a Mans Minde Move in Charitie, Rest in Providence, and Turne upon the Poles of *Truth*” (8). Bacon emphasizes the importance of charity, providence, and truth through a correlation between the movement of the mind and the daily rotation of the earth. He evokes the image of the mind “turn[ing] upon the poles.” To Bacon, the movement of the mind gives it great power and also reminds the reader to be careful with the mind’s motion. The mind must move in charity and rest in providence, and if it does so, then it represents heaven upon earth. Elsewhere in the *Essays*, Bacon extends the mind and effects of the mind, such as when he equates the products of imagination with children of the body, as I discussed in the introduction. Bacon’s primary focus, especially in the *Essays*, is therefore not on imagination itself, but on its effects. For Bacon, the location of the imagination in the brain is less important than the location of the outcome of imagination, for its products go beyond the mind and body, and enter into the world. So, because imagination, as Bacon has already argued, is not a physical object, then it is not bound to a single mind, and the location of imagination is accordingly public. Imagination is publicly accessed, and it becomes part of the community as it can be transmitted, and its location is unfixed. Its communal role also explains why Bacon is so concerned to define and moderate imagination, for it can enter into the public domain and effect immense consequences. Because of its public power, Bacon would think it “heaven on earth” if the motion of the mind were in charity, providence, and truth.

When Robert Burton describes the movement of the imagination, he emphasizes the implications of such constant motion. Citing the work of Pompanatius, Burton argues that charms and amulets that incite imagination cause a “strong conceit and opinion ... which forceth a motion of the humours, spirits, and blood” (1.2.3.2.256). Here Burton introduces the idea of motion and movement as it relates to imagination, for although the imagination resides quietly in the middle of the brain, it is connected to a network through the body that is in constant, and at times dizzying, motion. Burton continues his discussion of motion later in the text when he depicts a melancholic man in need of help from his friends. When Burton describes the man’s imagination, he writes, “for his phantasy is so restless, operative and quick, that if it be not in perpetual action, ever employed, it will work upon itself, melancholize, and be carried away instantly, with some fear, jealousy, discontent, suspicion, some vain conceit or

other” (2.2.6.2.109). In the case of the melancholic man, if his brain is not constantly in motion, and if his imagination is not continually employed with forming fantasies and recombining data from the common sense and the outward senses, then the motion of imagination will not cease, but will generate vain conceits that are not based on sensory data from the outside world. Instead, the perpetually moving imagination will only recombine images already present in the brain, thereby creating unnatural and harmful emotions and images, such as fear, jealousy, and vain conceit. According to Burton, the imagination is centrally located and yet cannot be fixed, because it is always moving. While that motion is necessary, it is also potentially dangerous if not employed properly.

To Cavendish, the motion of thoughts is essential but frustrating to any understanding of the brain. Because they are always in motion, thoughts are hard to halt and define. She addresses such a difficulty in her poem “The Motion of Thoughts.” In the poem, the speaker searches for thoughts, and she finds a light that “Alwaies in *Motion*, yet *fixt* did prove, / Like to the *Twinkling Stars* which never move” (40). The light “running severall waies, / Did seeme a *Contradiction* for to raise; / As to it *selfe*, with it *selfe* disagree” (40). She continues, “Yet at the last, all severall *Motions* run / Into the first *Prime Motion* which begun” (40). Like Bacon, she associates thoughts with the universe, for the motion of the mind is the “prime motion,” surely a reference to the *primum mobile*⁴¹ of the Aristotelian universe. The motion Cavendish describes is grand and immense, and it is also “yet fixed.” She writes of the fixed yet moving point of light,

Tis *its owne Center*, and *Circumference* round,
Yet neither has a *Limit*, or a *Bound*,
A *fixt Eternity*, and so will last,
All *present* is, nothing to come, or past. (41)

The motion has a centre, which yet does not have a limit, so it is a fixed eternity, reflecting the paradox of thoughts in movement. How can a person define what is fixed yet moving? The reader eventually discovers Cavendish’s definition of the point of light in the middle of the poem: “My *Thoughts* then wondring at what they did see, / Found at the last themselves the same to bee” (41). Cavendish does not announce the identity of the motion until the center of the poem, forcing her reader to come to the discovery with her. Moreover, the speaker’s thoughts, significantly at the centre of the poem just as the fixed eternity is at the boundless centre, are moving, and she cannot understand the movement or direction. The poem ends in unknowingness: “Yet cannot all the *Wise*, and *Learned* tell, / What’s done in *Heaven*, or how we there shall dwell” (42). After equating the mind with eternity, the speaker now relates the inability to understand thoughts to the

⁴¹ The *primum mobile* is “the outermost moving sphere which initiates the motion of all the rest” (Rivers 70) in Aristotelian-Ptolemaic cosmology.

obscurity of heaven, so the motion of thoughts is connected to heaven and earth, the fullness of creation.

The motion of the mind is particularly useful in *Poems and Fancies* because of Cavendish's conflation of movement and creativity. In the beginning of the text, in the dedicatory epistle to Sir Charles Cavendish, Cavendish describes her work, and particularly women's work:

True it is, *Spinning* with the *Fingers* is more proper to our *Sexe*, then studying or writing *Poetry*, which is the *Spinning* with the *braine*: but I having no skill in the *Art* of the first (and if I had, I had no hopes of gaining so much as to make me a Garment to keep me from the *cold*) made me delight in the *latter*; since all *braines* work naturally, and incessantly, in some kinde or other. (A2)

The circular motion of the mind, which directly corresponds to the circular motion of her poetry, is industrious and creative, and it is both natural and incessant. She can no more stop her creativity than she can stop her thoughts. Like her metaphor of spinning, the motion of the mind is also both literally and figuratively creative: on the one hand, it can produce real, published poetry that can be bound and held by the reader. It also creates metaphors and images in the imagination that have no physical correspondence and are not the images they evoke. For example, Cavendish creates poetry in her text, but she does not spin a real cloth with her mind. Yet, she does create an image of spinning, so her creation is both literal and metaphorical. Cavendish does not always use such a comfortable image as spinning for the insistent motion of thoughts, however. In one poem, "Similizing Fancy to a Gnat," she speaks of the motion of the fancy or the imagination not as a circle, network, web, or garment, but as a cloud of gnats buzzing in the brain. The gnats, the fancies,

do sting so sore the *Poets Head*,
His *Mind* is blister'd, and the *Thoughts* turn'd red.
Nought can take out the burning heat, and paine,
But *Pen*, and *Ink*, to write on *Paper* plaine. (151)

The only way for the speaker to control the frenzied motion of imagination is to remove it from the brain by writing it down. Here, Cavendish's poem recalls Burton's argument that the imagination is in constant motion, and the only way to relieve it is to use it. The motion of imagination, therefore, not only facilitates but even necessitates an outward movement, from the inwardness of the mind to the outwardness of expression, whether that be verbal, physical, or, in the case of Cavendish, poetic.

According to Willis, motion is essential to the workings of the brain. In fact, he names motion the "necessity of the turnings about in the brain" (92). He again relates movement to the animal spirits:

For as the animal Spirits, for the various acts of Imagination and Memory, ought to be moved within certain and distinct limited or bounded places, and those motions to be often iterated or repeated through the same tracts or paths: for that reason, these manifold convolutions and infoldings of the brain are required for these divers manners of ordinations of the animal Spirits. (92)

The physical structure of the brain serves the imagination and memory, for the coils and convolutions in the brain facilitate the movement of imagination and memory. The faculties of memory and imagination are, according to Willis, so important that they determine the physical design of the brain. Willis also assigns a limit to the movement of the animal spirits in the brain, for they can only take certain predetermined paths. While he gives imagination a central role in the brain, and even allows that it determines the structure of the brain, he still constrains it. The layout of the brain, once determined, cannot change, and the paths of the animal spirits do not give the imagination, admittedly important and central in the brain, complete free rein.

The location and motion of imagination signifies a way of understanding the faculty and a way of explaining its effects and procedures. A central position allows imagination to mediate between common sense and memory; nothing can enter the memory unless it first comes from the senses, through imagination. Memory cannot produce action or affect the senses until memory data has navigated imagination. Because imagination affects both memory, which is inactive, and the senses, which are active, then imagination also bridges the internal workings of the mind and external stimuli that enter the mind, and it in turn takes internal mental processes and translates them into external action through the senses. Most early modern theorists agree that imagination has a central and mediatory role in the brain, but they disagree about the means by which to discuss imagination's position and role. Some authors attempt to do so by dissection, others by thinking about the faculty of imagination, and still others by considering the act of imagining. Moreover, many early modern authors contend that the faculty of imagination extends beyond the brain and is suffused throughout the body. Because it influences the senses, and the senses can be located in the entire body, then the imagination is also associated with the body. Imagination therefore also breaks down a perceived barrier between body and brain. Yet some authors suggest that imagination cannot be fixed or attached to a certain location because it is constantly in motion. For some, such motion is necessary and creative, but for others, movement is alarming and must be controlled so that the motion proceeds in an orderly fashion, and to proper ends. How early modern thinkers argue imagination can be controlled will be the subject of my next chapter.

Situating Imagination in Herbert's *The Temple*

Early modern theorists' discussions of imagination and its location in the brain and body move beyond the pages of psychological and philosophical texts, for works of early modern literature also can, and do, I contend, make use of the location—and its implications—of the faculty of the imagination. In order to trace the metaphorical significance of the physical positioning of imagination to a work of literature both as it is formed by the author and as it is understood by the reader, I focus primarily on George Herbert's seminal book of poetry, *The Temple*. Herbertian criticism is lengthy and various; most critics of his poetry debate his use of language and images, and attempt to define the structure of *The Temple*. Barbara Lewalski summarizes the common description of the organizing principle of *The Temple*:

Herbert critics have pointed to the traditional typological significance of the three parts of the Old Testament Temple—the Porch or Outer Court typifying the external and visible aspect of the Church from which none are excluded, the Holy Place typifying the communion of the invisible Church on earth, and the Holy of Holies, typifying the highest heaven of the saints—and have often tried to fit Herbert's structure to these terms. ... It seems obvious that Herbert made some use of these conventional associations in the first two sections of his work, though his application is rather to the Christian individual than to the ecclesiastical body. (287)

Sharon Cadman Seelig argues in a different vein: "Perhaps the most astonishing aspect of *The Temple* is its lack of progress, its absence of order, its chaotic indirection" (*The Shadow of Eternity* 8). Reading *The Temple* in light of early modern definitions of the characteristics of imagination, however, belies Seelig's claim. In this chapter, I find evidence to support Susanne Woods, who acknowledges Herbert's control over the clear and complicated: "Herbert's mastery of the techniques of line and stanza-making has at last been recognized for the breathtaking sophistication that frequently underlies whatever is apparently simple or obvious in *The Temple*" (30). Central to the simplicity and complexity of Herbert's poetry are his considerations of image and word. Ernest Gilman argues that "a Protestant reader of Augustine would ... find ample reason for distrusting the visual arts: the divine medium is the creating Word, and the Christian must beware of the enticements of the eye and the delusions of the visual imagination" (*Iconoclasm* 88). Although he may have had "ample reason for distrusting the visual arts," Herbert does not simply reject images and the imagination, for his poetry, especially his pattern poetry, is overtly filled with images, including images of the imagination as a faculty in the tripartite brain. William West intriguingly contends that reading language emblematically

combines text and image, which was the intent, he argues, of seventeenth-century poets. Although Herbert ultimately fails to create “a hieroglyphic theory of language— language, that is, that expresses its meaning, usually in some occulted sense, in its material realization” (201)—the attempt permeates *The Temple*.

“The Windows” has long been cited in the scholarly debate over the value Herbert places on images in liturgical worship, with scholars arguing vociferously that Herbert either promotes or rejects all externals as devotional tools. Richard Strier, for example, asserts that “The Windows” “could have been written by an iconoclast” (150), while others, such as Judy Kronenfeld, Robert Whalen, and Clifford Davidson argue for a more tempered view: “If Herbert was no iconoclast, so also we must not pretend that he was an iconodule [one who worships images]” (34),⁴² Davidson remarks. As Eugene Cunnar posits, Herbert uses liturgical externals only “after redefining their traditional Catholic meaning” (102). Davidson and others argue that “‘The Windows’ is ‘a crucial poem in *The Temple*’ (36) because it outlines some of Herbert’s thoughts on externals in worship. I certainly agree with these critics, but more importantly for my argument, “The Windows” demonstrates Herbert’s regard for the imagination and its bridging of the outer and inner life of a Christian. “The Windows” demonstrates that, even though Herbert never mentions the words ‘imagination’ or ‘fantasy’ in *The Temple*, he still engages with the faculty of imagination in his poems. Indeed, the poem bears uncanny resemblances to the layout of the brain as it is described by such theorists as Robert Burton. In its form and content, “The Windows” discusses and represents early modern depictions of the faculty of the imagination, paying close attention to the imagination’s physical location in the brain and its metaphorical significance.

The metaphors in “The Windows” demand that readers employ the combinatory powers of their imaginations. The image of church windows describes the nature of humankind, the life and role of a preacher, and the relationship between God, the preacher, and all believers. Readers must incorporate their mental images of church windows—glass, position in the church, staining, reflection, transparency—and connect those images and all that accompanies them—memories and sensory data—to their images and experiences of preachers and of God. What mental faculty other than the imagination has such abilities? Herbert’s metaphors demand that his readers merge tenor and vehicle—preachers and windows—in order to generate a synthesis, an understanding of God’s interaction with preachers and the preacher’s responsibility in the Church. The imagination, the recombinant faculty in the brain, is responsible and able, because of its location in the centre of the brain between the common sense and memory, to make such mixtures and novel understandings. Herbert does not overtly state that a preacher must lead by godly example because his readers’

⁴² See also Judy Z. Kronenfeld, “Probing the Relation between Poetry and Ideology: Herbert’s ‘The Windows,’” *John Donne Journal* 2.1 (1983): 55-80, and Robert Whalen, *The Poetry of Immanence: Sacrament in Donne and Herbert* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

imaginations are essential to their involvement in the poem. Placing moral and theological strictures within poetry pulls his readers into his meditation, so that Herbert's readers participate actively in his poetry by using their imaginations to reproduce the metaphors Herbert crafts. The poem is a process that must be completed in the imagination, causing readers to engage dynamically with, and even form, the poem in the middle of their minds.

Yet "The Windows" deliberately does more than use imagination generally as the facilitator of metaphor. Herbert uses the poem to describe and stimulate the imagination, paying special attention to imagination's position, its combining powers, and its role as a border between inner and outer. "The Windows" not only uses imagination, but in its form and content, it represents imagination as a physical faculty in the brain. Throughout the poem, Herbert performs or gives examples of imaginative blending, examples located almost solely in the centres of the poem—in the centre stanza of the three stanzas, in the centres of each stanza, and in the centres of the lines. In line 12, for example, Herbert uses the words "combine" and "mingle," reminding the reader that the poem's metaphors combine images, and the poem's form mingles words and lines. For instance, in line 11, he connects "doctrine and life, colours and light, in one," a line which not only unites the two words "doctrine," "life," and "colours," "light," within each phrase, but also connects the phrases themselves by means of their repeated number of syllables and their identical syntactic structure. The added "in one" emphasizes the unity between the two phrases. "All four nouns form one whole when they combine and mingle, when form and content are brought together in the preacher's speech" (28), Sigrid Renaux comments. That mingling is only possible by God's grace and the working of the imagination. The enjambment in the poem, between lines 3 and 4, 7 and 8, 11 and 12, and 12 and 13, also highlights the mingling of ideas and lines in the poem. It is no coincidence that most of the enjambment occurs in the centre of the stanzas, just as imagination is located in the centre of the brain. The poem also emphasizes the sense of sight rather than of sound: "But speech alone / Doth vanish like a flaring thing, / And in the ear, not conscience ring" (13-5). Judy Kronenfeld warns that Herbert is not emphasizing sight in order to encourage the use of images in liturgical worship. Instead, she asserts, Herbert finds right speech meaningless unless it is accompanied by right actions.⁴³ Still, sight is more commonly associated with the imagination, the creator of images, and so Herbert encourages his readers to consider the poem with their imaginations, and thereby also to understand the connection between the holy preacher, God, and the reader imaginatively.

The most prominent metaphor in the poem, the glass on which God "anneals" his "story" (6), contains connotations of a border between inner and outer. Just as imagination allows communication between the senses and the memory, but also mediates that communication, so glass windows allow visual

⁴³ See Kronenfeld, "Probing the Relation between Poetry and Ideology," p. 72-73.

traffic between the inside of a church building and the outside, but are also a barrier. Imagination, then, is the glass which is not dangerously unscriptural if God imprints his story on it. Imagination can, and must, according to Herbert, reflect and reveal God. Indeed, without imagination and God's impact on it, God's light shining forth from the preacher is only "wat'rish, bleak, and thin" (10). Furthermore, the pun in the centre of the middle stanza accentuates Herbert's preoccupation with bordering and mingling. When Herbert calls the light of the preacher "More rev'rend" (9), he unites the two meanings of "reverend" as a noun and an adjective, combining the two meanings to create a new image, the "rev'rend" light in the "reverend," the preacher. The pun is especially compact evidence of the combining force of imagination, for one word contains many different meanings and images, all blended into one.

Because invocations of imagination occur throughout the entire poem, the poem as a whole emphasizes the centrality of imagination, but the poem can also represent the different faculties of the brain. If each stanza corresponds to a faculty in the brain according to Burton's conception of the mind, the first stanza would be the common sense, the second would be the imagination, and the third the memory. Although elements of each faculty are contained in each stanza, and the faculty of imagination is central—literally—in every stanza and the poem itself, Herbert crafts his poem to represent the layout and interaction of the brain. The first stanza reaches out to God, just as the senses have the most interaction of all the faculties with the outer world. Herbert also evokes the senses in the first stanza with references to "word" (1)—sense of hearing, "brittle" (2)—sense of touch, and "crazy" (2)⁴⁴—sense of sight. The second stanza dwells on the centrality and liminality of glass, an image of the imagination. James Boyd White writes that "the second stanza responds to [the first] by an act of imagination, in which man is now transformed into a stained-glass window, full of color and telling a story" (40), but the second stanza does not just contain imagination, it embodies it. The third stanza, then, deals with the longer lasting consequences of the senses and the imagination. When senses and imagination "combine and mingle" (12), they "bring / A strong regard and awe" (12-13), which has lasting significance, for it does not "vanish like a flaring thing" (14) but, like memories, remains stored in the brain. When he describes imagination in and by his poem, Herbert does not dismiss or mock it, but instead, calls it a gift of God, given by "grace," as he writes in line 5. That gift of the imagination appears centrally in "thy temple" (3), surely a reference also to Herbert's *Temple*, yet not as an afterthought or a word experiment. Reading "The Windows" as the faculty of imagination does not negate or contradict Herbert's emphasis in the poem on free grace. As Robert Entzminger writes, "The life of the preacher ... functions to greatest rhetorical effect only when it becomes illuminated by the life of Christ" (42). Without Christ filling the imagination and shining through it, the

⁴⁴ "Crazy" is an adjective describing the state of the glass: warped, cracked, and full of flaws.

imagination (like uncolored windows) is useless for meditation and for “The Church,” both the physical building and congregation, and the second section of *The Temple*. But, when the faculty of imagination as Burton describes it in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, central both in the brain and to metaphor, forms and informs “The Windows,” then like the annealed glass that is the preacher, imagination has a “glorious and transcendent place” (4).

In another poem, “Trinity Sunday,” immediately following “The Windows,” Herbert, unsurprisingly considering the title, focuses on threes. The poem has three stanzas, and within those stanzas, especially in the last, he crafts lists of threes: “my heart, mouth, hands” (7), “With faith, with hope, with charity” (8), and “run, rise, rest” (9). Each stanza corresponds to a person of the trinity, but the framing and middle of the poem make it especially significant to the implications of the location of imagination. As in “The Windows,” Herbert pays special attention to the interaction in the middle of the poem, considering it a place of combination and mingling. The poem begins with “Lord” (1), and ends with “thee” (9), addressed to God. An invocation of God, therefore, encircles the poem. In the centre of the middle stanza, Herbert emphasizes the speaker, describing and promising the speaker’s actions. The speaker tells God, “For I confess my heavy score, / And I will strive to sin no more” (5-6). The poem, then, places the speaker in the centre of the poem and God at the outside. The centre also invokes ideas of the imagination and its ability to merge and mingle so that, by means of the poem’s layout, Herbert is asking that the speaker’s sinful self be combined with the blessing and perfection of God. In the imaginative middle of the poem, the speaker asks for his nature to be combined with God’s so that he may be united—merged—with him. In his highly influential *Self-Consuming Artifacts*, Stanley Fish proposes that “to read many of Herbert’s poems is to experience the dissolution of the lines of demarcation we are accustomed to think of as real” (164). He also argues, “The problem posed in so many of Herbert’s poems—what can I do if you have done everything—is finally solved by dissolving the distinction (between thine and mine) that occasioned it” (189). Although Fish does not name it, the site of dissolution and mingling of God and humankind is the imagination, evidenced by Herbert’s organization of his poems and poetry. The form of his poetry, related to the physical structure of the human brain, reflects and occasions the merging of the human and the divine self. Herbert begins to demonstrate such a combination in the last line of the poem, for in the last stanza, he asks that God may “enrich” (7) him so “That I may run, rise, rest with thee” (9). “Run, rise, and rest” are all actions of the sun, and by invoking images of the sun in the minds of his readers, Herbert is making a common early modern pun on sun/Son. When the speaker asks that he may “run, rise, rest with thee,” Herbert is combining the two meanings of sun/Son in order to request another combination: his nature with Christ’s. Like “The Windows,” then, “Trinity Sunday” depends upon the physical location of the faculty of the imagination and its corresponding combinatory powers.

Herbert emphasizes the mingling of man and God in the middle of other poems as well. At the beginning of “The Church” section of *The Temple*, Herbert clearly creates a distinct beginning, middle, and end section in “The Altar,” and in the middle, he writes,

Wherefore each part
Of my hard heart
Meets in this frame,
To praise thy name. (9-12)

Herbert layers meaning upon meaning into “this frame,” which can and does refer to the altar, his heart, his book of poetry, and the poem itself. I would extend the argument to claim that the combining of each part of his hard heart must occur—must “meet”—in the middle of “The Altar” because that is the place of the imagination, which is particularly suited to combine heart parts. As well, the imagination also facilitates the mingling of the different meanings of “this frame” itself; it allows the very layering that makes the poem so incredibly complex. Herbert consciously assigns a purpose to the imagination, to the meeting he arranges in the poem: “To praise thy name.” Repeatedly, Herbert emphasizes that the imagination, especially with all its power, must praise God’s name, be combined with godliness, and be controlled by God.

As much as he uses imagination and its implications in *The Temple*, Herbert, like his contemporaries, also highlights the potential spiritual dangers of the imagination. For example, in “Paradise,” Herbert ends each line of the four stanza poem with a word that loses a letter in each successive line. The three lines in stanza one thereby end with “GROW” (1)—“ROW”(2)—“OW” (3) and in stanza two, with “CHARM” (4)—“HARM” (5)—“ARM”(6). In each stanza, the word ending the middle line has negative connotations: “ROW” (2), “HARM” (5), “TART” (8), “PARE” (11), and “REND” (14). The centres of each stanza, therefore, are potentially dangerous, and are only redeemed by the words that precede and follow them. The speaker of the poem, who takes on the persona of a tree in the garden of Eden, asks to be pruned in order to be useful and praiseworthy to God, and the centre words—like the imagination—must be similarly pruned and restrained in order to be useful both to God and to the reader. James Bauman and Barbara Watson caution that Herbert is careful to submit his poetic wit to God’s Word: “Any exercise of sheerly human wit, artifice, or invention necessarily falls short of the beauty, truth, and simplicity of God’s Word, which cannot be added to or embellished without loss” (221). Yet, even though a poem such as “Paradise” is very witty, Herbert redeems it by mingling it (using the faculty of imagination) with God’s Word and with the wit of God himself. Herbert combines his wit with the revealed nature of God in order to redeem himself, his reader, and his poetry.

Herbert also underscores the danger of the imagination in “Sin’s Round,” which focuses on the restless movement of thoughts. Tellingly, the poem does not

have a beginning, middle, and end because it begins as it ends, with “Sorry I am, my God, sorry I am,” which is both lines 1 and 18. The poem, then, could be read as a “round,” for the end is the beginning, and the beginning the end. In the poem, the speaker describes his thoughts as “a busy flame” (3) which cause his words to “take fire from [his] inflamed thoughts” (7), and then his hands “do join to finish the inventions” (13). With neither a beginning nor an end, the poem can have no middle, and thus the imagination is out of order, spinning restlessly, and corrupting the rest of the person. The speaker’s imagination is combining nothing, caught in its own self-consumption, causing the speaker to call out helplessly, “Sorry I am.”

Because of the potential danger of a disordered imagination, Herbert emphasizes in other poems the need for the imagination to be combined, and to combine itself with godliness. For example, in the well-known “Easter Wings,” the centre lines of the poems are the shortest, and they signal a change from the sinfulness of humankind and of the speaker to a renewed strength because of God’s salvation.⁴⁵ In the first stanza, the speaker describes the sinfulness and degeneracy of man, which continued to deteriorate,

Till he became
 Most poor:
 With thee
 O let me rise
 As larks, harmoniously. (4-8)

In the centre of the stanza, the speaker has to be combined “with thee”—with God—in order to be able to rise from his Fallen state. In the second stanza, the speaker describes his punishment from God for sin, which was to such an extent, the speaker writes,

That I became
 Most thin.
 With thee
 Let me combine,
 And feel this day thy victory. (14-8)

As in the first stanza, the speaker must merge with God, but this time he actually uses the word “combine” so that his readers will not mistake his intent. Although the imagination can combine ideas and images, if it does not ally itself to God, it will torment a person and will remain “most poor” and “most thin.”

⁴⁵ “Easter Wings” and Herbert’s other pattern poems are often cited as examples of his emblematic style. See, for example, Peter Daly’s comments in *Literature in the Light of the Emblem*, in which he asks rhetorically, using “Easter Wings” as an example: “What could be more natural than to transform the emblematic poem with its serious conceptual foundation into a pattern poem by condensing the *pictura* of an emblem into the shape of the verbal work?” (125).

Herbert does not limit his discussion of the importance of the location of the faculty of imagination to individual poems; rather he models the outline of his entire text on the physical layout of the brain we saw in the beginning of this chapter. Herbert organizes his text into three parts: *The Temple* begins with “The Church-Porch,” then it moves to the largest section of the text, “The Church,” and ends with “The Church Militant.” Although it is difficult to definitively assert that any number in early modern texts corresponds to a certain numerological system, since there were so many such systems in the seventeenth-century,⁴⁶ I argue that these three sections of the text are consistent with the three faculties of the brain: the senses, the imagination, and the memory, in that order. “The Church-Porch,” therefore, matches the senses. Because it represents and appeals to the five senses (which report directly to the common sense), “The Church-Porch” is the most overtly active section of *The Temple*, and it demands the reader’s interaction with the outside world. Just as the senses lead sensory data from the outside world into the brain, so “The Church-Porch” guides the reader into *The Temple*. In “The Church-Porch,” Herbert gives lessons and commands to his readers, teaching them how to live a proper Christian life, and also instructing them how to read his poetry properly and effectively. He warns them against a number of different things, such as lust, drunkenness, and lying. “The Church-Porch,” then, floods the reader’s senses with commands pertaining to living properly, and interacting in a Christian fashion with the outside environment, whether that be with substances, with other people, or with the physical world. The faculty of the common sense is thereby deliberately and particularly invoked and stimulated in the first part of the text.

Clear and trustworthy senses are vital also to other seventeenth-century devotional poets. In *Silex Scintillans* (1650), for example, Henry Vaughan’s first poem encourages his readers to approach his poetry with repaired senses. In “Vain Wits and Eyes,” the first non-dedicatory poem in his text, Vaughan admits that his senses need repair. He must analyze his senses before he writes any other poem because, as Vaughan builds his poetry with visual imagery and other appeals to the senses, his text will be completely ineffective if his and his readers’ senses are incapable of processing his poetry. In order to prepare himself and his readers for the rest of his poetry, therefore, he begins his collection by adjuring readers to repair their senses by penitence and tears, so that the tears may wash away the filth of the eyes, which will then be able to see the glory of God:

⁴⁶ Trying to detect numerology in early modern poetry is a dangerous endeavour, Isabel Rivers warns. Interpreting the significance of numbers “is fraught with difficulties, one being that the critics may read meanings into the numbers they arrive at, another being that three different systems of number symbolism were available to the poet, Pythagorean, Biblical and temporal (the ways in which time could be divided, for example 24 hours, 7 days, 52 weeks, 12 months, 365 days). Thus the number 4 might represent justice, or the gospels, or the seasons; the context would confirm which meaning if any was intended” (173).

Vain wits and eyes
 Leave, and be wise:
 Abuse not, shun not holy fire,
 But with true tears wash off your mire. (1-4)

Indeed, when the reader's eyes are clean,

Then comes the light! which when you spy,
 And see your nakedness thereby,
 Praise him, who dealt his gifts so free
 In tears to you, in fire to me. (9-12)

When the senses are repaired, then people can see their own need for God, and they can also see God's salvation work in themselves. Vaughan, however, makes a distinction between his readers and himself, the poet, for the readers' eyes are cleansed by tears, but Vaughan's by fire. Tears and fire have similar metaphorical functions in the poem, for as Vaughan writes: "Tears and these flames will soon grow kind / And mix an eye-salve for the blind" (5-6), but one is reserved for Vaughan, and the other for the reader. Vaughan's "fire" is more violent and aggressive than the reader's "tears," and is more apparent to an onlooker. The readers' tears allow them to see Vaughan's fire. Vaughan's eyes are purified so that he can write poetry for many to see and experience, but readers' eyes are cleaned so that they can read the poetry. It is more important, especially in his first poem, for readers to understand, than for readers to create, as Vaughan will be doing in his poetry. Vaughan does not suggest that readers do not have to perform action along with him; rather that the actions of readers and of Vaughan are different.⁴⁷ While Vaughan is forming the images that the reader must witness, the act of witnessing is dynamic, for after readers' eyes are cleared, then their immediate action in response to sight is to praise God. Yet before readers can respond to the visual stimulation of Vaughan's poetry, the senses—both Vaughan's and readers'—must be repaired. As Al Alvarez emphasizes, Vaughan's poetry is full of physical sensation: "Vaughan's great gift was his ability to talk about his emotions and about ideas and about religion and about natural things and creatures in terms of physical sensation" (97). Those physical sensations appeal to the imagination, which works with sensory data and memory. Nevertheless, because of their sinful nature—something William Perkins especially emphasizes in his discussion of imagination—people can 'read' neither poetry nor the world around them to discover God's glory. Only when the

⁴⁷ Vaughan regards his poetry as an evangelical tool to be consumed by as many people as possible, in order to lead them to God. His desire for a large readership, for example, led him to remove his frontispiece emblem from the 1654 edition of *Sillex*. James D. Simmonds summarizes: "Far from being a withdrawn contemplative, solely preoccupied with his personal relationship with God and the problem of his own salvation, [Vaughan] was a religious militant, an indefatigable preacher" (13).

imagination, which can both form and understand images, receives data from the repaired penitential senses, can a person combine sensory stimuli with praise of God. If the senses cannot gather any data, they cannot give anything to the imagination, and the imagination is as crippled as the senses. If the imagination is to have any place in poetry, the senses must first be made effective, and therefore Vaughan begins his book of poetry with the sense purifying poem, “Vain wits and eyes.”

As in Vaughan’s *Silex Scintillans*, in *The Temple* the senses must first be operating correctly before the imagination and the memory can work and be useful for reading poetry. At the end of “The Church-Porch,” the reader should be able to successfully use his or her senses to proceed to the next section in *The Temple*, “The Church”—the imagination. Herbert tells his readers at the conclusion of “The Church-Porch” that they must be prepared before they enter the church and “The Church.” He warns in “Superliminare,”

Thou, whom the former precepts have
Sprinkled and taught, how to behave
Thyself in church; approach, and taste
The church’s mystical repast. (1-4)

“The Church-Porch,” Herbert acknowledges, has taught its readers how to behave, how to interact appropriately with God and their neighbours, and now they can taste from the church and “The Church.” Once their senses have been purified, they can combine and consume “the church’s mystical repast” in their imaginations. Herbert stimulates and puts the senses to work in “The Church-Porch” so that they are accustomed to exertion and will be effective for the rest of the text.

Proceeding from the church porch into the church, and metaphorically, through the brain, the next section of the text, “The Church,” corresponds to the faculty of the imagination. A number of consequences arise from reading “The Church” as the imagination. One is that “The Church” should be full of images, and such is the case far more than in “The Church-Porch,” not only in the metaphors and imagery that Herbert places in each poem, such as in “The Windows,” but also in his concrete, pattern poetry, such as “Easter Wings.” Because “The Church” represents the imagination, Herbert is stimulating the imagination particularly with his use of form poetry, which appeals not only aurally but also visually to the imagination, thereby forming images in the middle section of the brain, just as Herbert forms images in the middle section of his text. The length of “The Church” compared to the two shorter sections that precede and follow it emphasizes, as Wright does, that the imagination is like a court that can hold or entertain images for a long time in the brain. The length of the section recognizes such a characteristic of the imagination, and also pays homage to the potential danger of the imagination overpowering the other two faculties, blinding the senses, corrupting the memory, and even overthrowing reason. Yet, Herbert

does not allow his readers to wallow too long in “The Church,” for he moves them ahead to “The Church Militant,” the conclusion of *The Temple*. The reader cannot linger in any one section of the text, for as John Bienz comments, “Herbert’s book sets up at the start a disciplined pathway for the reader” (2).⁴⁸ The healthy imagination moves the reader to action—to travel through *The Temple* and through the stages of a Christian pilgrimage. The imagination brings about the goal of poetry, which is, as Philip Sidney defines it, to move its readers:

I conclude, therefore, that [poetry] excelleth Historie, not onely in furnishing the minde with knowledge, but in setting it forward to that which deserveth to be called and accounted good: which setting forward, and moving to wel-doing, indeed setteth the Lawrell crowne upon the Poet as victorious. (100)

Movement in the book of poetry is as important as is movement in the brain, and Herbert carries his readers along with him through the church, constructing his text as a journey through a church building.

The reader’s journey is also like a voyage through the brain, and because the reader spends so much time in “The Church,” the imagination, he or she has the same ability as the imagination to travel between the senses and the memory, between “The Church-Porch” and “The Church Militant.” Indeed, the warning in “The Church Militant,” describing the historical movement of the church and predicting its eventual distancing from England, is all the more urgent considering the personal commands and advice of “The Church-Porch” and the difficulties of a personal relationship with God described in “The Church.” “The Church-Militant” also encourages the reader to think of him or herself as part of a larger church community, one that is constantly in danger of heresies and complacency, again making each person’s personal conversion all the more necessary and urgent, since it is also for the good of the whole Church. As well, the reader’s focus on and in “The Church” encourages him or her to reread “The Church-Porch,” bearing in mind—literally—the imagery and combinatory powers of “The Church.” For example, after reading “The Altar,” the first poem in “The Church,” the reader can and should find further significance in the first stanza of “The Church-Porch,” which tells the reader, “A verse may find him, who a sermon flies, / And turn delight into a sacrifice” (5-6). Read in the context of “The Altar,” that sacrifice demands acknowledging the broken state of the heart, and the necessity of God repairing it. As well, “the sacrifice” is not only the reader’s response to the poetry, but it is the poetry itself, which is shaped like an altar, and it is the combining of the reader’s nature with Christ’s. In turn, “The Church-Porch” affects “The Church,” because the urgent demands for holy and active

⁴⁸ Bienz also implicitly connects “The Church” to imagination: “the reader enters “The Church,” an imaginary space indicated by new page headings” (3). Although Bienz calls “The Temple” “imaginative,” he does not overtly relate “The Church” to the faculty of the imagination, making no mention of the importance of the physical layout of the brain.

living filter through “The Church,” making the images, metaphors, and abstract ideas of “The Church” equally urgent and active, encouraging the reader to transform the poetry into an active sacrifice of praise and supplication to God. Because “The Church” borders on “The Church-Porch,” a reader cannot process the poetry of “The Church” only cerebrally, but must also transform its ideas into action, just as the imagination, because it is in the centre of the brain, transforms ideas from the memory, recombines images in the imagination, and turns ideas into action because of imagination’s interaction with the common sense. The middle part of *The Temple*, therefore, encourages the reader to read the three different parts of the text in an interactive fashion, and the poetry of “The Church” influences the reading of “The Church-Porch” and of “the Church Militant.”

If such a reading of *The Temple* is possible, rewarding, and even insistent, then the significant layout of *The Temple* can enhance a reading of *Silex Scintillans* as well.⁴⁹ In his collection, Vaughan places the poem he models after “The Church-Porch,” “Rules and Lessons,” in the centre of his collection of poetry.⁵⁰ Vaughan carefully crafts and suggestively locates “Rules and Lessons” in *Silex Scintillans*, for as Martz notes, “Vaughan places [his] advice for daily living exactly in the middle of his book: twenty-four stanzas, one for every hour of the day” (xii). In the rest of his text, Vaughan is careful to imitate Herbert as closely as possible, so his completely different placement of “Rules and Lessons” demands attention. Why does Vaughan, especially in non-imitation of Herbert, place his poem of rules and commands in the centre, rather than at the beginning, of his poetry? When Vaughan was writing his poems, the state of the Church was very different than it was when Herbert was writing. For Herbert, the Church of England was secure, the Book of Common Prayer was in regular use, and church buildings were recognizable as belonging to the Church of England. When Vaughan was writing, however, much of that security was completely gone. The Church of England was outlawed under the Cromwellian government, and the Book of Common Prayer was banned from church services. To Vaughan, then, the Church of England and the Book of Common Prayer—which, I argue, is the model for his “Rules and Lessons”—only existed in his memory and in his imagination. As Madeline Forey emphasizes, “The abolition of the Prayer Book forces from Vaughan a private poetry of sighs and groans” (167). The Book of

⁴⁹ Many, if not all, critics of Vaughan emphasize his imitation of Herbert. Although Vaughan’s admiration of Herbert is clear from *Silex Scintillans*, I cite Robert Duvall’s estimation of Herbert’s influence on Vaughan, for he places Herbert as just one of the forces affecting Vaughan’s poetry: “Affected by the disintegration of that which he found valuable in society, by the reading of Herbert, by the mysticism of his brother, and by death and disruption around him, Vaughan turns within; and the very language of his quest is often Biblical. During his dark night of the soul, he seeks knowledge in nature and in devotional exercises” (13).

⁵⁰ See Michael Schoenfeldt, who writes, “Vaughan’s ‘Rules and Lessons’ [was] written in deliberate imitation of Herbert’s ‘Church-porch’” (“Poetry of Supplication” 95).

Common Prayer was no longer a physical, stable, and comfortable artefact to Vaughan, one that he could read, touch, smell, and hear with his senses, as could Herbert, but rather one that, out of necessity, lived and grew in his and his readers' imaginations. Therefore, in order to emphasize the now imaginative quality of his and his readers' interaction with the Book of Common Prayer, Vaughan places "Rules and Lessons" in the centre of his book of poetry, in the place of imagination, instead of at the beginning of *Silex Scintillans*, reflecting a different Church situation from the one Herbert experienced when he was able to place "The Church Porch" at the beginning of *The Temple*.

If "The Church-Porch" relates to the senses, and "The Church" to the imagination, then "The Church Militant," because it is at the end of the text, corresponds, according to the layout of the brain, with the faculty of memory and reason. Although there are elements appealing particularly to the senses, the imagination, and the memory in each of the three sections, each section relates primarily to a certain mental faculty. "The Church Militant" recalls the past history of the church, and therefore appeals overtly to the faculty of memory because it describes the biblical and early history of the Church before musing about the Church's possible future. At the end of the poem, Herbert assigns a purpose to motion (one of the characteristics of imagination) when he concludes,

But as the Sun still goes both west and east;

So also did the Church by going west

Still eastward go; because it drew more near

To time and place, where judgement shall appear. (274-277)

Herbert brings his poetry full circle, literally, as westward movement results in an easterly destination and the Church, or "The Church," moves in two directions. In the same way, the mental faculties, or the three sections of *The Temple* merge into each other through the combining faculty, the imagination, represented by "The Church." At the conclusion of his text, Herbert calls out,

Blessed be God alone,

Thrice blessed Three in One.

Although Herbert is clearly referring to the Holy Trinity, the layering of his poetry exhorts his readers to also read "three" as the three sections of his text, and the three faculties of the brain. Combining such meanings, and placing three in one, is, because of its location, the role of the imagination.

CHAPTER TWO

Controlling Imagination: Fantasy and Reality in Richard Brome's *The Antipodes*

Because imagination resides, according to most early modern authors, in the central part of the brain and thereby has a vital role in the brain and body, early modern thinkers consider it essential to explain how the faculty of imagination is and can be controlled. This chapter on control will be the most familiar to critics of the early modern period who emphasize that sixteenth- and seventeenth-century theorists feared and avoided imagination, and sought, above all else, to suppress and restrain it. I do not seek to underestimate early modern cautions about imagination, but such warnings must be placed in a larger discussion of imagination and all its early modern characteristics. Control is especially necessary, for example, considering the power early modern writers assign to imagination. Imagination, because of its connections to the rest of the body and brain, and because of its role in melancholy, has great power over the imaginant and others, a power I will demonstrate in more detail in chapter 3. Indeed, early modern texts on melancholy document, in great detail, the dangerous force with which imagination works in those whose melancholic imagination is unregulated. Control, then, is essential to any discussion of early modern imagination, but imagination is, nevertheless, indispensable to us. Its force can be channeled and focused, according to some early modern authors, into valuable creative uses. Poetry, fiction, and originality are partly the responsibility of imagination, and it is a weighty responsibility. If imagination can increase the rhetorical impact of the creative arts—painting, music, but especially literature—its control is again essential, for it enters the public consciousness and affects the imaginations of all those who view, read, and experience the creative results of imagination.

To Michel de Montaigne, who deals extensively with imagination in his *Essays* (1580), control over imagination is different for different people, but it is, above all, associated with class. In his essay, “On the power of imagination,”⁵¹ Montaigne writes, “It is probable that the belief in miracles, visions, enchantments, and such extraordinary occurrences springs in the main from the power of the imagination acting principally on the minds of the common people,

⁵¹ John O'Brien comments on the title of the essay, which he translates as “Of the Force of the Imagination”: Montaigne “shows how far his own imagination has been captured by the idea of imagination’s force. He does not even label the imagination formally as a faculty (although one might argue that this is an assumption he makes elsewhere). What he does do consistently is to describe the imagination as a force; it is defined not with respect to thinking, but as a disruptive transgressive power” (11).

who are more easily impressed” (39). Again, Montaigne speaks about impressions on the mind, reminding us of Thomas Wright’s description of the brain as soft, moist, and easily imprinted. Montaigne, in contrast, assigns softness of mind to only “common people,” whose minds, he argues, have different qualities than the minds of upper class people. Montaigne, who would certainly not consider himself “common,” does not share lower class people’s belief in miracles, visions, and enchantments. Yet he qualifies his argument by stating that “it is probable that the belief in miracles” comes from imagination running amok in the minds of common people; he does not completely deny that miracles, visions, and enchantments are possible. Because the rest of the essay speaks about imagination and its very real effects, Montaigne is not questioning whether or not imagination forms the belief; rather whether the belief in miracles, visions, and enchantments arises simply from imagination or if it actually has any basis in the physical world. While Montaigne is unwilling to conclusively state whether or not miracles, visions, and enchantments are real or imaginary, he is adamant on another point: common people may be impressionable, but Montaigne has firm control over his own imagination. In his lengthy essay entitled, “On experience,” for example, he muses about the connection between his health and his considerations of his health. After he discusses his kidney stones at some length, he argues that his kidney stones are actually an advantage to him. He then immediately mocks his own assertion by saying, “By such arguments, both strong and weak, I try to lull and divert my imagination, and to salve its wounds” (380). Montaigne attempts to sway his imagination by his arguments. He tries to reason with his imagination, to convince it to believe that what is bad is good. Montaigne’s endeavour implies that imagination has great power, but also that Montaigne is consciously trying to change and influence his own imagination, particularly by means of rational argument. The process of writing down his arguments is also vital to his control over imagination, for Montaigne does more than tell himself privately that his kidney stones are to his advantage; he writes it down and publishes it for others to read as well.

Timothy Bright, in *A Treatise of Melancholie*, emphasizes that reason is, or should be, the control over imagination. When Bright first defines melancholy in his preface, he calls it “the braine, being either not of well tempered substance: or disordered in his parts” (sig.*ii), and the brain he defines in the same preface as “the instrument of reason” (sig.*ii), so the brain’s most important task and role is reasoning. In another pithy definition of melancholy, he writes that “It signifieth in all, either a certayne fearefull disposition of the mind altered from reason, or else an humour of the body, commonly taken to be the only cause of reason by feare in such sort depraved” (1). Melancholy only enters the mind if the mind is no longer steered by reason—if the mind is somehow disconnected from reason, and if reason is undercut by fear. Lyons asserts that “Bright’s confidence in reason is obvious in his entire critical method, which depends on syllogism, abstract logic and analogy” (144). Yet Bright still allows and describes the possibility of reason breaking down and freeing imagination. How, then, does

reason lose control over the mind, and how does fear undermine reason, causing reason to relinquish authority over imagination? Bright writes that reason's power over the mind is inversely proportional to the amount of the melancholic humour in the body.⁵² He describes a complex relationship between body and mind:

[The] melancholick humour ... for the most part is settled in the spleane, and with his vapours anoyeth the harte and passing up to the brayne, counterfetteth terrible objectes to the fantasie, and polluting both the substance, and spirits of the brayne, causeth it without externall occasion, to forge monstrous fictions, and terrible to the conceite, which the judgement taking as they are presented by the disordered instrument, deliver over to the hart, which hath no judgement of discretion in it self, but giving credite to the mistaken report of the braine, breaketh out into that inordinate passion, against reason. This commeth to passe, because the instrument of discretion is depraved by these melancholick spirites, and a darknes & cloudes of melancholie vapours rising from that pudle of the splene obscure the clearenes, which our spirites are endued with, and is requisite to the due discretion of outward objectes. (102)

According to Bright, imagination participates in the process that disorders reason, and if reason is unfit for its commanding duties, then imagination is certainly uncontrolled. Bright describes the overshadowing of reason in religious terms of light and darkness,⁵³ and he says "For where that naturall and internall light [reason] is darkened, their fansies arise vayne, false, and voide of ground: even as

⁵² Many scholars have debated the humoral system in early modern medicine, psychology, and philosophy, and with good reason, for the humours were a major part of how early modern people thought of themselves and their world. For two particularly excellent discussions of humoral or Galenic philosophy, see Gail Kern Paster, *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), especially the introduction, pp 1-24, and Michael Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁵³ John Milton uses similar imagery of light and darkness, outlining their Christian metaphorical significance, in *Paradise Lost*. When he describes God's creation of the universe out of chaos, he writes,

Confusion heard His voice and Wild Uproar
 Stood ruled, stood Vast Infinitude confined,
 Till at His second bidding darkness fled,
 Light shone, and order from disorder sprung. (3. 710-3)

When he created the world, Milton emphasizes, God brought light to darkness. He associates God with light, and chaos with darkness.

in the externall sensible darkenes, a false illusion will appeare unto our imagination, which the light being brought in is discerned to be an abuse of fancie” (103). He considers reason a light that allows people to see clearly. The vapours arising from the spleen and the melancholic humour obscure the light of reason, and dark, melancholic images arise in the imagination. Such images, Bright contends, are “the internall darknes” and “cause of greater feares, and more molesteth us with terror” (103) than any outward absence of light. In the darkness caused by an imbalance of humours, imagination “fancieth not according to truth: but as the nature of that humour leadeth it, altogether gastely and fearefull” (103). When the melancholic humour obscures reason, imagination is uncontrolled, and even contributes to the excess of fear that further reduces reason’s effectiveness.

Melancholic humour not only impacts imagination, but through imagination it influences the common sense and memory as well. If the imagination is out of order, then because of its location between the common sense and memory, it also disturbs the rest of the brain. Once affected, memory and common sense further move the imagination. If imagination is not controlled, the rest of the mind is in disorder and disarray. Moreover, not only the mind suffers from an uncontrolled imagination, but the heart languishes as well, for the brain and the heart operate in tandem, Bright argues. Melancholic humour itself arises from the imbalance between the brain and the heart:

Moreover seeing it is necessarie, that both braine and hart be disposed in a kinde of Sympathie, to shewe foorth the affection, as they be diverslie disposed, so may the cause of perturbation more or lesse move and trouble. As if the brayne be quicker of conceit, and of more exact discretion then the heart is ready to yeeld his passion, by reason of a more compact & firme temper, then is it not aunswerable to the apprehended hurte or daunger. (136-7)

If the heart and mind are not working together, then the imagination can adversely affect the heart, and the heart can injure the imagination or the brain.

Because spleen, heart, and brain are connected, it is essential to include the body in the control of imagination. Bright emphasizes the connection between body, heart, and mind when he finally reaches, at the end of his treatise, “The cure of melancholy, and howe melancholicke persons are to order them selves in actions of the mind, sense, and motion” (242). Health results from keeping the mind and body in tune, he argues, so it is essential to exercise and occupy the body and the mind as well, but yet not to overtax them. Because the health of the body is necessary, Bright outlines the importance of diet, which can manipulate the melancholic humour: “Our diet consisteth not onely (as it is commonly taken) in meate, and drinke: but in whatsoever exercises of mind or body: whether they be studies of the braine, or affections of the hart, or whether they be labours of the bodies, or exercises only” (242-243). Michael Schoenfeldt points out that, in the early modern period, the extraordinary relationship between the inner and outer

world, between the environment and the body, was possible because of the humoral theory, which taught a close connection between the humours inside and outside of the body. Humoral theory “possesses a remarkable capacity to relate the body to its environment, and to explain the literal influences that flow into it from a universe composed of analogous elements” (*Bodies and Selves* 3). Just as diet regulates the body, outward influences on the mind also change the mind’s—and body’s—equilibrium. Bright cautions,

Wherefore above all, abandon working of your braine by any studie, or conceit: and give your mind to libertie of recreation, from such actions, that drawe too much of the spirit, and therby wrong the corporall members of the bodie. For in maintenance of health it is specially to be observed, that the employing of the parts either of mind or bodie with their spirite, is to be carried with such indifferencie, and discretion, that the force which should be common to manie, be not lavishly spent upon any one. (243-244)

Any excess is harmful and leads to loss of control over imagination. Bright’s treatise is saturated with the desire for and the necessity of regaining reason, and his text itself, therefore, becomes part of the control over imagination. By using reason to understand imagination, he is attempting to reassert or bolster authority over his own imagination and over the imagination of his readers, for in his text, reason, by both literal and literary means, controls imagination by understanding and defining it.

Like other early modern authors, Thomas Wright depicts a constant struggle between imagination and the passions, and reason. Reason, he concludes, should have control over the mind, but the combined force of imagination and passion is often too much for the harassed reason. His arguments about the interplay between imagination and reason do not differ significantly from Bright’s—and as we shall see, Bacon’s and Burton’s—arguments, but Wright also addresses a source of influence over the imagination to which the other authors allude only implicitly. One Wrightian critic, Thomas Sloan, argues that “Wright’s great stroke as a writer on the soul—and as a rhetorician—is his insistence that the passions are to be *used* to move the will. This movement is to be accomplished through *reason’s control* of the *imagination*, ... [which] is the major mediating force between the body and the mind” (43). While Sloan is not incorrect, he misses one of Wright’s central arguments about the role and control of imagination, which Lawrence Babb explains when he explores why the imagination often overthrows the reason: “It may seem strange that, in a creature as ideally endowed as man, the lower nature should thus subvert the God-ordained order of things and win the mastery over the higher. The explanation is the corruption of man and the enfeeblement of his intellectual powers which resulted from the Fall” (*Elizabethan Malady* 18). Wright, rather than only emphasizing people’s responsibility to control their imaginations, argues that

imagination is strongly affected by the spiritual world: by God, by angels, and by the Devil. God, for instance, according to his providence, allows the imagination to see things that otherwise it would not be able to see. Wright explains that only according to God's providence can a sound, produced by a physical object, stir up passions in the soul, which is spiritual, "for the very same upon necessity we must put in the imagination, the which not be able to dart the forms of fancies, which are material, into the understanding, which is spiritual; therefore where nature wanteth, God's providence supplieth" (209). According to Wright, the imagination's ability to transform materially generated fancies into spiritually significant understanding is supplied only by God's providence. The workings of the mind are spiritual, for God directly controls the progression from sensory data to imagination to understanding.

Because mental processes are spiritual, Wright contends, the devil, another spiritual being, also has some control over imagination. Wright writes that the devil can impede virtue by affecting the imagination: "First, the Devil immediately by his suggestions allureth us to sin; he, being a spirit, by secret means can enter into the former part of our brain, and there chop and change our imaginations" (324). If the imagination (which Wright had already located, contrary to other early modern theorists, in the front of the brain) is controlled by the devil, a person's resultant actions will be sinful. Wright adds almost immediately, saving the reader from despair that he or she will be unable to resist the "chop and change" of the devil, "Yet I doubt not but God's good Angels help us more to virtue than the wicked spirits incite us to vice, because questionless the charity of them exceedeth the malice of these; whereunto if we adjoin the providence of God in restraining and limiting the Devil's power, ... there can be no comparison" (325). Because they must "adjoin the providence of God," Wright's readers are not entirely powerless in the struggle between devils and angels over the imagination. Wright underscores his instructions to his readers to take action in the spiritual battle over their imaginations by exhorting them to act rightly: "Therefore to conclude this matter I resolve myself that we have more means to do good than occasions to do ill, and them also of their nature to be more forcible and potent" (335). In order to equip his readers for such good behaviour, he lists examples of what may prevent people from doing good, and thereby allow the devil to influence their imaginations: "Nevertheless, for four reasons more men are wicked than virtuous: first, for lack of prudent meditation; secondly, for ill education; thirdly, for palpable and present delectation; lastly, for defect of due preservation" (335). The first reason for wicked behaviour is lack of meditation, and that first reason leads to the rest. In order to invite good angels to guide the imagination, a person must focus intensely upon God and ask God to enter the mind, providentially bolster the imagination, and save it from the devil. Like Bright, Wright too emphasizes the importance of occupying the imagination with a single object, but he names the proper object of the mind's preoccupation: a person must continually focus deliberately on God and ask him to control the imagination.

In his *Advancement of Learning*, Francis Bacon also strongly connects reason and imagination, creating reason as imagination's commander, as do Montaigne, Bright, and Wright. Bacon emphasizes above all else that imagination must be controlled, by whatever means can control it. Eugene McCreary summarizes:

[Bacon's] deep desire to control and exert power over human experience expressed itself in the grand new method, the *Novum Organum*, that seeks to impose rule over human reflective activities, particularly those of natural philosophy, in the hope of reducing them to laws and axioms. The restraints and bonds Bacon wants to impose on imagination do not arise merely from contemporary theories of hierarchical faculty psychology that he undoubtedly shared, but from his full realization that imagination as the source of human freedom, spontaneity, and unpredictability would be a prime suspect in such a system of law and order. (318)

Bacon describes the different states and properties of a person's thoughts and thought processes when either the imagination or reason is directing the brain. He writes in the section entitled, "Division of knowledge into intellectual and moral—the faculties": "In matters of faith and religion, we raise our imagination above our reason; which is the cause why religion sought ever access to the mind by similitudes, types, parables, visions, dreams" (116). Reason and imagination do not operate in a strict hierarchical structure, according to Bacon, for they access such different parts of the brain that their functions do not necessarily overlap and vie for supremacy. When the brain uses the imagination rather than reason, such a use is not necessarily wrong or incorrect, for the brain using the faculty of imagination operates differently than the brain using the faculty of reason primarily. Using imagination grants access to understanding through particularly 'imaginative' means—through metaphor and other 'non-scientific' avenues. Bacon continues: "And again, in all persuasions that are wrought by eloquence, and other impressions of like nature, which do paint and disguise the true appearance of things, the chief recommendation unto reason is from the imagination" (116). When the mind encounters parables, metaphors, eloquence, or rhetoric, the imagination must assist the reason, for if reason must make the final judgment to present to the understanding, the imagination is one of its advisors. To Bacon, then, reason and imagination must cooperate in order for reason to be effective at all. As we shall see, Brome demonstrates a similar understanding of reason and imagination's relationship in *The Antipodes*.

Once he has described the importance and power of imagination, Bacon explores people's conscious control over it, for if imagination can trump reason in some cases, can people bolster and encourage their imaginations? Bacon states, "If the imagination fortified have power, then it is material to know how to fortify and exalt it" (115). He is less assured when he continues: "It may be pretended

that ceremonies, characters, and charms do work, not by any tacit or sacramental contract with evil spirits, but serve only to strengthen the imagination of him that useth it” (115). He then continues assertively, “But for mine own judgement, if it be admitted that imagination hath power, and that ceremonies fortify imagination, and that they be used sincerely and intentionally for that purpose; yet I should hold them unlawful, as opposing to that first edict which God gave unto man, *In sudore vultus comedes panem tuum* [“In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread]” (115).⁵⁴ Bacon admits that fortifying the imagination by means of religious ceremonies and images is possible, but is wrong and unlawful according to the Bible. Surprisingly, he does not cite the second commandment to denounce religious ceremonies and images. Instead, Bacon scorns the attitude that “a few easy and slothful observances” (116) can attain what should be won “at the price of labour” (115-116). If imagination is evoked by ceremony and ritual, then it is actually fettered, Bacon argues, for it is then swayed and influenced by what is unlawful and damaging. A good control for imagination is therefore control over the objects, events, and symbols that can affect and effect imagination.

Like other early modern theorists, Robert Burton states unequivocally in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* that the faculty of reason is the part of the brain that primarily must master imagination, but he also writes that each interaction imagination has with different faculties in the brain, including common sense and reason, exerts a level of control over imagination. The common sense, because it is physically the first part of the brain, is:

The judge or moderator of the rest, by whom we discern all differences of objects; for by mine eye I do not know that I see, or by mine ear that I hear, but by my common sense, who judgeth of sounds and colours: they are but the organs to bring the species to be censured; so that all their objects are his, and all their offices are his. (1.1.2.7.159)

The common sense brings together all sensory data in the brain, and therefore it moderates all the brain’s interactions with the outside environment, for nothing can reach the imagination, or the rest of the brain, if it does not first come through the common sense, which is, as I defined in the introduction, the brain’s interpretation of the simple data of the senses. The common sense is the first and most immediate barrier between the inner and outer world, Burton contends. The imagination, because it lies beside and can influence the common sense, can directly impact that barrier between inner and outer, and thus it must be controlled.

Nevertheless, before Burton outlines the means of authority over imagination, he discusses the lack of control people have over the unfettered imagination. He writes in his first description of imagination that “in time of sleep

⁵⁴ Genesis 3:19.

this faculty is free, and many times conceive strange, stupend, absurd shapes, as in sick men we commonly observe” (1.1.2.7.159). His assertion compels readers to wonder, if the faculty is free during sleep, what restrains it during alertness? Burton answers his readers’ implied question about conscious control over imagination when he continues his definition of the faculty of imagination: “in men it is subject and governed by reason, or at least should be” (1.1.2.7.160). Immediately after he names reason as imagination’s regulator, he plants seeds of doubt in the fertile minds of his readers, and by doing so challenges the tyranny of reason, for as soon as he asserts reason’s supremacy, he questions it, writing, “or at least should be.” Just as reason does not have absolute, implacable control over the workings of the mind, it does not even have uncontested authority in a single sentence. Yet to Burton, even if reason’s power over imagination is fairly tenuous, it is still unquestionably necessary, for Burton warns about imagination, “In brutes it hath no superior, and is *ratio brutorum*, all the reason they have” (1.1.2.7.160). If imagination is not controlled by reason, then a person’s mind is akin to the mind of an animal. Burton shies away from stating outright that people whose imaginations are running amok are beasts, but his readers can hardly come to another conclusion. If a person’s mind is beast-like, Burton does not blame or condemn imagination for its lack of restraint. Reason has a task and a duty to control imagination, and if imagination runs wild, it is not intrinsically the fault of imagination, for imagination by definition wants to be free and invent new things. If a person’s imagination invents absurd, frightening, and melancholic images, it is not entirely the imagination’s fault, but the result of reason shirking its duty. Indeed, later, while describing melancholy people who imagine themselves to be monsters, Burton asserts: “Reason was in fault as well as imagination, which did not correct this error: they make away themselves oftentimes, and suppose many absurd and ridiculous things. Why doth not reason detect the fallacy, settle and persuade, if she be free?” (1.1.3.2.171). Reason has the freedom to detect errors and to calm them, but imagination, as much as it desires to be so, should not be free, for its liberty can result in madness, depression, or even heresy.

Burton does not underestimate the struggle involved in reason’s supremacy over imagination: “Although this phantasy of ours be a subordinate faculty to reason, and should be ruled by it, yet in many men, through inward or outward distemperature, defect of organs, which are unapt or hindered, or otherwise contaminated, it is likewise unapt, hindered, and hurt” (1.2.3.2.253). He again warns that reason’s control over imagination is not a given; its authority is constantly challenged, and it can easily be broken. Most of his explanations of this defect refer to problems in the body, for reason, although it is at liberty, is easily affected by a number of different maladies and changes in the environment and body. Christopher Tilmouth emphasizes the interconnectedness and the vulnerability of the body and mind in *The Anatomy*: “The imagination’s monomaniac dotage is triggered by a disturbance in the brain which may stem from a distemperature anywhere in the body” (529). Lawrence Babb argues more generally that all early modern discussions of melancholy involve and identify the

connection between body and mind: “Since Renaissance thinkers recognize the interreaction of body and mind, *melancholy* is both a psychological and a medical term” (*Sanity in Bedlam* 2), and Jeremy Schmidt agrees: “It was thus the standard wisdom that the successful treatment of melancholy required both the treatment of the body and the correction of the mind” (601). To Burton, reason’s control over imagination is a constant struggle, involving more than just training the reason. It is also necessary to safeguard the health of the body. Burton’s approach to controlling the imagination is a holistic one, making no attempt to segregate the mind and body, for, according to *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, both must work in tandem to restrain the rebellious imagination. In *The Antipodes*, Richard Brome similarly underscores the necessity of body and mind working together to cure an unhealthy imagination, as I shall argue later in this chapter.

Not only is reason weakened by physical maladies and changes in the outside environment, but it is especially attacked by the imagination. The freedom of reason allows it to control imagination, but imagination’s desire for a similar freedom causes it to attempt to captivate the beleaguered reason, and very often succeed. Burton emphasizes imagination’s impact on reason in his description of imagination as a rudder: “I may certainly conclude this strong conceit or imagination is *astrum hominus* [a man’s guiding star], and the rudder of this our ship, which reason should steer, but, overborne by phantasy, cannot manage, and so suffers itself, and this whole vessel of ours to be overruled, and often overturned” (1.2.3.2.257). By means of his metaphor, Burton gives a definition of imagination; he speaks about its power, he identifies the means to control it, and he outlines the consequences of a disordered imagination. Because it is centrally located in the brain, the imagination is highly influential in the brain, and is therefore a person’s “*astrum hominus*.” Yet the faculty of imagination can be overcome by phantasy, the product and action of the physical organ of the imagination, if reason is not in control. By defining it as a rudder, Burton places imagination in a position of great importance, because imagination is one of the tools that controls “this our ship”—our bodies and minds. Navigation has important religious connotations, for if “our ship” is on the pilgrimage of life, which ends, early modern people hoped and believed, in paradise, then reason is (or should be) steering us by imagination, the rudder, through life, towards God. Imagination, then, has immense power, but Burton also emphasizes that imagination, if not checked by reason, can mislead our pilgrimage so that we are “overruled, and often overturned.” Imagination, like a rudder, must be subordinate in order to work effectively.

For Thomas Hobbes, who in *Leviathan* emphasizes the importance of restraining imagination, discipline is the most reliable control. In his discussion of imagination, particularly of dreams and apparitions which are, according to Hobbes, an outpouring of the faculty of imagination, he writes that it is simple for a “man full of fearful thoughts, and whose conscience is much troubled; and that sleepeth, without the circumstances of going to bed or putting off his clothes, as one that noddeth in a chair” (26) to experience a vision or nightmare. But, the

man that “taketh pains, and industriously lays himself to sleep” (26) will have little trouble distinguishing dream from reality. For Hobbes, people’s actions of getting themselves ready for sleep, composing their thoughts, and going to sleep in a good frame of mind will prevent fearful dreams, or at least will allow them to understand that a dream is simply a dream, not a vision or omen. Hobbes continues scornfully, speaking now about people who are not necessarily asleep when they dream, “for even they that be perfectly awake, if they be timorous and superstitious, possessed by fearful tales, and alone in the dark, are subject to the like fancies, and believe they see spirits and dead men’s ghosts walking in churchyards” (26). If people are afraid, then their imaginations will take control of their understanding and cause them to see things that are not really there. The inability to distinguish between sense and dream is ignorance, Hobbes writes, and it can lead to heresy and false religion: “From this ignorance of how to distinguish dreams, and other strong fancies, from vision and sense, did arise the greatest part of the religion of the Gentiles in time past, that worshipped satyrs, fawns, nymphs, and the like” (26). Like Bacon, Hobbes equates the misuse and lack of control over imagination with heresy and false religion. Control over imagination is a conscious state of mind, the will to remain calm and collected. Imagination can be easily controlled because it is simply a recasting of sensory data, and nothing can appear in the imagination that does not first come from the senses. Hobbes acknowledges dreams and visions, but separates them from imagination by naming them “fears” and “fantasies,” dismissing them as a facet of imagination that should be avoided and qualified. Dreams are not reality, and only someone with little self-control would confuse the two. Ideally, nothing untrue can appear in the imagination because it is based only on things tangible to the senses.

Yet sometimes the train of thought, which Hobbes calls the train of imagination, can backfire. Hobbes titles such an occurrence, “Train of thoughts unguided” (28). Such unguided thoughts are, Hobbes contends,

without design, and inconstant; wherein there is no passionate thought, to govern and direct those that follow, to itself, as the end and scope of some desire, or other passion: in which case the thoughts are said to wander and seem impertinent one to another, as in a dream. Such are commonly the thoughts of men, that are not only without company, but also without care of anything; though even then their thoughts are as busy as at other times, but without harmony; as the sound which a lute out of tune would yield to any man; or in tune, to one that could not play. (28)

Hobbes here addresses a concern that has already appeared in the works of Burton and Wright—the matter of obsession and preoccupation. Burton writes that keeping the mind busy and occupied can engage the imagination in fruitful tasks, and Wright fears that objects confined within the gates of imagination can cause

unhealthy obsession and a distorted view of the world. Hobbes inclines towards Burton's argument, for he asserts that only those who are careless or lazy allow their thoughts to run about freely, for they fail to control their thoughts with a passion or a desire. Instead of seeing passion or desire as unhealthy obsession, Hobbes considers preoccupations a guide for the train of imagination, for they cause imagination to proceed in an orderly fashion, following the dictates and patterns of the senses. Michael Oakeshott contends, "For Hobbes, the salvation of man, the true resolution of his predicament, is neither religious nor intellectual, but emotional. Man above all things else is a creature of passion, and his salvation lies, not in the denial of his character, but in its fulfilment" (78). Hobbes may imply that a person's character should be fulfilled, but he has a limited view as to what a person's character should be, and it definitely should not include a wandering mind susceptible to imaginative fears. Roger Lund points out that "for Hobbes and those who followed his lead ... wit and imagination, linked as they were to the passions, were inherently unstable" (58). To stabilize the imagination, then, Hobbes insists that a person become and remain busy and orderly, for then he or she is also functioning for the aid of society, and is not useless like a lute out of tune, or a lute in the hands of a tone-deaf musical novice.

To ensure that his readers will not allow their thoughts to become haphazard, Hobbes defines "thoughts regulated" as thoughts "*regulated* by some desire, and design [...which] by the greatness of the impression, comes often to mind, in case our thoughts begin to wander, they are quickly again reduced into the way" (29).⁵⁵ His definition of trains of thoughts is not just for information or intellectual debate, for Hobbes concludes the description with a command to the reader: "In all your actions, look often upon what you would have, as the thing that directs all your thoughts in the way to attain it" (29). To Hobbes, controlling the imagination and the mind is a matter of concerted action and concentration. Someone who is tempered and disciplined has authority over his or her imagination, for imagination is intrinsically ordered because it comes from the senses and the natural world, but it is most ordered when the mind focuses on one unifying factor—or goal—in the natural world, ignoring all the confusion and cacophony in the rest of the world and in the brain.

Margaret Cavendish, contrary to Bacon, Burton, Hobbes, and other writers of imagination, advocates imagination's liberty almost without reservation. Indeed, she only writes about the control over imagination in *Poems and Fancies* when she emphasizes how harmless imagination is and how free it should therefore be. In her epistle "To all noble and worthy ladies," she exhorts women to "employ their time no worse then in *honest, Innocent, and harmlesse Fancies*" (A3V). Imagination is innocent and can do no harm, especially to men, Cavendish contends. Her epistle is therefore not only to women, but also to men who

⁵⁵ "Impression" connects Hobbes to Wright, who qualifies the brain as soft and moist and particularly suited to imprinting.

disapprove of women writing, for Cavendish anticipates and dismisses their objections. Instead, Cavendish argues imagining is actually a suitable, socially advantageous occupation for women. In fact, in order to keep fancies innocent and harmless, the mind must be engaged with them. Cavendish complains, for example, about women who gossip, and she protests that “when their *Thoughts* are well employed at home” (A3V), they will refrain from gossip because their minds and their fancies will be occupied. Jay Stevenson argues, “Cavendish’s own imagination, together with the writings that enact it, is necessary for her own mental and social well-being. Her representations of mind exercise and order her own thoughts while they appeal to her readers for approval and acceptance” (144). Cavendish’s metaphor of imagination not only asks for approval from her readers, but insists on participation from her readers as well. Her explanation of the proper use of imagination in women is not just a description, but a command and a justification as well. Women should occupy their thoughts productively, she contends, and *Poems and Fancies* is Cavendish’s own demonstration of her proper, womanly use of her imagination. Like Hobbes, Cavendish emphasizes the necessity of thinking and focusing the mind on productive work. She reiterates the importance of occupying the mind when she writes in “An Epistle to Mistris Toppe,” “For the truth is, our *Sex* hath so much waste Time, having but little employments, which makes our *Thoughts* run wildly about, having nothing to fix them upon, which *wilde thoughts* do not onely produce unprofitable, but indiscreet Actions; winding up the *Thread* of our *lives* in *snarles* on *unsound bottoms*” (A5). Women especially need mental tasks, for rather than not having the intellectual power to engage in society’s activities, they have so many thoughts in their minds that the very number of them makes them—both the thoughts and the women—dangerous. The thoughts need an outlet, particularly because thoughts lead to action. If the thoughts are excessive and unmanaged, then the actions arising from those thoughts will be indiscreet. Cavendish exhorts women to find occupations that will also engage their brains, and she encourages men to see that, if women are busy with pursuits that occupy the mind, their actions will be virtuous as well. Controlling women’s minds by education or by literature will determine their resultant actions. Cavendish’s book of poetry, therefore, will not encourage loose behaviour or wild thoughts in women, she argues, but will do the opposite, fostering good and discreet action in women.

Cavendish does not completely reject Burton’s definition of reason as the control over imagination, but she subverts it in the publication of her poetry. In her poem entitled, “The poetresses’s hasty resolution,” she writes that when she read her own verses, she loved them so much that she thought very highly of herself and her skill. At that moment, she cautions,

Reason observing which way I was bent,
Did stay my hand, and ask’t me what I meant;

Will you, said shee, thus waste your time in vaine,
On that which in the World small praise shall gaine? (A8)⁵⁶

In response to her reason's attempted control over the publication of her verse, Cavendish narrates that she quickly ran out and published her poetry before reason could gain control over her desire for fame and her wish to share the love of her fancies with her readers.⁵⁷ To Cavendish, the mind is almost unlimited, but she argues that in the limitlessness of the mind is order and discipline, for only when the mind is occupied in imagination and fancy, deliberately, will the mind turn away from gossip, indiscreet actions, and random and wild thoughts that harm the good name of women and damage right actions in and for society. Of course, Cavendish turns her argument about the utility and necessity of the female imagination to her own advantage, justifying her publication—even her hasty publication—of *Poems and Fancies*.

Cavendish does assign a limit on fancy; not on how the imagination works and affects the mind, but on what the imagination can picture. She defines the limit at the end of her address "To the Reader": "For it were too great a *Presumption* to venture to *Discourse* that in my *Fancy*, which is not *describeable*. For *God*, and his *Heavenly Mansions*, are to be *admired*, *wondred*, and *astonished* at, and not *disputed* on" (A7V). She draws a veil over God and heaven, and sets religious matters apart from her disputations and imaginations. "My *Incapacity*, *Feare*, *Awe*, and *Reverence* kept me from that *Work*" (A7V), Cavendish asserts. She will not bend her fancies to God because God is indisputable. But, she continues in a poem at the end of the letter,

But at all other things let *Fancy* flye,
And, like a *Towring Eagle*, mount the *Skie*.
Or lik[e] the *Sun* swiftly the *World* to round,
Or like pure *Gold*, which in the *Earth* is found.
But if a drossie *Wit*, let't buried be,
Under the *Ruines* of all *Memory*. (A7V)

⁵⁶ Cavendish continues in the following lines: "Angry I was, and *Reason* strook away, / When I did heare, what shee to me did say" (A8). Her use of the word "angry" reminds the reader of the connection between imagination and the passions, a connection especially espoused by Thomas Wright in his *Passions of the Minde in General*. She also genders reason female, something not done by Montaigne, Bright, Wright, Burton, or Hobbes.

⁵⁷ Paul Salzman points out that Cavendish's address to the reader is more than a conflict between fancy and reason, but also a demonstration of her trepidation at publishing her text: "As a first publication, *Poems and Fancies* bears many such traces of Cavendish's anxiety about venturing into print. At the same time, it also indicates Cavendish's boldness in publishing in such an ambitious manner, and this boldness was to increase over time as Cavendish's books increased in number" (138).

After writing that she will not speculate on heavenly matters, she breaks forth into an exuberant expression of what her imagination can and should do. She does not see her own wit as “drossie,” and refuses to be buried “Under the *Ruines* of all *Memory*.”

Nevertheless, elsewhere Cavendish uses ideas of faith and God in order to emphasize the importance, power, and acceptability of imagination. In her poem, “It is hard to beleive [sic], that there are other Worlds in this World,” Cavendish argues that the imagination, rather than the limited senses, reveals more of the possibilities inherent in the natural world. She assigns religious significance to the restrictions imposed by the senses, for she begins her poem by stating,

Nothing so hard in *Nature*, as *Faith* is,
For to beleive [sic] *Impossibilities*:
As doth impossible to us appeare,
Not 'cause 'tis not, but to our *Sense* not cleer. (43)

Relying on limited senses, Cavendish argues, counteracts faith, so denying the role of imagination not only restrains a person's understanding of the possibilities inherent in nature, but it also, Cavendish implies, threatens faith in the infinite variety of creation and faith in the Creator. Cavendish reasserts her theological denunciation of a total reliance on the senses when she writes in the same poem,

Things against *Nature* we do thinke are true,
That *Spirits change*, and can take *Bodies* new;
That *Life* may be, yet in no *Body* live,
For which no *Sense*, nor *Reason*, we can give. (44)

Cavendish moves from her argument that sense inhibits faith to remind her readers of their preexisting faith in spiritual, non-sensory truths, and then asks her readers to apply that same faith to forces in Nature that they cannot perceive with the senses. Cavendish argues that if people can trust the contents of the Book of Scriptures without verifying those contents with their senses, then they should read the Book of Nature in a similar manner. While Cavendish argues in the preface to her text that imagination and fancy should not attempt to explain or project God, in another part of her text she conflates faith and imagination in order to justify fancy. Cavendish connects or disconnects God and imagination as she requires in her text; first to justify writing poetry about the natural rather than the spiritual world, and then to emphasize the importance of imagination to her description of that natural world.

Early modern authors may come to different conclusions about the most effective control of imagination, but they are certain on two points: imagination must be restrained, and maintaining that restraint is very difficult. The practical advice for controlling the imagination is vague, as well as varied and contradictory from one author to the next. Hobbes, for example, writes that people

must practice a disciplined, orderly life, and follow a routine in order to keep the imagination busy with its proper occupation, while Wright concludes that constant meditation is essential to keep the devil from adversely affecting the imagination. Some authors suggest that imagination can be restrained and reason can be strengthened by means of education, while others caution that overtaxing the mind can weaken it, giving the imagination free rein. Still others, such as Cavendish, argue that the only way to control imagination is to exercise it. The practical advice for controlling the imagination is limited and contradictory, but early modern theorists are unanimous in their desire to wield authority over the fantasy. Such authority is especially important in treatises about imaginations out of control and causing melancholy. Many texts are wholly invested in gaining control over imagination, a control that ideally comes from the reason. Reason has to ensure that the faculty of imagination is not convincing the understanding that untrue images are reality. The reason must restrain the imagination and influence the understanding to decipher between truth and falsehood as it is presented by the imagination. Yet, as Gail Kern Paster summarizes, reason often fails its duty: “Reason—the master coming late to an unruly household, the princess on her throne considering the state of her kingdom from a distance—is forever on the defensive, forever seeking domestic peace through appeasement, at times yielding basely to the importunities of passion and sense” (11). As well, because of its important central location in the brain, an unrestrained imagination can cause widespread disruptions in the whole brain and also in the body. When imagination is discussed in a published text, it is especially vital to have control over it, for not only is the author’s imagination invoked in the text, but the readers’ imaginations are stimulated as well. The written word, therefore, accesses imagination in a number of different, and even seemingly contradictory ways. At the same time as the text calls forth the reader’s imagination so that he or she can participate in the text—see its images, hear its words—the text also restrains and controls the reader’s imagination by reason. Reason stops the imagination from convincing the reader’s understanding that images constructed in the brain are tangible and accessible with the outward senses in the physical, rather than mental or spiritual, world. How an early modern author negotiates and complicates the relationship between text, imagination, and reason will be the focus of the second half of the chapter, which will closely read and consider the implications of imagination in Richard Brome’s *The Antipodes*.

Richard Brome’s *The Antipodes*: Control of and by Imagination

If imagination’s power and force comes, in part, from its position in the centre of the brain, this chapter is likewise aptly placed. The control of imagination is incredibly important to any understanding of imagination and its implications in the early modern period. According to early modern theorists, imagination can only be effective, and can only control bodies and texts if it is in turn controlled. In his play, *The Antipodes*, published in 1640, Richard Brome

demonstrates the necessity of reining in an unruly imagination. In often hilarious ways, he mocks imaginations that are out of control, and he suggests a variety of cures for such a managerial loss. He does not however, merely ape, and express literarily, the theories of Montaigne, Bright, Wright, Bacon, Burton, Hobbes, and Cavendish. Instead, he complicates their considerations of control over imagination by carefully manipulating his characters, his audience, and his readers. His play does not allow a simplistic dichotomy of imagination and reason; rather, it simultaneously proposes, strengthens, and destabilizes any domination over the imagination.

The Antipodes begins with Blaze, a herald painter, welcoming a country gentleman, Joyless, to London. Joyless, along with his young wife, Diana, has taken his son, Peregrine, and Peregrine's wife, Martha, to London to seek a cure for Peregrine's melancholy. Peregrine's melancholy manifests itself in his obsession with travel to distant lands, spurred on by his constant reading and re-reading of the travels of Sir John Mandeville. His obsessive desire to travel to the Antipodes has caused Peregrine⁵⁸ to neglect his duties, to such an extent that, even after three years of matrimony, his marriage to Martha is unconsummated. Consequently, Martha is similarly melancholy, desiring a child to the point of madness. In desperation, Peregrine's father and step-mother take him to London to meet with Dr. Hughball, who promises a cure. Hughball enlists the aid of Letoy, a nobleman obsessed with play-acting, who has set up his home as his own private stage. The doctor drugs Peregrine and, when Peregrine wakes up, the Doctor tells him that they have traveled to the Antipodes, but in reality "The Antipodes" is the title of the play Letoy is staging for Peregrine's benefit. Peregrine's immersion in fantasy is multi-layered. As Miles Taylor clarifies, "Brome's audience at Salisbury Court would have been well aware ... that Mandeville's text had come to be seen as more fantastic than realistic, rendering Peregrine's obsession with it ironic. Thus, the fictional travel within the play merely reinscribes the fictional nature of Peregrine's reading" (447). Peregrine, who has never seen a play before, believes that he really is in the Antipodes, and he both watches and interacts with the actors, immersing himself in what he believes is another world. He even crowns himself King of the Antipodes. Seeing his chance, the doctor presents Martha to Peregrine, telling him that she is the princess of the Antipodes, whom he must marry. After some initial trepidation, Peregrine "marries" Martha, and when they consummate their wedding, both husband's and wife's melancholies are cured. The play has more cures to perform, however, for Joyless is desperately jealous over his young new wife, Diana. After the conclusion of "The Antipodes," the play-within-a-play, Letoy enacts another play of a sort, in which he convinces Joyless that he and Diana are meeting clandestinely. He then has Joyless secretly watch as Letoy tries to convince Diana

⁵⁸ Peter Holland notes the pun that is Peregrine's name, for Peregrine has a "desire to peregrinate" (176).

to sleep with him. When Diana refuses and professes that she loves her husband, Joyless is almost cured. It takes, however, the arrival of Diana's supposed father to completely cure Joyless. In a *deus ex machina* revelation,⁵⁹ the audience discovers that Diana is actually Letoy's daughter, for, years earlier, Letoy had been so jealous of his wife, that he had suspected that his daughter, Diana, was not his own. When she was just an infant, he had given her to the man Diana grew up thinking was her father. Witnessing the horrible consequences of jealousy, Joyless finally believes his wife's protestations of faithfulness. The play then concludes with another play—a masque—which Letoy stages for the newly recovered Peregrine and the rest of the Joyless family. In the masque, Discord upsets all natural balance, but is quickly vanquished by Harmony restoring equilibrium to the world of the masque, and, by extension, that of the play.

The Antipodes has never been at the forefront of critical attention, but it is garnering more notice now that critics are beginning to value it as a social satire, a psychological exploration, and a metadramatic masterpiece. Because Brome seems to have been employed by Ben Jonson, he has critically been in the shadow of the more famous playwright. Richard A. Cave expresses the new approach to Brome, however, when he writes that Brome is “a dramatist in need of re-discovery” (“The Playwrighting Sons of Ben” 88), one who needs to be studied in his own right, separate from endless comparisons to Jonson, for, as Cave writes elsewhere, “No other play by Brome has such an intricately woven dramatic fabric or is so layered in its satirical strategies and ways of creating meaning” (“*The Antipodes*: Critical Introduction” 1). *The Antipodes* “is undoubtedly Brome's most original and most interesting play” (112), according to Clarence Edward Andrews, who goes so far as to call the play “almost unique in drama” (112).⁶⁰ As they newly discover *The Antipodes*, critics generally consider the play a satire, whether or not successful. The statements about the effectiveness of Brome's social satire in *The Antipodes* range from adoring—“*The Antipodes* is brilliantly successful in its combination of popular satiric devices and sophisticated dramatic technique in the interests of a comprehensive political statement; it is difficult and multi-layered, yet Brome is wholly in control at every point” (Martin Butler 219)—to scornful—“There is no sense of development in the Antipodean scenes. Once the comic point about reversal has been made, the satire which follows has no room for manoeuvre. It implies a static model of society which can be simply reversed and still make sense” (Edwards et al 244).⁶¹

⁵⁹ Clarence Edwards Andrews indignantly calls the introduction of Old Truelock, Diana's true father, a “very serious fault in structure ...[and] the very cheap solution of a situation” (63).

⁶⁰ Catherine M. Shaw agrees that *The Antipodes* is the most remarkable of Brome's *oeuvre*, for she writes, “*The Antipodes* is the most sophisticated and ingenious of Brome's satires” (122).

⁶¹ Jonas Barish sides with Edwards when he writes, “The satire, if it is such, comes scattering forth like buckshot, thickly but a little wildly, directed at no identifiable target. Brome seems insufficiently in control of his own exuberance” (208). For more on satire in *The Antipodes*,

Whether or not the satire comes off, Brome's use of a play-within-a-play to "cure imagination" has fascinated *The Antipodes's* readers. Brome bills the play-within-a-play as a curative device, and critics generally admire his use of drama, and especially metadrama, as psychological therapy. Klaus Stierstorfer concludes that "Brome aims at a therapeutic inclusiveness and acceptance of his characters' existence" (287). Marina Leslie, on the other hand, argues that the inner play comments on society rather than psychology, and, in her analysis, she emphasizes Brome's reaffirmation of Peregrine's and Joyless's patriarchal roles.⁶² In his analysis, Ira Clark argues that the play is about both male identity and psychological health, and he cites the metadramatical elements of the play as Brome's most effective theatrical tool: "All these metadramatic devices—song and implied folk fest, masque and revel, role manipulation and extemporaneous acting—do more than blur if not obliterate boundaries between plays and life, inside Brome's plays. They help bring about Brome's well-known use of comedy as a moral and psychological curative" (175). Although critics disagree, as they are wont to do, about the purpose and effectiveness of the play, they are all fascinated by Brome's seamless integration of a complex play-within-a-play into a highly imaginative, hilarious, and pointed drama.

Yet of all critical approaches, one has been oddly understated. Ann Haaker, in the introduction to her 1966 edition of Brome's *Antipodes*, posits, with solid evidence, that the play responds to Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, and it uses a cure for melancholy that Burton also espouses in his text. Haaker writes, "The symptoms of melancholy afflicting the Joyless family and the cures devised for Peregrine, Joyless, and Martha can all be accounted for in Burton's widely read psychological treatise" (xiii). Haaker's arguments are compelling, but they have been largely ignored by subsequent critics of the play. Charlotte Spivack does briefly mention Burton when she writes, "Brome's play, like Ford's, was influenced by Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, but Brome goes much further in developing the psychological themes and their attendant theatrical theory" (202).⁶³ Spivack's subsequent arguments, especially those about the

see also Ian Donaldson, *The World Upside-Down: Comedy from Jonson to Fielding* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), especially p. 97. Julie Sander's evaluation of Brome's satire is quite elegant. She emphasizes that Brome takes a simple and seemingly effortless theatrical device to perform a pointed analysis of his society: "The Antipodean city-state frequently performs the function of a mirror, critiquing some of the social realities of contemporary 1630s Caroline society simply by reflecting them back to its inhabitants" (*Caroline Drama* 54).

⁶² See Marina Leslie, "Antipodal Anxieties: Joseph Hall, Richard Brome, Margaret Cavendish and the Cartographies of Gender," *Genre* 30 (1997): 51-78.

⁶³ Spivack is referring to John Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy* which, like *The Antipodes*, uses a highly metaphorical masque to cure a prince of his melancholy. Brome's play-within-a-play is much more extensive and focuses on imagination more generally than on only one manifestation of a disordered imagination: melancholy. Ford's play, however, especially when considered together with *The Antipodes*, demonstrates that playwrights were exploring

psychological impact of the play-within-a-play in Caroline drama, are compelling, but hardly complete in their investigation of the connections between early modern faculty psychology and *The Antipodes*.⁶⁴ Andrews also compares *The Antipodes* to John Ford's *The Lover's Melancholy*: "I think it very probable that the doctors in both plays are practitioners of the school of Burton" (124). The doctors may be practitioners of Burton's specific cures for melancholy, but Brome also uses Burton and other early modern theorists more generally when he employs *The Antipodes* to enact the characteristics and control of the faculty of the imagination.

As Haaker, Spivack, and Andrews begin to emphasize, but do not discuss in detail, Peregrine's melancholy is caused by his disordered imagination. Peregrine, as Joyless tells the Doctor, reads in order to "convey his fancy round the world" (1.2.40). Consequently, Peregrine's "mind [is] all on fire" (1.2.42) and his thoughts are "extravagant" (1.2.50). Martha's madness, as Joyless describes it, is similarly caused by her imagination, or fancy:

She's full of passion, which she utters
By the effects, as diversely as several
Objects reflect upon her wand'ring fancy,
Sometimes in extreme weepings, and anon
In vehement laughter; now in sullen silence,
And presently in loudest exclamations. (1.2.63-5)

Martha's actions mirror Burton's description of melancholic women who "are apt to loathe, dislike, disdain, to be weary of every object, etc., each thing almost is tedious to them, they pine away, void of counsel, apt to weep and tremble, timorous, fearful, sad, and out of all hope of better fortunes" (Burton 1.3.2.4.415-416). Yet Peregrine, and because of his inattention, Martha as well, is following Hobbes's advice in *Leviathan*: "look often upon what you would have, as the thing that directs all your thoughts in the way to attain it" (29). Their obsessive thoughts, however, are not causing them to be productive members of society, as Hobbes desires, but rather are causing them to confuse reality and fantasy.

Imagination, or the confusion of reality and imagination, brings about the other cases of melancholy in the play as well. Joyless's fevered imagination, for instance, incites his immense jealousy, for other than her provocative comments, the audience has little indication that Diana has done anything to warrant Joyless's suspicion. Joyless cannot differentiate between his own fantasy and imagination and reality. The play, then, as Haaker rightly points out, describes a

characteristics and control of imagination in their drama, enacting the theories of thinkers like Burton and Bacon.

⁶⁴ Matthew Steggle has noticed the psychological nature of *The Antipodes* and writes that "the Antipodes functions as a metaphor for the subconscious" (111), but rather than focus on early modern faculty psychology, he emphasizes subconscious sexual desires and fears of plague.

number of different losses of control over the imagination, and outlines the disastrous and ridiculous consequences of such losses of control. When Brome discusses the controls and cures for imagination—using theories from thinkers such as Wright, Bacon, Burton, and Hobbes—he places them in the context of drama and its possibilities, thus theatrically augmenting and complicating medical and philosophical proposals about imagination and its control. Brome can do more than write about imagination: he can perform it. If imagination relies on sensory data, drama provides more fodder for the imagination to sift through and recombine. When a person reads a book, he or she can see and hear the words (if reading aloud), and can feel the pages. When watching a play, a person's senses are bombarded with the sight of the action onstage and of other audience members, the sound of the play and the audience, the smell of the theatre, and perhaps the feel of a jostling, rowdy audience. The sensory data stimulates the imagination, which Brome uses to good effect.

While early modern authors of philosophical, medical, and psychological texts can separate different characteristics of imagination into discrete and examinable segments, Brome, like Herbert, and, as we shall see, Nashe and Quarles, combines and scrambles various facets of the faculty of imagination. Peregrine's cure, for example, for all its emphasis on control, is related to and is carried out by his body, and his obsession with fantasy controls what he does with his body. Likewise, and even more explicitly, imagination impacts the body of his wife, Martha, who is obsessed with her own body, her husband's, and her only-hoped-for children's. In *The Antipodes*, an imagination out of control negatively affects the body, which is also my focus in chapter three, for imagination, as I will discuss in that chapter, has a significant and irresistible impact on the body of the imaginant. Likewise, the cure for Peregrine's distorted imagination also takes place through and on his body. He has to bodily enact his own cure, for he cannot just hear about the Antipodes; his body must believe that it is there, and his cure only begins to take effect after Peregrine finds the actors' room of props, destroys a number of props, sits in the throne he finds there, and declares himself King of the Antipodes, a declaration shortly followed by the physical consummation of his marriage with Martha. When his body takes action, and he participates actively in the world around him—even if that world is created for his benefit—his mind is cured. Brome demonstrates that the control of imagination cannot be separated from the other characteristics of imagination—its location, its effect on the body, the body's influence on it, and its power of literary creation. While the control of imagination is of primary importance to thinkers and to writers of literary material, it is still only one of the characteristics of imagination.

The Antipodes further complicates psychological and philosophical considerations of imagination because of its portrayal of reason. If *The Antipodes* is about the cure of disordered imaginations via reason's control, where is reason and who controls it? Reason, especially at the beginning of the play, seems absent from the text. Peregrine, certainly, has a very disordered reason for he is afraid of his wife, he is living in a fictitious world and is obsessed with his desire for exotic

travel, and is therefore not fulfilling his duties as a husband and as a son. Similarly, Joyless's reason, sufficient to bring him to London to find a cure for his son, is certainly not controlling his imagination, as he falsely believes that his wife is unfaithful. Perhaps Letoy could be reason's controller, for he acts as the puppeteer of the entire play(s)-within-the-play, but Letoy is, in fact, the play's main representative of fantasy rather than of reason. Already in the *Dramatis Personae*, Brome lists Letoy as "a fantastic lord," which Haaker correctly translates as: a "highly imaginative as well as eccentric" (8) lord. In the play, when the Doctor and Letoy discuss their cure for Peregrine, Hughball exclaims to Letoy: "Oh, y'are the lord of fancy" (2.1.5). Letoy's answer, although scornful of Hughball's epithet, demonstrates his fancifulness and eccentricity:

I'm not ambitious of that title, sire.
 No, the Letoys are of antiquity
 Ages before the fancies were begot,
 And shall begin still new to the world's end (2.1.6-9).

Indeed, Letoy merges his absurd family pride and love for heraldry with his fancy, making his family heritage and longevity itself appear imaginative. Letoy, although he manipulates the other characters in the play, also has weaknesses, and his reason, we discover in Act 5, had been disordered when he unjustly accused his wife of cuckolding him. During the play, Letoy acts as the ambassador (Bacon's name for imagination, as I discussed in chapter 1) between reason and the affections. If Dr. Hughball represents rationality and Peregrine affections and appetite, Letoy is their go-between, just as imagination performs a similar function in the brain.

Even Letoy's control over his actors is not complete. He commands his main actor, Byplay, to read his lines as they are written, and he accuses him, saying,

But you sir, are incorrigible, and
 Take license to yourself to add unto
 Your parts your own free fancy, and sometimes
 To alter or diminish what the writer
 With care and skill compos'd. (2.2.39-43)

While Byplay is onstage, however, and Letoy is part of the onstage audience, Letoy can do little to control his extemporaneous acting. As Audrey Birkett notes, "Although *The Antipodes* does ultimately praise the therapeutic power of the theatre, it also exposes the complications that arise from the competition for control between the actors, the writers, the authors, and the audiences" (59-60). Indeed, Byplay's spirit of "extempore" even begins to influence the other characters—the onstage audience—such as Diana, who declares herself to be

enamoured of the character she believes is named “Extempore” (2.9.17). Jackson I. Cope brilliantly explains the importance of “extempore” in the play:

Doctor Hughball has recognized in the case of Peregrine (who is symbolic of the plights of all the others as well as protagonist of the plot) that fantasy is an inner wheel which, when turned, at the extreme point comes back to reality. And like Peregrine, the others too must be extemporal actors, players in spite of themselves, that they may return to themselves. (152)

Like Peregrine who unexpectedly and actively participates in the play-within-a-play, Diana and other characters act extemporaneously, allowing them to realize, like Peregrine, an active cure for their disordered imaginations. “Extempore” also forces Letoy, the fanciful lord, to continue to invent new scenarios and dramas with which to control other characters in the play.

Even Doctor Hughball, the controller of Peregrine’s imagination and his wise guide through the Antipodes, is powerless against Letoy’s fancy. If anyone other than Letoy could be the representative of reason in *The Antipodes*, it is Hughball, who follows Burton’s advice to use “some artificial invention” (Burton 2.2.6.2.110) to cure Peregrine of his disordered imagination. Indeed, Hughball’s prescription works, by means of Letoy’s execution, and Peregrine’s fancy no longer runs amok at the end of the play. Nevertheless, near the conclusion of *The Antipodes*, Hughball warns Letoy that he ought not to allow Peregrine to watch the concluding masque. Hughball protests, “My lord, you’ll put him back again if you trouble his brain with new discoveries” (5.10.13-4). Letoy dismisses the doctor’s concerns with “I care not, sir; I’ll have it to delay / Your cure a while, that he recover soundly” (5.10.18-19). Letoy, then, is in control of the cure, and he dictates who will watch what play, when, and to what purpose. Yet even Letoy cannot control every character or event in the play, as he displays by his frustration with Byplay’s independence. Brome creates no single and stable means of control over imagination and fancy; neither does his play give readers and watchers the satisfaction of a strong sense of reason that overpowers the unruly imagination. Certainly, Peregrine’s imagination is directed and is brought into alignment with his proper behaviour in society, but there is no one character or event that watchers and readers can look to as the harmonizer of the play.

Although there is no central control over imagination in the play, Brome demonstrates that the imagination still must be reined in, or at least channeled. Because each person’s imagination is unrestrained, Peregrine, Martha, and Joyless cannot be useful members of their society and their imaginations cause them to be unable to form relationships with each other. Peregrine’s and Martha’s obsessive imaginations prevent them from functioning as husband and wife, either sexually or emotionally. Likewise, Joyless and Diana are separated by Joyless’s imagination and intense fear of cuckoldry. In the play, unrepressed imagination forms a wedge between people in relationships, and it is, in effect, undercutting

the foundation of society. Imagination, therefore, must be controlled not just so that Peregrine and Joyless can become sane again and the play can come to a comic resolution, but also so that the characters of the play can become functioning members of society, and can take up their roles as family members and even heads of families, effectively.

Peregrine, for example, cannot be a useful husband or father until he restrains his imagination. Hughball forces him to reexamine his psychological role as head of his family by confronting him with an unfamiliar social arrangement in Anti-London, the name Hughball gives the capital city of the Antipodes. Peregrine, when he crowns himself King in Anti-London, wants to import London's social values to the Antipodes in order to regain control over a city he views as unrestrained and unfamiliar. Anti-London, where wives rule over their husbands, children over their parents, and servants over their masters, turns relationships that would be understandable and acceptable to the theatre and the on-stage audience completely on their head. Brome uses the lack of control over imagination in the play-within-a-play not only as a plot device or for comedic effect, but also to enact the control—particularly over imagination—that is necessary at all levels of society in order to maintain good order. Control of the mind leads to control of the family and of society. According to Cavendish, for example, a person with an ordered imagination is also an effective citizen. Peregrine, then, when he takes control of the Antipodes, restrains his own imagination, which had been obsessed with travel to distant lands, and he correspondingly regains his position as head, both of his fancy and of his family.

Peregrine and Joyless regain their positions of authority by restraining their unruly imaginations, but their restraint does not necessarily come from reason. In fact, I question whether it is correct or even helpful to describe *The Antipodes* as a struggle between reason and imagination. Brome may depict control over imagination, and early modern thinkers may argue that such control can only come from reason, but still, Brome does not use reason as the reins of the imagination. The play-within-a-play, for instance, which ultimately brings about Peregrine's return to reality, is an imaginative construction. Peregrine's faulty imagination is cured and controlled, therefore, by means of further imagination. He does not truly travel to the Antipodes, and his adventures, although they are enacted by real people, are just that, an act. Brome suggests, then, that reason is not the only control over imagination. Although reason should bind imagination in a properly functioning brain, and only by reason can a person determine what is imaginative and what is not, Peregrine is not cured by someone reasoning with him and arguing with him logically, thereby exercising his reason. Rather, Hughball and Letoy cure him by using a creative—an imaginative—event, his so-called trip to the Antipodes. Brome proposes, therefore, that the disconnected and hierarchical arrangement between reason and imagination is not as strong and as clear-cut as some early modern theorists of imagination would like it to be. Indeed, reason, in a sense, plays very little part in *The Antipodes*—it hardly even appears in a cameo! When Dr. Hughball protests, in the end, that Peregrine is

unstable and his imagination should not be further strained, Letoy, the main proponent of imagination in the play, disregards Hughball's voice of reason. Brome never allows a simple, clear cut dichotomy between reason and imagination, for the two are inextricably intertwined. Although imagination has slipped reason's rule at the beginning of the play, an escape causing problems for the family, reason only regains its control when Hughball and Letoy exercise and channel distorted imagination with their own healthy⁶⁵ imaginations.

The play's closing masque further destabilizes the triumph of reason. As he displays in the masque, Brome does not create a distinction between reason and imagination; rather, he contrasts discord and harmony. He suggests, I argue, that any conflict between reason and imagination is but a symptom of a larger unrest: the unrest between harmony and discord. He does not assign imagination and reason to discord and harmony respectively, creating an easy correspondence. In the masque, Discord enters the stage with, as Letoy narrates, "her followers: Folly and Jealousy, Melancholy and Madness" (5.11.2-3). Brome does not mention the imagination, and even though thinkers often associate melancholy with imagination in the early modern period, Brome does not make such an explicit connection. Because melancholy, madness, and the rest of Discord's entourage are actors performing an imaginative role however, they are physical examples of imagination, or at least of the imagination that the audience must bring to their performance. Harmony and its followers are also examples of imagination. While they may be imaginative, in as much as all acting appeals to the imagination, they are certainly not representatives of reason. Harmony, Letoy again interprets for the audience, leads on "Mercury, Cupid, Baccus, and Apollo. / Wit against Folly, Love against Jealousy, / Wine against Melancholy, and 'gainst Madness, Health" (5.12.3-5). To further intertwine harmony and discord, Letoy has all the masquers—Discord and her followers and Harmony⁶⁶ and its entourage—dance together. Letoy signals to Peregrine, "Note there how Discord cheers up her disorders / To mingle in defiance with the virtues" (5.12.17-18). After the arrival of Harmony, Discord does not vanish from the stage, but she and her crew dance together in harmony with Harmony. At least for a time, Harmony is not reason stamping out the unruly, discordant imagination, but harmony involves the mingling of madness and mirth. By the end of *The Antipodes*, the

⁶⁵ I use the term "healthy" in the context of early modern theories of imagination. A properly functioning imagination is one ruled by reason. Reason, then, can only regain control in the play as a whole through characters whose imaginations are governed (at least to some extent) by reason.

⁶⁶ Letoy repeatedly refers to Discord as a woman, but he never assigns a pronoun to Harmony, leaving the reader to guess: is Harmony, in Letoy's masque, played as a man or as a woman? I suggest that Brome's deliberate omission of a gendered pronoun for Harmony could allow for revealing performance choices. For example, if a director chose to have Harmony played as a male role, men, in the play, would emblematically be subduing the unruly women in *The Antipodes*. Women would then be the source and cause of discord, and men the victorious social harmonizers.

relationship between reason and imagination is not one in which one rules over the other, but it is, at least for a short time, the overlap and interplay of reason and imagination. Yet madness and mirth can mix only for a moment, Brome demonstrates to his audience, for as Letoy tells Peregrine about the dancing Discord and her minions, “But soon they vanish, and the mansion quit / Unto the gods of Health, Love, Wine and Wit” (5.12.19-20).

Although reason may be involved with Harmony, Brome does not list it explicitly as one of Harmony’s associates. Nevertheless, the concluding cure for discord—health—is according to thinkers like Bright, Wright, Bacon, and Burton ultimately brought about by reason. Yet reason is conspicuously absent from the masque because of the timing of the play, for *The Antipodes* is an example of the dance of Harmony and Discord, not of the final banishment of Discord. As the concluding masque summarizes, at the beginning of *The Antipodes*, Discord reigned, only to be conquered by Harmony, in the form of the curing of Peregrine and his family. By the end of the play, Discord has not yet left the stage, for Peregrine’s hold on reality is still tenuous and Martha says that she is not yet well, for her cure requires “a few such nights more” (5.12.29). If the masque is an allegory for the whole play, the masque itself, at the end of the play, is the conflation of Discord and Harmony, and the masque’s reference to a time when Discord will leave and Harmony will rule supreme is a reference to the future beyond the play.⁶⁷

By the time of the masque, Harmony has not yet fully been restored, and Brome, through Letoy, does not name reason in the final masque because he is still seeking the approbation of the audience’s reason. Brome demonstrates the role of the audience in the Epilogue, in which the Doctor has this speech:

Whether my cure be perfect yet or no,
It lies not in my doctorship to know.
Your approbation may more raise the man,
Than all the College of Physicians can;
And more health from your fair hands may be won,
Than by the strokings of the seventh son. (5.12.34-9)

The doctor turns to the audience to complete the play. Indeed, the epilogue is not a separate section of the play, but is included in the end of Act 5, implying that the play is not complete, and cannot be complete, without the audience’s approval.

The audience has a very privileged view in and of *The Antipodes*. Members of the on-stage audience can see the play-within-a-play, but those in the theatre audience can see everything; they can see the play-within-a-play, and they

⁶⁷ For a further discussion of the masque in *The Antipodes*, with special attention to the music in the play, see R.W. Ingram, “The Musical Art of Richard Brome’s Comedies,” *Renaissance Drama* 7 (1976): 219-42.

can also see the on-stage audience watching the play-within-a-play. Can the theatre audience, those with an aerial perspective on the drama, be the representatives of reason, or at least of harmony, in the play? In one sense, Brome grants the audience the ability to separate fantasy from reality, because the audience can see that the play-with-a-play is a play-within-a-play, and they can witness that Peregrine's trip to the Antipodes is fictitious. Brome deliberately allows and encourages such a viewpoint, for as Chiang Hsiao-chen notes, "In *The Antipodes*, the noise and disturbances of actors behind the scene are moved to the front stage and exposed to the audience, making them aware that all the dramatic presentation is pure show" (62). Sight—who sees and what they see—is essential to the faculty of the imagination, for imagination operates with data from the senses, so the more a person can see or sense, the more information the imagination can receive and process. Brome stimulates the imaginations of the audience members more than he stimulates the imaginations of characters in the play, by allowing the audience to see everything. Because the theatre audience can recognize that they are watching two plays, one encased within the other, Brome forces the audience to suspend its collective imagination. Those in the audience cannot immerse themselves into the play itself because Brome compels them to observe that a play is an enactment of imagination. Because they can see that, within *The Antipodes*, actors are putting on a play for other actors, they recognize the un-reality of drama itself. Yet because of the framing play, Brome constantly pulls the audience members into believing that the framing play—*The Antipodes*—is real, but also continually reminds them that the play-within-a-play—"The Antipodes"—is imaginative. Brome is highly skilled in manipulating reality and fantasy in the mind of the audience. He deliberately causes the brains of the audience members to switch back and forth between belief and disbelief, and while he encourages them to suspend their disbelief, he does not allow that suspension to be complete.

The theatre audience can also situate itself in the play by equating its experience with Peregrine's. The audience could—and should—view the play as if *The Antipodes* is to them what the play-within-a-play is to Peregrine. Letoy forces Peregrine to understand himself and his society by participating in the play-within-a-play. In the same way, Brome compels the theatre audience to analyze itself and its society by watching *The Antipodes*. The play is itself, as many critics have pointed out, a cure for the theatre audience as well as a description of the possibility of an imaginative cure for Peregrine. Brome is not only demonstrating the use of imagination, and the control of imagination and by imagination, within the play, but he is also using the play itself to control the imaginations of his theatre audience. The control of imagination and by imagination extends out from the play itself and it works on both audience members and readers.

Other early modern playwrights, such as Shakespeare, also consciously consider and stimulate imagination in their drama. As I mentioned in my introduction, Theseus famously ponders imagination in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, concluding,

Such tricks hath strong imagination
 That if it would but apprehend some joy
 It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
 Or in the night, imagining some fear,
 How easy is a bush supposed a bear! (5.1.18-22).

Theseus's summation of the power of imagination reflects the arguments of other early modern thinkers that I have been analyzing in this thesis, and as such, has often been viewed by critics as the definitive explanation of early modern considerations of imagination.⁶⁸ Theseus's later discussion with Hippolyta as the two of them watch "Pyramus and Thisbe" is a better demonstration, however, of the importance of imagination to the audience viewing a play. When Hippolyta protests, "This is the silliest stuff that I ever heard" (5.1.209), Theseus replies, "The best in this kind are but shadows, and the worst are no worse if imagination amend them" (5.1.210-1). Hippolyta understands Theseus's intent when she says in return, "It must be your imagination, then, and not theirs" (5.1.212-3). The burden of imagination is on the audience, Hippolyta and Theseus contend, for audience members must control their imaginations, forcing their faculties to both improve and approve of the play. Still, Theseus and Hippolyta hold themselves aloof from the play—they "[stand] apart" (Cope 225)—from it. Brome allows no such distance in *The Antipodes*, as I shall shortly demonstrate. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the audience must suspend its disbelief and let—or force—their imaginations to convince them that they are seeing what the play intends them to see. Shakespeare expresses and impresses the audience's burden of imagination even more overtly in *Henry V*. At the very beginning of that play, a Chorus comes on stage as a prologue to exhort the audience:

And let us, ciphers to this great account,
 On your imaginary forces work.
 ...
 Piece out our imperfections with your thoughts:
 Into a thousand parts divide one man,
 And make imaginary puissance. (Prologue 17-19, 23-25)

The Chorus again appears between Acts, reminding the audience to continue to exercise and manage their imaginations. For example, the Chorus insists at the beginning of Act 3,

⁶⁸ Jackson I. Cope, for example, turns to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to compare the imagination in *The Antipodes* to another well-known early modern play. He does so, however, for the same reason I also investigate imagination in Shakespeare's play: to highlight variant attitudes towards imagination in drama in the early modern period.

Thus with imagined wing our swift scene flies
 In motion of no less celerity
 Than that of thought.

...

Still be kind,
 And eke out our performance with your mind. (3.0.1-3, 34-35)

The Chorus commands the audience to compel their imaginations to complete the play. If the play uses only five actors to depict a battle between hundreds of men, for example, the audience must force itself to imagine hundreds of men rather than see only the reality of five men. Participation in drama, then, demands control over imagination. The audience members must be taught how to relate their imagination to the drama. In order for the audience to believe that a battle scene enacted on stage is actually a battle, a Chorus must come on stage to tell the audience to use its imagination to transform the scene on stage into a battle. In order for a play to effectively enthrall an audience, characters from within the play—whether they be a participant in the action, such as Theseus, or another voice, such as a Chorus—ask and remind the audience members to stimulate their imaginations and to suspend their disbelief.

Why then does the play-within-a-play work on Peregrine if he had never seen a play before? Although he has never seen a play before, and has therefore never been taught to use his imagination in a theatre, Peregrine has no trouble immersing himself within the play, and he even participates in the play by taking on the role of the King of the Antipodes. When a character in a play discusses imagination or when a Chorus comes on stage to ask the audience to use its imagination, they are controlling how audience members view the play and their own imaginations. They are asking audience members to think consciously about their imaginations, and in fact, they appeal to the reason of the audience members to exert control over their imaginations and to compel their imaginations, for a time at least, to accept as real what is not real. Even though the audience members, when reminded, immerse themselves in the play, they do so in full control of their imaginations. Peregrine does not have that training. His imagination is already out of control since he is so obsessed with images of distant lands that he cannot fulfill his role in society. It still responds to the drama in front of him, but not in a conscious, controlled manner. Because he is not commanding his imagination, his imagination is controlling him, and he believes that he really is in the Antipodes and is not just a spectator watching a play. Brome, therefore, complicates the way in which people change or use different faculties within their brains for different experiences. He questions whether or not theatre audiences are really immersing themselves in plays, or whether they are still keeping themselves separate from the action of the play, and therefore not achieving Peregrine's self-awareness and social integration, and—ultimately—not truly enjoying a play in the same way Peregrine enjoys a play.

The on-stage audience's response to the play is often naïve and delightful—since "The Antipodes" is the first play for most of the on-stage audience as well—but Peregrine's response, his intense pleasure and emotional reaction to the play-within-a-play is truly remarkable. Peregrine does not just watch and come away unaffected; his emotions are deeply moved by the play. He cannot watch something and be indifferent to it: He lauds the educational system of Anti-London, telling Hughball, "'Tis a wise nation; and the piety / Of the young men most rare and commendable" (2.9.33-34) but then cries out when he hears a story about a woman abusing a man, "They are an ignorant nation, / And have my pity mingled with correction" (4.3.32-33).⁶⁹ According to Julie Sanders, the motif of travel in *The Antipodes* is especially effective. If travel requires imagination, especially when depicted on the stage, then an audience watching *The Antipodes* must engage imaginatively in the play. Sanders argues further, "The experience of travel, a dynamic imaginative action, if static in terms of physical location, enables the fantasist to see anew their everyday world and in the case of ... Brome's [play] this impact extends to watching or participating audiences" (147). Brome gives a model for the audience to follow. When Peregrine observes absurd situations, he responds emotionally and physically to what he sees in the play, and through him, Brome is encouraging members of his audience to react in the same way, to unaffectedly and imaginatively immerse themselves in a play and respond to it both mentally and physically. At the same time, audience members are also laughing at the bumbling Peregrine, and are thereby distanced from him. Even their laughter, however, is a mental and physical response to the drama.

The Antipodes's impact does not end with the audience—both onstage and in theatre—but it reaches readers as well. Brome did not just leave his play as a performed piece taken in by the audience, but he also published it as a text.⁷⁰ By publishing his play, Brome both extends and controls the consumption of his play and its imaginative reception. In order to maintain authorial control over his text and over the imaginations of his readers, he adds his own voice at the end of the

⁶⁹ Peregrine's responses, as fresh and intense as they are, are also extremely subjective. As a young man, he applauds a system that sends old men rather than their young sons to school, and, as a man, he is horrified to hear of a woman's assault on a man. Brome holds up Peregrine's responses to the play-within-a-play as an example to the theatre audience, but he also sets up Peregrine for satire and ridicule.

⁷⁰ For Douglas A. Brooks, who describes the struggle between reading and acting in *The Antipodes*, Brome's publication of his play as a text is quite bold. Brooks contends that, in *The Antipodes*, "Brome would seem to be pitting ink against kin, book against play, reading against playing, the closet against the stage—and for Peregrine, hanging in the balance of this conflict is his future as a husband and potential father" (205). Peregrine's madness, Brooks points out, is caused by his voracious reading. He is cured of his faulty imagination and obsessive reading by participating in a play. Thus, Brome pits, as Brooks states, text against the stage. Yet he still publishes his play as a text. In order to still emphasize the theatricality of *The Antipodes*, Brome includes a final address to the reader that reminds the reader that the play is a drama that was—and should be—performed.

play. The play, like other works of fiction, as Cavendish and others also emphasize, stimulates the imaginations of its readers, and thus, Brome wants to direct how his readers imagine his play. His authorial voice is, I propose, finally the voice of reason in the play. I cite Brome's address in its entirety:

Courteous Reader: You shall find in this book more than was presented upon the stage, and left out of the presentation, for superfluous length (as some of the players pretended). I thought good all should be inserted according to the allowed original; and as it was, at first, intended for the Cockpit stage, in the right of my most deserving friend, Mr. William Beeston, unto whom it properly appertained; and so I leave it to thy perusal, as it was generally applauded, and well acted at Salisbury Court.

Farewell,

RICHARD BROME. (1-10)

At the end of the published play, Brome's voice sounds reasonable and technical: he recounts some of the history of the play, he acknowledges differences between the play in performance and the play in print, he gently admonishes his actors, and he humbly leaves the play in the hands of the readers. Brome jolts readers out their imaginative connection with the play, and what has been forming as an image in the mind of the readers is transformed into words and into reason at the end of the play when Brome addresses the reader specifically. As much as Brome is proposing that imagination can be its own control and that the best experience of a play is through imagination, he still is uneasy about his readers, and so he uses reason at the end of the play to control the readers' interpretation of the play. At the end, he intercedes, stepping between the reader and the play.

Because Brome's voice at the end of the play causes his readers to think consciously of the play as a text with a publication history, he encourages his readers to ask further questions about the play's publication. Why, for example, does Brome name the play *The Antipodes* rather than "The curing of Peregrine" or "From the country to London"? The play's title equates the entire play with the play-within-a-play, which is also, confusingly, named "The Antipodes," to the great frustration of critics and commentators. Yet, rather than the play-within-a-play copying the title of the outer play, *The Antipodes* takes its name from the inner play. It is an important distinction, for it recognizes that the play-within-a-play defines the entire play. "The Antipodes" is certainly central to *The Antipodes*, making the introduction, the on-stage viewers, and the aftermath of the play-within-a-play a frame for that play, training the audience and the listeners to understand "The Antipodes," which is the central focus of *The Antipodes*. Even by the play's title, Brome is turning his play upside down and inside out, for the play is defined by the play-within-a-play. Brome is destroying all of our presuppositions about drama and what is the most important part of a play. The topsy-turvydom of the play also affects imagination in the play, for while Brome

recognizes in *The Antipodes* that imagination must be controlled, he does not assign that control solely to reason; imagination and reason must work together, he says. Spivack, in her discussion of Caroline plays-within-a-play, agrees, positing that in *The Antipodes*, “Reality and theatrical fantasy have not been in conflict, but the stage has served as an extension of life, through which acting flows into and merges with identity” (205). *The Antipodes*, in part because of its blending title, is a palimpsest of London and Anti-London, of reason and imagination, and of fantasy and reality.

Nevertheless, as much as Brome proposes the integration of imagination and reason, he complicates this integration by his use of satire. If the play is satirical, does Brome mock imagination and the cure of Peregrine’s fantastical melancholy as well? What in the satire is being satirized, and what is the agent of that satire? Again, Brome complicates the position of imagination, for although imagination comes under attack in certain parts of the play, it is also the vehicle through which Brome is performing his attack. Certainly, Brome ridicules Peregrine’s and Martha’s destructive imaginations, but, when Brome satirizes imagination, he is lambasting imagination gone wrong. He is, like Hobbes, laughing at people who cannot tell the difference between imagination, fantasy, and reality, and who have been so caught up in what they read and see that they can no longer act productively in society. Brome’s satire is then a warning to any in his audience or readership who may, as well, be unable to distinguish between the fiction of the play and the reality of their own lives. By making a laughingstock of people in *The Antipodes* who cannot tell the difference between what they read and what they do, Brome is also satirizing fears that drama could cause a person to conflate fact and fiction.⁷¹ Bottom expresses such a fear in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, when he argues that the ladies watching their play will be sure that Pyramus really kills himself. He plans to prevent the conflation of fantasy and reality by means of a prologue, saying “I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue, and let the prologue seem to say we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and for the more better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver. This will put them out of fear” (3.1.15-20). In contrast, in *The Antipodes*, if a person is enraptured by drama and is unable to distinguish real life from the play, then the problem is with that person, Brome argues, and it is not with the text or the play itself. Anyone who is stupid enough to be unable to distinguish between imagination and reality deserves to be mocked, according to Brome. Yet Brome also satirizes the cure of Peregrine’s imagination, for “*The Antipodes*” is absurd, and always teetering out of the control of Hughball and Letoy. *The Antipodes*, then, while it demonstrates the means to control imagination, is as much about imagination out of control. Brome uses imagination as a vehicle of satire, but it

⁷¹ Martin Butler demonstrates that early modern proponents of theatre were eager to defend the usefulness of imagination and drama. He writes specifically about *The Antipodes* and its insistence on the healthful participation in drama when he argues, “This is a time-honoured apology for the dignity of the imagination, the ability of illusion to better reality” (217).

does not thereby escape mockery and ridicule. As the title of his play suggests, Brome turns everything on its head, complicating Burton's and Bacon's—and other early modern thinkers'—conclusions about control over imagination.

CHAPTER THREE

The Physical Imagination: Brain, Body, and Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*

To early modern authors, imagination must be controlled because of its central position in the brain—its tendrils can reach out and affect other parts of the brain—but command over imagination is even more vital because of imagination's power over the body. Imagination, according to almost every early modern author who writes about it, has immense ability to dominate other parts of the brain and also other parts of the body. While people's control over imagination may be quite tenuous, imagination's power in the body and mind is undisputed. It can influence the passions, the senses, the memory, the reason, and the rest of the body. For some authors, the physical power of imagination even extends beyond the body of the imaginant into the mind and body of others. When imagination moves from one mind to another and from one body to another, it blurs the distinctions between minds and between bodies. Imagination can then destabilize a sense of individual identity which is undermined when bodies and minds merge, as I shall examine in more detail when I discuss Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*. Although early modern thinkers may not be able to agree about the nature of the imagination—whether it is physical or spiritual—its effects are visible and, to some authors, distressingly tangible. In fact, for many authors, imagination, like the wind, can only be seen by what it moves and changes. Accordingly, early modern texts give extensive attention to the bodily powers of imagination, for ideas about how to define the imagination, its location, and the emphasis on its control, all lead to intense discussions of imagination's force. Early modern thinkers ask how the nature and location of imagination give it authority and how control over imagination can curtail, promote, and change its power. The influence of imagination includes its rhetorical, its bodily, and its spiritual power over the lives of all those who encounter it.

Michel de Montaigne writes extensively about the physical power of the imagination in his chapter in *Essays*, "On the power of the imagination," primarily using examples of impotence to describe imagination's impact on the body. When a man who is otherwise virile, for example, believes that he is impotent then he will be, says Montaigne. Conversely, if the man believes he is not impotent, then he is not. Montaigne then expands his argument by giving more diverse examples, such as a woman who believes she has swallowed a pin and shrieks in pain, but when she believes she has vomited up the pin, recovers. She had never swallowed a pin in the first place, Montaigne writes, both in mockery and amazement. The mind affects the body and produces pain or inability as the imagination decrees. Montaigne sums up his argument: "But all this may be attributed to the close connexion between the mind and the body,

whose fortunes affect one other” (45). He contends that the mind and body are connected, and what affects the mind affects the body, and vice versa. Montaigne builds upon his argument by asserting, “It is another matter when the imagination works, as it sometimes does, not on one’s own body but on someone else’s” (45). He compares imagination to a contagion, for just as a disease such as smallpox spreads from one person to another, so “when the imagination is violently disturbed, it launches shafts that may hit a distant object” (45). To demonstrate his conclusion, he cites stories of animals that kill other animals with a single glance, or people who kill others in a similar fashion. He also uses the example of pregnancy and conception, for he believes that a child is born according to what the mother imagines. One woman, he recounts, had a rough and hairy child because a picture of John the Baptist hung above her bed. John O’Brien muses, “One might almost conclude from Montaigne’s account that there is a bodily imagination as well as a mental imagination. And this somatic imagination can not only suspend sense perception within one’s body: at its most puissant it has the power to re-shape the body—one’s own and, Montaigne adds, other people’s” (13). O’Brien’s separation between bodily and mental imagination is useful in emphasizing imagination’s powerful impact on the body, but it is ultimately misleading to separate these two kinds of imagination. Montaigne makes no distinction between them; on the contrary, he repeatedly and insistently erases any differences between bodily and mental imagination, for, he argues, they are indistinguishable. After he has cited his plethora of examples, many of which, he admits, are quite outlandish, Montaigne turns to consider the nature of history and truth-telling. After his exhaustive list of sensational tales of the imagination, Montaigne vows that he conscientiously tells the truth, even more than do other historians. Yet, he wonders, how can a person argue that the history he or she writes is truth? He asks, “How can they pledge their word on a popular belief?” (47). He worries that he has based his philosophy of imagination on folk stories and hearsay, believed widely by lower class people, whom Montaigne had already mocked and downplayed in his *Essays*. His question is particularly appropriate in the context of his discussion of imagination. If, as he argues, the imagination is easily swayed, how can people be sure that they themselves know the truth? If their imaginations can convince them of something that is not so, can people ever rely on their own memories in order to recount the truth? Although Montaigne’s main focus is its powerful influence on bodies, imagination can also compromise a person’s ability to tell the truth and to discern reality.

Timothy Bright also emphasizes the connection between body and mind, but instead of citing examples that demonstrate imagination’s impact on the body, Bright defines the relationship between body and soul through an analogy to the structure of the universe. Already in his preface, Bright emphasizes that the purpose of his text is to demonstrate how the body and soul are connected, and because he sees the imagination as a part of the soul, imagination and the body are likewise linked. “I have layd open howe the bodie, and corporall things affect the soule, & how the body is affected of it againe” (sig.*iiiV), Bright writes in his

opening letter. He strengthens his assertion when he tells his readers that, in order to understand melancholy, “first it shall be necessarie for you to understand, what the familiaritie is betwixt mind and bodie: howe it affecteth it, and how it is affected of it again” (33-34). Grandly, Bright forms bonds between heaven and earth and body and soul. God created the earth as a physical entity, but God is spiritual, so what can bridge the connection between God and creation, Bright asks? He answers: the spirit—the image of God—that dwells in humankind is the link between heaven and earth: “The soul, and bodie, have growne into acquaintance: and is ordained of God, as it were a true love knot, to couple heaven & earth together” (35). The soul and the body, when united, have the power to metaphorically unite heaven and earth. More than other early modern writers, Bright underscores the bond between body and mind for, to him, that connection brings together heaven and earth, and imagination’s mediatory role between the mind and body mirrors the intermediary position humans have between created nature and the Creator—God. Because Bright so strongly emphasizes the interconnection between body and mind, and also different parts of the mind and different parts of the body, alteration in any faculty of the body or mind will affect all other faculties. “The brayne sympathetically partake[es] with the hartes fear” (106), Bright cautions, and if the heart fears, so does the mind, and if “the brayne [is] thus affected” (108), then “the heart [will answer] his passion” (108). Imagination’s power in this holistic view of the body, mind, and soul is worrisome to Bright, for the imagination can disrupt the balance between the heart and the brain. Because he has established the connection between mind and body as being the relationship between heaven and earth, between the Creator and creation, the balance between imagination and body is important not only for the health of the body and mind, but also for the balance of the universe. If the mind and body are disconnected, they can no longer reflect the right relationship between the physical world and the divine. The power of imagination, according to Bright, extends far beyond the body and the mind because it stands for something much larger—the relationship between the spiritual and the physical.

When Thomas Wright, in *The Passions of the Minde in General*, writes about the passions or emotions, the reader is directed to understand that the imagination underlies the passions. The passions, Wright argues, have no being without the imagination: “We know most certainly that our sensitive appetite cannot love, hate, fear, hope, etc. but that by imagination or our sensitive apprehension we may conceive” (112). When Wright describes the powerful influence of the passions on a person’s mind and body, the imagination is implicated and involved in that power. Imagination’s sway over the passions can even be increased by fear: “If the imagination be very apprehensive it sendeth greater store of spirits to the heart and maketh greater impression” (123). “Impression” assigns a physical, even aggressive force to imagination. Like other early modern thinkers, once he has set up his equation between imagination and passions, which in turn influence the reason, the understanding, and the will, Wright outlines how imagination, through the passions, affects the body. Through

the imagination, for example, the passions can speed recovery from an illness when it “herein (though erroneously conceiving things better than indeed ... they are) causeth a vehement Passion of Hope” (139). The imagination influences the passions, which in turn impact the body, and so a person, simply by hoping and imagining recovery, can recover.

Wright, again like many other early modern authors, discusses imagination’s link to pregnancy and uses the example of a cow who “while she was in conceiving, [imagined] such a coloured Bull; which imagination wrought so mightily that she conceived the like” (139). He argues that such a power over conception works in humans as well, explaining the varied appearance of children, for “divers imaginations of more or less pleasure in that act inciteth more or less thereunto, and so causeth a perfecter or more unperfect generation” (140). Diverse births are caused by emotions and imaginations during conception, and infants’ identities are formed by their mothers’ imaginations.⁷² Then, diverging from Bacon, Burton, and Hobbes, as we shall see, Wright turns to another influence imagination has on the body. Since, as Wright believes, the actions and expressions of a person’s body demonstrate that person’s imagination, he advocates ‘reading’ the body to discover the mind. “Heavy dull eyes proceed from a dull mind and hard of conceit” (183), for instance. The expression of a person’s face and eyes, and the movements and actions of his or her body demonstrate the nature of that person’s mind and imagination. Moreover, imagination affects how people dress, for Wright contends, “Extraordinary apparel of the body declareth well the apparel of the mind; for some you have so inconstant in their attire that the variety of their garments pregnantly proveth the fickleness of their heads” (187). How a person chooses to dress, and more generally, present him or herself to others, is directly influenced by the imagination, again making the body a book through which the imagination can be read to discover a person’s identity. When imagination affects the body, it is transmitted to other people. Wright explicitly outlines the connection between the imagination, the body of the imaginant, and the imagination of another person, for he encourages his readers to use their minds to affect others: “If we intend to imprint a passion in another it is requisite first it be stamped in our hearts; for through our voices, eyes, and gestures the world will pierce and thoroughly perceive how we are affected” (212). The imagination of another person will pick up the imprinted object or idea through his or her senses and plant it, in turn, in that person’s heart. To Wright, imagination’s power need not be suppressed, only directed, for when directed, it can grant a person persuasive power.

Francis Bacon’s *Advancement of Learning* inexorably links body and mind. He asserts that there are “Sympathies and concordances between the mind and body, which being mixed cannot be properly assigned to the sciences of

⁷² The role of imagination during pregnancy gives some importance and weight to women’s imaginations, for their thoughts and the images in their minds will directly affect the appearance of their children.

either” (103). If anyone desires to understand the mind or the body, he or she must have a comprehension of both, for to know one’s self means to know one’s body and mind, and especially the interaction between the two. Bacon titles such self-knowledge, “Human philosophy, or the knowledge of ourselves” (102). One of the first sciences he examines in his desire to find self-knowledge and to encourage his readers to do the same is “physiognomy, which discovereth the disposition of the mind by the lineaments of the body” (103). According to Bacon, the body’s shape and form denote the state of the mind. Bacon next describes “the exposition of natural dreams, which discovereth the state of the body by the imaginations of the mind” (103). He acknowledges the importance of the mind’s influence on the body when he writes that the connection between body and mind has not been studied enough: “Either, how and how far the humours and affects of the body do alter or work upon the mind; or again, how and how far the passions or apprehensions of the mind do alter and work upon the body” (103-104). How, Bacon wonders, can imagination have the power to demonstrate the condition of the body? Instead of answering his own questions, he asks his readers to engage with his text and take action by looking for the answer or answers to his musings. He wants his readers to look not only at themselves, at how their own bodies and minds interact, but also at how the bodies and minds of other people work together. He makes his question all the more urgent when he explains that physicians must carefully consider the imagination’s connection to the body. He insists that they undertake “an inquiry of great depth and worth concerning imagination, how and how far it altereth the body proper of the imaginant. For although it hath a manifest power to hurt, it followeth not it hath the same degree of power to help” (104). Bacon states that if imagination has power to harm, then it necessarily also has power to help. But, unlike Burton, he does not conclude that its power to aid is equal to its power to injure. Above all else, Bacon is very concerned to control imagination and to mediate its impact upon the body.

Throughout his discussions of imagination in *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon emphasizes imagination’s striking amount of power, especially as “fascination,” the bodily power of imagination: “Fascination is the power and act of imagination intensive upon other bodies than the body of the imaginant” (115). He draws upon the ideas of Paracelsus⁷³ to speak about natural magic, but he cringes at what Paracelsus and his followers have done in “exalt[ing] the power of the imagination to be much one with the power of miracle-working faith” (115). Yet, as Todd Butler writes, “Bacon’s criticism of Paracelsan magic does not entirely dismiss the imagination. Rather it redirects the faculty’s power,

⁷³ Paracelsus, an important contributor to the evolution of early modern imagination, could figure prominently in this dissertation, but does not. He has already received considerable scholarly attention, and the imagination he describes is close to what would now be described as ‘magic,’ rather than faculty psychology. For a detailed discussion of Paracelsus which places him in the context of imagination and its relationship to medicine and healing, see Laurence Kirmayer, “Toward a Medicine of the Imagination,” *New Literary History* 37.3 (2006): 583-605.

denying its claims to universal influence while, however begrudgingly, acknowledging its continuing influence in human affairs” (35). Bacon—along with many other early modern writers—doubts and defies the use and validity of certain kinds of imagination, or of certain ways of thinking about the imagination. He does not want to equate imagination with faith, or give imagination magical abilities, but he does not doubt that imagination can act on other bodies. One of his most important assertions in his discussion of imagination is that “it is material to know how to fortify and exalt [imagination]” (115)—and to control it.

Francis Bacon’s *Essays* provides a useful contrast to *The Advancement of Learning* because in his *Essays*, he addresses imagination’s power over politics and public moral life. He reveals his focus already in the title of the text, *The Essays or Counsels, Civill and Moral*. Bacon’s interest in imagination arises from his consideration of a person’s public role in society and his or her ability to undertake that role, which he also discusses in his essay, “Of Regiment of Health.” Here, Bacon outlines a good routine for maintaining the body’s health, but he particularly focuses on the wellbeing of the mind. Bacon emphasizes that fears can disrupt the mind, so he encourages his reader to “Avoid Envie; Anxious Feares; Anger fretting inwards” (101). When he writes of fears and looking inward, he is addressing, as do other early modern authors, imagination’s unhealthy preoccupation with frightening images and with a solely inward focus causing the mind to be constantly occupied with what is inside of itself. Avoid, Bacon cautions, unhealthy obsessions of the imagination because such single-mindedness will destroy the health of the body and mind, which it does in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, as we shall see. Instead, Bacon gives this advice: “Entertain Hopes; Mirth rather then Joy; Varietie of Delights, rather than Surfet of them; Wonder, and Admiration, and therefore Novelties; Studies that fill the Minde with Splendide and Illustrious Objects, as Histories, Fables, and Contemplations of Nature” (101). According to Bacon, novelties, connected to imagination, create a sense of joy in the mind. Furthermore, he lists fables as one of the studies that fill the mind with illustrious objects, and elsewhere in his *Advancement of Learning*, Bacon associates fables with poesy, and poesy with imagination. Bacon continues in a later essay, “There is no Stond [Stoppage] or Impediment in the Wit, but may be wrought out by Fit *Studies*: Like as Diseases of the Body, may have Appropriate Exercises” (“Of Studies” 154). Imagination, to Bacon, is part of a healthy regime to counteract impediments in the wit. It is appropriate to a well-rounded education of the mind, causing a delight in the world. Imagination, therefore, through poesy and learning, has power to improve a person, who can then better participate in public life, also influencing and enriching those around him or her.

Robert Burton asserts repeatedly that imagination has great power to affect the mind and body of the imaginant, and that it can also transfer to another person’s mind and body. His focus on imagination’s bodily power is pronounced because of the close connection he makes between imagination and melancholy. Burton’s primary definition of imagination includes the statement that “In

melancholy men this faculty is most powerful and strong, and often hurts, producing many monstrous and prodigious things, especially if it be stirred up by some terrible object, presented to it from common sense or memory” (1.1.2.7.159). He immediately identifies imagination as both powerful and painful, but he also emphasizes that imagination can itself be influenced, for the bodily power of imagination follows a loss of control of reason over imagination. After he has established that authority is necessary over imagination and the basic power of the faculty, Burton then devotes his attention to the force of the imagination: “I will only now point at the wonderful effects and power of it; which, as it is eminent in all, so most especially it rageth in melancholy persons” (1.2.3.2.253). Burton emphasizes that imagination is eminent “in all,” for imagination is central not only in a melancholic mind, but in the mind of every person, whether ill or healthy. He continues: imagination “at length ... produceth in some parties real effects, causeth [melancholy] and many other maladies” (1.2.3.2.253). Burton does not deny that imagination can create serious problems in the brain. Indeed, the first force of imagination Burton emphasizes is its power to do harm, cause illness, and bring pain. Burton even approaches the argument that imagination is responsible for sin: “Some ascribe all vices to a false and corrupt imagination” (1.2.3.2.254), he writes, but he distances himself from those who condemn imagination by beginning with the phrase “Some ascribe.” Although he is unwilling to credit sinful actions to a corrupt imagination, Burton unequivocally attributes changes in emotion to the imagination. He writes, “Some will laugh, weep, sigh, groan, blush, tremble, sweat, at such things as are suggested to them by their imagination” (1.2.3.2.255). Like Wright, Burton posits that the emotional response caused by imagination is carried out by and is visible on the body for, as he underscores, imagination impacts the body and the mind of the healthy as well as of the ill. Imagination “works not in sick and melancholy men only, but even most forcibly sometimes in such as are sound: it makes them suddenly sick, and alters their temperature⁷⁴ in an instant” (1.2.3.2.255). Imagination’s power even extends over life itself, for “Sometimes death itself is caused by force of phantasy” (1.2.3.2.256). To Burton, then, understanding imagination and how to control it is literally a matter of life and death. Then, finally, Burton gives comfort: after he describes the force of imagination to do harm, he summarizes his belief in the strength of imagination and concludes, like Bacon, that it can cause good as well as ill: “As some are so molested by phantasy; so some again, by fancy alone, and a good conceit, are as easily recovered” (1.2.3.2.256). Imagination can cause miraculous recovery just as easily as it can cause people to fall into an illness. Burton spends less time

⁷⁴ Although such a connection is impossible to prove conclusively, it is tempting to argue that Burton’s use of the metaphor of heat—both “temperature” and “sweat” (255)—is in response to Nashe’s portrayal of the heat of the sweating sickness as a metaphor for imagination in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, as I shall demonstrate later in the chapter. “Temperature” also refers to temperament, the qualities of a body based on its proportions of the four humours.

depicting and explaining the recuperative force of imagination, perhaps because the anecdotes are not as sensational. Nevertheless, he does not define the power of imagination as a power only to do ill, for that power can be applied by a wise physician to bring about recovery.

To Burton, the power of imagination is so great, and can so dramatically work upon the mind and body of the person who is imagining, that its influence extends even further. Imagination, he argues, can also affect the body and mind of other people, for “so diversely does this phantasy of ours affect, turn, and wind, so imperiously command our bodies ... ‘that it can work upon others as well as ourselves’” (1.2.3.2.257).⁷⁵ He follows his assertion with a number of examples to highlight his argument. “Why doth one man’s yawning make another yawn?” (1.2.3.2.257), Burton asks. Because imagination is a bridge between inner and outer, senses and body, perception and action, imagination’s power must, if it appears physically, transcend a single person and be able to be transmitted to others. This trans-body power of imagination, which Bacon calls “fascination,” Burton names the “forcible imagination.” He writes, “The forcible imagination of the one party moves and alters the spirits of the other” (257). Imagination is a force, a power; it not only has power, it is a power to affect the body and mind of the person who is imagining and also the body and mind of the person who sees the first person’s imagination. Burton concludes his discussion of imagination:

Imagination is the *medium deferens* [instrument] of passions, by whose means they work and produce many times prodigious effects: and as the phantasy is more or less intended and remitted, and their humours disposed, so do perturbations move, more or less, and take deeper impression. (257-258)

Because it is used by the passions, which strongly influence the body and emotions, imagination leaves a deep impression, a lasting mark, on the mind and body. The power of imagination, Burton concludes, is strong, but more importantly, it is permanent. For Burton, controlling the imagination, or even just understanding the imagination, is essential because of the great power of the imagination over both the ill and healthy, to do good and bad.

Imagination’s power over the mind and body, to early modern authors, is indisputable. Not only does it cause fears and melancholy in the mind, and is in turn affected by those fears and melancholy, but imagination also influences the body. Imagination’s bodily power is akin to a contagion, spreading rampantly from mind to body, from body to body, and from body to mind, as we shall especially see in Nashe’s *The Unfortunate Traveller*. Like a disease or a plague, imagination becomes almost completely unbound and unrestrained. Its power and control moves from being a private, individual matter to a social and political concern. Such a property of diffusion makes imagination almost impossible to

⁷⁵ Marsilius Ficino, *Theologia Platonica de Immortalitate Animorum*, Lib.13, Cap. 18.

avoid, for it is visible in every person's appearance, mannerisms, and through his or her speech. Because it is unavoidable, controlling and curtailing imagination's trans-body power is supremely important, according to some authors. Others, such as Wright, prefer to use and enhance imagination's persuasive powers in order to have rhetorical power over others. One person's actions or words, which originate in thought, can affect another person's thoughts, actions, and even sense of identity. If imagination causes thoughts to be made concrete and physical, then such a transformative power gives imagination and the control of imagination great possibility for harm and for good, a characteristic of imagination that is worrisome to early modern theorists, but also used to its full advantage by those same thinkers and writers.

The Infection of Imagination: Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*

Just as imagination spreads from body to body and from mind to body as does a disease, so Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* highlights concerns about the merging of identities of different characters in the narrative, and the merging of the identities of the reader and the protagonist, Jack Wilton. Plague, in the text, is a metaphor for the potentially dangerous power of the imagination to trigger the mingling of identities caused by the bodily power of the imagination. Margaret Cavendish also compares ideas to diseases in her letter "To all Writing Ladies" in *Poems and Fancies*: "It is to be observed, that there is a secret working by Nature, as to cast an influence upon the mindes on men: like as in Contagions, when as the Aire is corrupted, it produces severall Diseases; so severall distempers of the minde, by the inflammations of the spirits. And as in healthfull Ages, bodies are purified, so wits are refined" (161). Just as bodies are susceptible to infectious illnesses, so too the mind can be diseased and corrupted. In order to fruitfully discuss plague, pestilence, and imagination in Thomas Nashe's 1594 text, *The Unfortunate Traveller*, I must first define what I will not be attempting to do. I do not intend to look at 'real' disease as a historical phenomenon in early modern England—I recognize that plague and epidemic were very disruptive and deadly, but it is not my purpose here to trace the plague, either its sources or its medical roots.⁷⁶ Instead, I will focus on disease and contagion as a metaphor for imagination's power over the minds and bodies of both the readers and the characters within the text.

Nashe's preoccupation with disease and with imagination appears in his other texts as well as in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, his best known work. In his *Terrors of the Night*, Nashe focuses in the text—full of contrary and conflicting

⁷⁶ Melissa Smith rightly asserts, "More than discursive occasions, or plausible fictions, plague and syphilis destroyed lives, impacted views of health and wellbeing, impaired communities, and could neither be ignored nor seamlessly incorporated into popular culture" (9), and, although this chapter does not emphasize the horror of plague itself, it is not meant to deny or smooth over that horror.

statements⁷⁷—on the sources and consequences of nightmares. He attributes them to spirits of the night, of which there are several kinds. “As for the spirits of the air,” he writes, “they are in truth all show and no substance, deluders of our imagination and naught else” (216). Likewise, the spirits of the earth cause the rise of the melancholy humour in a person, which “still thickening as it stands still, engendreth many misshapen objects in our imaginations” (217). He concludes about dreams and imagination, “A dream is nothing else but a bubbling scum or froth of the fancy, which the day hath left undigested; or an after-feast made of the fragments of idle imaginations” (218). In *Terrors*, Nashe traces the impact of imagination on the body, and writes of those who can diagnose bodily ailments by analyzing dreams. Nashe was certainly well acquainted with ailments, for he witnessed and escaped the sixteenth-century plague in London. In his play, *Summer’s Last Will and Testament*, Nashe writes a song to or about plague. The refrain, “I am sick, I must die: / Lord, have mercy on us” (195), must have sounded familiar to the play’s audience, well acquainted with pestilence and death. In the song, Nashe emphasizes the class-leveling nature of plague, which takes both the poor and the rich, and also—closer to Nashe’s situation—the artist. “Hell’s executioner,” the song continues, “Hath no ears for to hear / What vain art can reply” (196). Nashe cannot by art—either by cleverness or artistry—stop or cure disease. He does, however, use plague in his art, equating it with imagination in order to create *The Unfortunate Traveller*.

For an author that Steven Mentz calls “among the least classifiable of Elizabethan writers” (339), Nashe has received and continues to receive much critical attention. Perhaps it is his inability to be classified that has frustrated, engaged, and captured the attention of critics. Certainly, a reader such as Neil Rhodes expresses frustrated delight when he writes, “*The Unfortunate Traveller* veers from jest-book farce to sermon, from burlesque epic to encomium to tragedy, and the reader is constantly being buttonholed and invited to admire Nashe’s dextrous shifts of genre” (38). Madelon Gohlke, on the other hand, argues that Nashe uses an established genre, the picaresque, to describe Wilton’s acknowledgement of his own ignorance “in the face of the irreducible complexity of the world” (413). That same complexity is displayed in the form of Nashe’s narrative, Ann Rosalind Jones argues: “the world [that *The Unfortunate Traveller*] constructs is a jarring confrontation of contemporary discourses, not the mirror of a world that rises above them” (78). Indeed, instead of trying to find a logical flow to the narrative itself, many critics look at Nashe’s narrative style to determine its place in the English literary canon. Critics such as Jennifer Turner emphasize Nashe’s engagement with humanist writing, arguing that Nashe employs and subverts humanist discourse through his style and subject matter in

⁷⁷ I do not view the contradictions in the text as indications of Nashe’s confusion or illogical arguments. Rather, like a nightmare, Nashe’s text swirls and moves chaotically, as fragmented and inconclusive as a dream itself.

The Unfortunate Traveller.⁷⁸ David Kaula contends that through his style, “[Nashe] expresses the kind of vitality which calls into question any notion of order but the most securely grounded” (57); Arthur Kinney writes that “Humanist belief in man fails Nashe; but he tries desperately to hold on to humanist poetry” (350); and Lorna Hutson neatly summarizes such critical approaches to Nashe when she concludes, “A tendency to classify Jack as a satirist and to regard *The Unfortunate Traveller* as the vehicle of his satiric comment leads attention away from what is surely the most important point: it is not a society that is the object of representation in Jack’s narrative, but the way in which society is currently ‘set forth’ in discourses of all kinds, not least in Jack’s own” (220). Baffled by the loosely connected content of Nashe’s narrative, critics look at his style rather than his substance. Yet the substance of his text—the plague that fills it—is also its style, for Nashe uses pestilence as a metaphor for his stylistic representations of imagination and its influence on the body and mind of the characters in the text, and the readers outside of it.

Thomas Nashe’s *The Unfortunate Traveller* is driven by disease, and its preoccupation with plague warrants a concerted investigation of epidemic in the text. At the beginning of the narrative the protagonist, the young Jack Wilton, describes in proud detail the various pranks he plays on fellow soldiers and pages. The text begins as a rambling and self-congratulatory list of harmful escapades, outlining Wilton’s cleverness and his dupes’ stupidity. One exploit follows another with no apparent narrative aim, and it is not until Wilton leaves London that the picaresque portion of the text, his travels throughout Europe, begins. Wilton’s voyage is precipitated by a plague decimating the city of London, for the sweating sickness is literally melting people to death. Wilton calls it “the sweating sickness that made me in a cold sweat take my heels [sic] and run out of England” (273). He describes the sweating sickness as the disintegration of the body, causing people to melt away into nothing, or into sources of heat: “Cooks that stand continually basting their faces before the fire, were now all cashiered with this sweat into kitchen stuff” (273). He continues, “I have seen an old woman at that season, having three chins, wipe them all away one after another, as they melted to water, and left herself nothing of a mouth but an upper chap” (274). The effects of the sweating sickness are not just contained to one collapsing body, but spread from one body to the next, for Wilton writes, nothing was “so contagious as one man that had the sweat was to another” (274). When Wilton narrates that he left London by taking to “his heels,” he does more than use a slang expression. He leaves in time to escape the plague, and to escape with his whole body, including his heels, intact. Plague causes movement in the narrative, just as imagination is movement in the brain. Plague and Wilton’s fear of disappearance

⁷⁸ Jennifer Turner, “Jack Wilton and the Art of Travel,” *Critical Approaches to Elizabethan Prose Fiction 1520-1640*, Ed. Donald Beecher (Ottawa: Doverhouse Editions, 1998) 123-156.

and dispersal also explain the beginning of the text, which can seem unrelated to the rest of the narrative. Because he is so afraid of being a nameless, forgotten body, Wilton recounts his pranks as a desperate attempt to be distinct and memorable. Moreover, plague drives the whole text forward and becomes Wilton's reason for traveling. The text itself, as a fictional travel narrative, is made possible by plague. Just so, the text is also made possible by imagination—Wilton's in imagining what might happen to him if he remains in London, and Nashe's in composing the tale of the adventures of one Jack Wilton, page.

The disintegration of bodies caused by the sweating sickness is emphasized by Wilton's immediate, post-London destination, the scene of a battle between the French and Swiss. There, Wilton finds what he describes as "a bundle of bodies fettered together in their own bowels" (276) and "arms and legs scattered in the field" (277). Wilton finds similar dismemberment when he witnesses the aftermath of the battle at Münster. The plethora of scattered body parts blurs boundaries between bodies, just as the sweating sickness had likewise caused bodies to melt, decay, and blur together and into the surrounding environment. Andrew Fleck has noticed the prevalence of broken and scattered bodies in the text, but he attributes the theme to a xenophobic representation of non-English, mutilated people while the English body, Jack Wilton, remains whole and sound.⁷⁹ While Nashe may be advancing a nationalistic agenda by promoting the survival of Wilton, Wilton is still constantly in danger of disappearance and disintegration. In contrast to Fleck, I propose that the presence of dismembered and blurred bodies in the text reflects the possible blurring of Wilton's identity with the identities of those around him. In doing so I expand upon Michael Keefer's reading of *The Unfortunate Traveller*, for in his broader study of abjection in the text, Keefer writes, "The sweating sickness, and the scenes of warfare to which Jack escapes from it ... has more to do with threats to the boundaries of the self than with social boundaries" (200). In response to Keefer's brief and provocative remark, I analyze Wilton's attempts to keep his identity whole and safe. In his travels, Wilton must learn to find his own identity, to remain separate and whole, but also to live as a productive, God-fearing member of a community, as the contested ending of the narrative emphasizes.

Wilton's description of the dismembered bodies on the battlefield also imaginatively unites him with the readers of *The Unfortunate Traveller*. The description provokes an emotional response in Wilton who, when he views the bodies at Münster, writes both callously and compassionately,

Pitiful and lamentable was their unpitied and well-performed slaughter. To see even a bear, which is the most cruellest of all beasts, too too bloodily overmatched and deformedly rent in pieces

⁷⁹ Fleck writes, "The xenophobic representations of national difference that Nashe projects onto disciplined foreign bodies in *The Unfortunate Traveller* allow him to celebrate the bodily integrity of his English narrator" (299).

by an unconscionable number of curs, it would move compassion against kind, and make those that, beholding him at the state yet uncoped with, wished him a suitable death to his ugly shape, now to re-call their hard-hearted wishes and moan him suffering [sic] as a mild beast, in comparison of the foul-mouthed mastiffs, his butchers. (285)

Because Nashe describes the scene in such visual and metaphorical detail, he wants his readers to picture—to imagine—the battlefield along with Wilton. Indeed, the reader is not only to mentally picture the scene, but he or she must have an emotional response to the image, the very idea, of a plain covered in broken bodies. As Wright and Burton emphasize, the imagination is apparent on the body, and readers' reactions to the imagined battlefield will appear, according to early modern theorists, as a bodily response. The reader's body, therefore, carries out an imaginative response to the narrative, and the physical reaction to the sight of dismembered bodies travels, like a disease, via the imagination, from the text to the mind and body of the reader. Imagining the battle scene reminds readers that Wilton had earlier addressed them directly and asked them to purposefully use their imagination to suspend disbelief and allow the story to proceed temporally.⁸⁰ In order for the text to continue and advance, the reader must use his or her imagination—to dream—and to thereby participate in the formation of Wilton's narrative.

If Wilton, when he runs from the sweating sickness in London, is attempting to escape his own disappearance and integration into an urban centre, during his journeys he continues to confront pressure to align or exchange his identity with others. On his travels through Europe, Wilton meets his former master, the Earl of Surrey, and while the two of them travel together, Wilton pretends to be the master, and Surrey to be the servant. Wilton explains: "It was concluded betwixt us that I should be the Earl of Surrey and he my man, only because in his own person, which he would not have reproached, he meant to take more liberty of behaviour; as for my carriage, he knew he was to tune it at a key either high or low, as he list" (298). Not only does Wilton exchange his identity for another's, but he also boasts of his ability to act according to any station. At the beginning of the text, his transmissible identity is his pride, and, like the effects of the sweating sickness, Wilton's self merges with another's, and becomes as dismembered as bodies on a battlefield. The reader, however, occupies a different position from Wilton and Surrey. Indeed, at this point in the text, the reader is most separate from the characters because Nashe, via Wilton, constantly reminds the readers that Wilton and Surrey are playing a charade and that their characters are a sham to all who meet them. Nashe forces his readers to

⁸⁰ After his descriptions of his pranks while a page, Wilton commands his readers, "Sleep an hour or two, and dream that Turney and Turwin is won, that the King is shipped again into England, and that I am close at hand meat at Windsor or at Hampton Court" (271-272).

acknowledge that their engagement with his text is an imaginative one, for the characters in the text are not real people, but imaginative creations whose identities can be constructed or deconstructed according to the movement of imagination in the brain. When Wilton is closest to losing his identity, the reader's identity as separate and distinct from the text is most secure, for Nashe makes readers forcibly aware that he can and is manipulating their connection to his text. Indeed, Nashe never allows the reader to feel comfortable while reading *The Unfortunate Traveller*; instead he constantly badgers his readers and re-defines their relationship to the text. As Constance Relihan points out, "Jack manipulates the consumers of his text in various ways, bantering with us throughout *The Unfortunate Traveller* and shifting rapidly between frames of reference on the level of plot and image. He also shifts the rhetorical construction of his text's consumers" (145). Kiernan Ryan presents a similar argument to Relihan's, but from a different point of view. Ryan posits that Nashe has no desire to form an audience at all; rather, his unpredictability acknowledges the unpredictability of his readers: "Nashe's deliberate incorporation of the reader into the narrative [is] in order to elicit a new kind of reading. Nashe is engaged in writing unpredictable material for an unpredictable readership, whose differing views and values he can presume neither to share nor control" (52). Even when he seems unpredictable, Nashe is still very much in control of his narrative, and his manipulation of his audience is both planned and masterful. Nashe, through Wilton, compels the reader to constantly readjust his or her position in the text—swinging from guilty conspirator to impartial judge to amused bystander and back.

After Wilton reclaims his own name, separating from the Earl of Surrey, he travels to Rome, where he again finds plague and pestilence. In a crowded metropolitan area such as London and Rome, Wilton is most likely to merge into the crowd, to become just one of many city dwellers, without a distinct identity, or, because of the plague, without a distinct body. Wilton's precarious selfhood is especially challenged in Rome, for Rome is, as Wilton describes, "The Queen of the world and metropolitan mistress of all other cities" (324). The disease in Rome, like the plague in London, is identified with excessive heat. "So it fell out," Wilton relates, "that, it being a vehement hot summer when I was a sojourner there, there entered such a hotspurred plague as hath not been heard of" (330). Like London's sweating sickness, this pestilence in Rome creates a bodily melting pot, for "one grave was the sepulchre of seven score; one bed was the altar whereupon whole families were offered" (331). Wilton's travels do not make him exempt from losing his identity—on the contrary, in Rome, Wilton is in danger of disappearing into the crowd of people, of melting into just another traveller to the city. Again, while Wilton's identity is threatened by the plague—both real and metaphorical—in the city, it is also bolstered by its link to the real—the reader. Wilton's narrative gives him an imaginative link with his readers and sets him apart from the nameless hordes of people dying from the plague. Nashe's narrative, therefore, affects the imagination on at least two levels: the reader is in

danger of associating his or her identity with Wilton's but the reader also pulls Wilton from disappearing into Rome and obscurity. Wilton deliberately promotes such an identification by addressing the reader in the first person, and at the end of the text, promising to write more of his adventures if his readers enjoyed his first account: "All the conclusive epilogue I will make is this: that if herein I have pleased any, it shall animate me to more pains in this kind" (370). Narrating his travels gives Wilton a certain imaginative power over his own identity, for he can describe himself and his situation, which creates him as both a 'real' person and a character he creates—or "animates"—for himself.⁸¹ Of course, Wilton is not a real person at all, but a fiction of Thomas Nashe, but Nashe wants readers to imagine Wilton and be affected by him.

Wilton is impacted by his own imagination as well. While in Rome, Wilton is imprisoned by a Jew, Zachary, who plans to anatomize Wilton. Again Nashe links the image of epidemic and plague to dismemberment and lack of self-containment, but in the care of Zachary, Wilton suffers more from the fear of dismemberment than the act itself. Because he knows that Zachary intends to dissect him, Wilton suffers that dissection a thousand times by his imagination. Wilton explains, "Oh, the cold *sweating* cares which I conceived after I knew I should be cut like a French summer doublet!" (349, my emphasis). Not only is Wilton afraid of death, but he also fears that he will lose his identity and become nothing other than a body used for medical research, thereby becoming indistinguishable from all the nameless people who had died in Rome from the sweating sickness. Wilton's fear manifests itself on his body, which is both influenced by his imagination and in turn increases his imaginative fear:

Methought already the blood began to gust out at my nose. If a flea on the arm had but bit me, I deemed the instrument had pricked me ... Not a drop of sweat trickled down my breast and my sides, but I dreamt it was a smooth-edged razor tenderly slicing down my breast and sides. If any knocked at door, I supposed it was the beadle of Surgeons' Hall come for me. In the night I dreamed of nothing but phlebotomy, bloody fluxes, incarnatives, running ulcers. I durst not let out a wheal [pimple] for fear through it I should bleed to death. (349)

Reid Barbour, in *Deciphering Elizabethan Fiction*, also notices the bodily consequences of Wilton's fear. Barbour describes the incident in this way: "pain for Jack always involves the basic materials of his body. He is compelled to imagine his own anatomy ... He can fill the space only with images of the stuff at hand: parings, excrement, and other bodily matter" (89). Although Barbour's

⁸¹ Bacon's assertion in *The Advancement of Learning*, "Poesy endueth [history] with more rareness, and more unexpected and alternative variations" (80-81), echoes Nashe's promise—through Wilton's—to be animated.

assessment of Wilton's situation and Wilton's response is not incorrect, it is lacking the psychological reading early modern theorists could and would ascribe to the connection between his brain and his body. His fear of dissection infects his whole mind and body, possessing his imagination. His imagination of his anatomization causes him to sweat, and his imagination then interprets the sweat as the feel of the razor. Wilton's mind affects his body, which in turn affects his mind, thereby exhibiting Wright's "impression," Bacon's "fascination," and Burton's "forcible imagination."

When he recounts Wilton's imaginative response to his imprisonment in Zachary's basement, Nashe demonstrates the physical power of the imagination on Wilton. He forces his reader to participate in and experience the same power of imagination through his narration of the rape of Heraclide, Wilton's hostess in Rome. Nashe creates a web of connections between Wilton and Heraclide: for example, Heraclide is raped, and Wilton is also threatened by sexual violence, for Wilton tells of his experience with Zachary, "The purblind Doctor put on his spectacles and looked upon me; and when he had thoroughly viewed my face, he caused me to be stripped naked, to feel and grope whether each limb were sound and my skin not infected. Then he pierced my arm to see how my blood ran" (349). Furthermore, Wilton's observation of Heraclide's rape and suicide incriminates him in her death. Basing her arguments on Wilton's witness of and commentary on the assault, Wendy Hyman argues compellingly that "the rape narrative repeatedly implicates Wilton, and therefore Nashe, in the violent act. One need simply chart the narrative progress of the sword/rapier, clearly a stand-in both for pen and for phallus, during the course of the rape scene" (33). Nashe and Wilton are guilty partakers in Heraclide's rape, but Hyman continues: "we are never allowed to forget that the ultimate consumer of [the text] is the reader. Heraclide's rape has made it clear: voyeurism is not a neutral activity" (34). Readers' imaginations implicate them in Heraclide's rape and death, for readers, like Wilton, watch and consume the crime. Indeed, just as the incident only exists for readers because of Wilton's narration of it, so too the rape only exists for them in their own minds. Without the readers, the crime would not exist. The power of imagination, then, causes readers to become guilty of, by imaginative identification with, the death of Heraclide. Implicitly, the text itself is therefore not contained within its own pages, but like a contagion, moves beyond itself into its readers, and readers also in turn moves into the text, breaking down a separation between the reader and the text and the reader and the author, blurring reader/author identities and limits.

Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* reflects and displays early modern beliefs about the close association between the imagination and the body, especially the influence of one person's mind on another person's body. One consequence of such an association is the reader's implication in the entire text, not just in isolated incidents such as the unfortunate story of Heraclide. What Wilton sees the reader sees, and the reader likewise shares in all of Wilton's exploits. Just as the sweating sickness in London and Rome meshes bodies and

identities together, so the identities of the readers and of Wilton are likewise inextricably linked by what Burton will later call “the forcible imagination” (1.2.3.2.257). *The Unfortunate Traveller* is a demonstration that “in poets and painters imagination *forcibly* works” (Burton 1.1.2.7.159, my emphasis). As Nashe’s body literally had to move to write his text, so his imagination, recorded in the narrative and in his character, Jack Wilton, influences the minds (and according to early modern theorists, the bodies) of his readers. Using the metaphor of heat and plague, Nashe alludes to the connection between Wilton and the reader when he recounts the speech of an Earl Wilton meets in Rome. The Earl is opposed to travel and would rather sit at home and read about other places than experience them. Hyman rightly points out that the Earl’s “tedious” (38) advice is overshadowed by “Nashe’s voracious text” (36) and is part of Nashe’s satire, but still the Earl’s admonition contains plague-like references. If Nashe characterizes plague and epidemic by heat, it is no coincidence that the Earl asks Wilton, “What is here but we may read in books, and a great deal more too, without stirring our feet out of a *warm* study?” (343, my emphasis). Reading books is associated with warmth, so if the Earl is sitting in his study, he cannot help but be infected by the places that he is reading about, and like the reader participating in the text of *The Unfortunate Traveller*, the Earl participates in travel—is infected by it—because of the warmth of the study. The Earl’s invocation of books also reminds the reader that Wilton is a page, but, given Nashe’s predilection for puns, he is not only a page by occupation, but a page—a leaf of a book—by nature. Jonathan Crewe has also noticed Nashe’s use of ‘page’ and employs the pun to good effect:

Let us recall that Nashe is credited in the *O.E.D.* as the first user of ‘page’ in its sense of a printed sheet (in the *Menaphon* preface). Nashe’s own usage thus enables him to confer a double identity on his page-protagonist Jack Wilton. The pun on page is not relentlessly pressed, but is always available, and it contributes to the work’s self-conscious doubling back. (69-70)⁸²

Wilton literally is his text, and when people read his book, they are reading—and being infected by—him. Yet, books are not linked to the immoderate heat that defines epidemic, but instead with warmth, which is perhaps a more moderate and less deadly form of contagion.

So, too, *The Unfortunate Traveller* contains the heat of plague, describing the merging of identities, but that heat is ultimately tempered by the didactic quality of the text that features, perhaps only with lip service, character reform.

⁸² Mihoko Suzuki also notes the connection between “page” and “page” and points out further puns in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, such as “leave” and the “leaves” of a book, and “ear” and “ear”-marking a page. See Mihoko Suzuki, “‘Signiorie Ouer the Pages’: The Crisis of Authority in Nashe’s ‘The Unfortunate Traveller,’” *Studies in Philology* 81.3 (1984): 348-371.

Wilton's reform tempers the heat of the epidemic in the book and the heat of the epidemic that is the book, and makes it into the warmth of study; the text performs the realization of identity rather than the dispersal of identity. Finally, when Wilton is no longer in danger of disappearing in a morass of disintegrating and dismembered identities, he can regain a useful position in a community. After witnessing the gruesome hanging of a murderer, Wilton abruptly recounts, "To such a straight life did it thenceforward incite me that ere I went out of Bologna I married my courtesan, performed many alms-deeds, and hasted so fast out of the Sodom of Italy, that within forty days I arrived at the King of England's camp" (370). His unfortunate travels have taught him, and his readers, how to live in a community—even a large, bustling, crowded metropolis—while maintaining both a distinct identity and an integrated role. At the end of the narrative, Nashe does not want Wilton—or the reader—to merely attain a distinct identity which is still constantly on the run from possible imaginative mergers with other identities. Instead, that newly formed, non-dismembered identity can and must return to the familiarity of England, this time whole, distinct, and safe from the plague.

The sudden reformation of Wilton at the end of the text has long been a troubling element for critics. Many view it as unconvincing and satirical, but all find it abrupt and startling, or an indication that the entire text is only loosely connected and not logically composed. Peter Holbrook, for example, writes that "The book's sudden close confirms the general impression it gives of flagrant arbitrariness, an arbitrariness communicating ... an arch social-literary confidence" (85). G.R. Hibbard, in his seminal but oft-challenged reading of Nashe, attributes the ending to Nashe's reliance on describing individual scenes rather than on constructing a continuous narrative:

Interested in the immediate, local effect he can extract from an idea or a situation, [Nashe] works on it until he has exhausted its possibilities or grown bored with it, and then moves on to something else, unconcerned about its relationship with what has gone before, intent on showing his craftsmanship by treating it in an arresting manner and relying on his virtuosity as a showman to cover up the gaps. (147)

The very abruptness of the ending, however, demonstrates Nashe's satirical brilliance. The suddenness of Wilton's conversion makes it seem artificial and contrived, and mocks the practice of ending a text with the tidy repentance of any erring characters. George Chapman's, Ben Jonson's, and John Marston's 1605 play, *Eastward Ho* ends with a similarly artificial repentance. In the play, the excessive penitence of the scheming apprentice, son-in-law and usurer rings false, giving the play a satirically orderly and moral conclusion. The sudden and satirical conversion of characters at the endings of *The Unfortunate Traveller* and *Eastward Ho* allow readers to question the sincerity (as much as it can be measured) of conversions in other texts as well. Does Joyless truly trust Diana at

the end of *The Antipodes*, for example, and at the conclusion of *All's Well that Ends Well*, how happily married are Bertram and Helena? As much as the ending of *The Unfortunate Traveller* emphasizes the newfound utility of Wilton's imagination, it also mocks any neat, moralizing reading of the text's conclusion.

Yet the ending of the text also follows Wilton's adventures in a logical sequence. During his travels, his escape from plague, his near death and his witnessing of death, Wilton has been constantly learning. His interaction with what he sees—what he senses—has grown and evolved until it reaches its reasonable conclusion at the end of the book. Louise Simons views the ending of the text very negatively, arguing that “after recounting the deaths of so many others, Jack is still alive, to be sure, but he is dazed by the enormity of mankind's capacity for evil. In essence, Jack is aged and dispirited and silenced” (36). On the contrary, I argue that the concluding scene of the narrative is the most hopeful: at the beginning of the narrative, Wilton runs from the plague in London, he then witnesses but bypasses the bloody battlefield in Germany, he sees and mocks the Anabaptist debates in Münster, and he similarly separates himself from the various events he witnesses as he passes through Europe. In Rome he begins to interact with and be affected by what he views, for his imagination is becoming increasingly active. His imagination is stimulated by watching the rape and suicide of Heraclide, and it then shifts into high gear when he is imprisoned by Zachary. Throughout his journey, Wilton's imagination—and the reader's—is being trained to impact the body and mind, translating sensory data into personal response. When, at the end of the narrative, Wilton witnesses the confession and gruesome execution of Cutwolfe, his imagination consequently compels him to respond, and respond he does—drastically: “Mortifiedly abjected and daunted was I with this truculent tragedy of Cutwolfe and Esdras” (370). Nashe's techniques to make imagination useful and powerful are certainly very bodily and violent. Wilton's conversion and reformation are therefore not necessarily abrupt or out of place, but instead a demonstration of the force of the imagination.

CHAPTER FOUR

Imagination's Creative Power: Francis Quarles Pictures the World in *Emblemes*

Thomas Wright seamlessly connects the physical power of imagination with its deliberate, rhetorical transmission, but other early modern authors address the two facets of the faculty of imagination separately. They do so because of the importance of the creativity and communication of imagination. If imagination has incredible force, and the faculty has an involuntary influence on the body and mind, how can one person deliberately transmit his or her imagination to another person? Conversely, how can a person determine what another person is imagining? Someone can 'read' imagination by its influence on a person's body, but a person can also read imagination more traditionally, in a text or piece of literature, or in another's speech. For example, Thomas Wilson, in *The Arte of Rhetorique*,⁸³ writes simply that "The tongue is ordeined to expresse the mynde, that one mighte understande anothers meanyng" (25). He is certain that through verbal communication, the mind, and therefore also the imagination, is articulated. Nor is the tongue simply the organ of transmission, for Wilson writes that it is ordained to express the mind. The tongue's role in imagination's transmission is assigned to it providentially, and God commands the tongue to be the means of transmission from mind to mind, facilitating not just communication, but understanding. Imagination can be deliberately sent out into the world by communication—by verbal and textual communication. When a person describes, depicts or stimulates imagination via words, then imagination can move from the private to the public realm. Imagination ceases to be an individual faculty within a single person's mind, but enters into the public domain and is accessible to all those who can read or hear the communication of imagination. Imagination, disseminated through literary texts, is especially important to writers of early modern devotional texts, who use literary means to encourage readers to dedicate their lives to God. Francis Quarles, for example, consciously considers the interplay between creative imagination and devotion, image and text, in his devotional *Emblemes*, as we shall see.

If written or spoken, imagination is widely transmitted, for its bodily power can reach many people, both deliberately and unconsciously. Some, by their speech or words, betray their imagination while others carefully craft their

⁸³ Peter Medine, Wilson's biographer, writes that "The publication record suggests that Wilson's *Art* was one of the most successful sixteenth-century books of its kind in England, and contemporary comments make clear that it was widely respected and even influential" (55).

words to display—and perhaps more importantly—to evoke a certain image in the mind. Such display and evocation is the creative power of imagination, which also involves the possibility of imagination creating original images or ideas. Is imagination simply a reformation of sensory data and images from the memory, or can imagination create things that are new, also in the mind of a reader or listener? Are those new images or ideas dangerously heretical, or can they enhance a reader's understanding of things unseen—particularly of God? J. Paul Hunter writes that, in the early modern period, “Works of imagination were always associated with refusal to tell the truth or inability to distinguish reality from fantasy: either delusion was involved or seduction into irrational thoughts and hopes” (307). Yet Bacon's, Burton's, and Cavendish's works, for example, do not support Hunter's claim. In their texts on the faculty of imagination, these early modern thinkers do not dismiss creative imagination out of hand, but instead earnestly debate the position and value of imaginative texts. Rather than condemning imagination as heretical and dangerous when creating original texts and images, early modern theorists ponder how imagination can produce newness, and how that newness can impact people's relationships with one other, with the texts they read, and with God.

Searching for early modern authors' considerations of the creativity of imagination also addresses, therefore, the place and importance of originality and the creation of fictional literature in the period. Michael McKeon, tracing the origins of the English novel, describes early modern attitudes towards originality:

In the seventeenth century the standard defense against the charge of ‘newness’ was still the claim to be renewing or reforming the old. But the unprecedented (and unavoidable) experience of preserving the old in permanent, printed records enforced a sensitivity to, and an acceptance of, the undeniable newness that distinguished the present from the past. (46)

Faculty psychologists—those who divide the brain into the discrete faculties of sense, imagination, and memory, as I defined in the introduction—discuss imagination as a source of creativity and novelty and even question whether or not people, and not just poets,⁸⁴ can create something out of nothing, and whether that created fiction is valuable in any way.

⁸⁴ Philip Sidney famously, and with great critical attention, writes in *The Defence of Poesie*, “Onely the Poet, disdayning to be tied to any [...] subjection, lifted up with the vigor of his owne intention, dooth growe in effect into another nature, in making things either better then Nature bringeth forth, or, quite anewe; formes such as never were in nature, as the *Heroes*, *Demigods*, *Cyclops*, *Chimeras*, *Furies*, and such like: so as hee goeth hand in hand with *Nature*, not inclosed within the narrow warrant of her gifts, but freely ranging onely within the Zodiack of his owne wit” (88). Early modern faculty psychologists, however, do not limit such creativity to poets, but assign such power to all people.

William Perkins, like Thomas Wilson, debates the mechanisms by which people can deliberately transmit their imagination, and how others can perceive such transmissions. In *A Treatise of Mans Imagination*, Perkins questions how a person can know someone else's thoughts. He writes, "There are two waies to knowe mans thoughts: either directly without meanes, or indirectly by meanes" (23). Significantly, he does not discuss how to transmit thoughts, but how to discern other people's thoughts. It is more important, for Perkins, to know how to understand than to know how to be understood, for he emphasizes the unconscious transmission of imagination rather than its conscious dissemination. Truly knowing someone's thoughts, Perkins argues, is "proper to God alone: for no creature in heaven or earth can immediately and directly know the thoughts of man" (23-24). For Perkins, only God can understand a person's thoughts without needing an interpretive tool, and everyone else, by extension, must look for imagination by indirect means, and must examine the effects of imagination rather than imagination itself. Only God is able to understand the tenor without needing a vehicle. Still, Perkins offers his readers a number of ways to read other people "by meanes." To Perkins, the mind can only be understood via another object, so like metaphor, it can only be understood and made complete through the interaction between tenor—its true nature, which only God can know—and vehicle—the expressions of imagination that proceed out of the mind. Perkins lists three ways to know a person's mind indirectly: "by instinct from God; by revelation from the Scripture; and by signes" (24). "Instinct from God" is God's direct revelation, informing a person what someone is thinking. The second means, "revelation from Scripture," is given by God, but is less directly influenced by him. By Scripture, a person can know "the frame of the heart" (26), and so can generally comprehend the ways in which people think and act. The third means, "by signs," can be influenced by humans rather than just by God. Such signs include, according to Perkins, "speeches, and actions" (26). Indeed, Perkins writes unequivocally, "Mans thoughts are knowne by *signes*; as speeches, and actions" (26). For him, there are indirect ways to know man's thoughts—by revelation or Biblical truth—but the most immediate way to understand a person's thinking is to read his or her speeches or actions. Textual and artistic revelation, which is a person's representation of him or herself or of his or her thoughts, is an expression of the mind, and therefore also of imagination.

Although it may seem redundant and unnecessary to emphasize the imaginative element of literature, Perkins does not consider it so, for he carefully lists all the ways in which to understand another person's imagination, prescribing how his readers should understand the faculty. His equation of imagination and writing places his own text in a difficult position, for he had earlier condemned imagination as the evil thoughts of post-lapsarian people, and he now equates his own project with that imagination. Because his text is intended to guard against the evils of imagination and direct people to curb their wicked thoughts, Perkins's rehabilitation of imagination is built directly into his text. His book, itself a testament to his imagination—an imagination he encourages his readers to

understand—is written to control and curtail the excesses of Fallen imagination. Perkins's text wrestles with a question that Quarles also addresses in *Emblemes*: while reading the world is essential to a person's understanding of his or her position towards God and neighbours, the world itself is flawed. As part of the world, human communication and our understanding of it is also riddled with error, so the transmission of imagination, like any human endeavour, is at one and the same time useful and dangerous.

Unlike Perkins, who finds imagination in all "signes," Francis Bacon, in *Advancement of Learning*, makes an association between imagination and only poesy. Many of the implications of such a connection have already been explored in preceding chapters. Like Burton, although not as bluntly, Bacon affirms the power of imagination to generate newness, for he calls poesy "feigned history" (80), implying that poesy is original. He continues to explain that the use of such poesy

hath been to give some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it, the world being in proportion inferior to the soul; by reason whereof there is, agreeable to the spirit of man, a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety, than can be found in the nature of things. (80)

Imagination, through poesy, can create a world or a situation that is equal to the size of the soul, rather than the size of the world, for the soul is of greater magnitude than the world. Imagination's creative ability extends beyond the physical world and is not constrained by its limitations. Carson Bergstrom, rebelling against critics of Bacon who focus on and overemphasize his denunciation of poetry, protests: "Bacon's writing persistently relies on myth, allegory, and rhetorical figures as means for thinking through and conveying his philosophical ideas. He sees the poet as a legitimate intellectual type who rightly mines the resources of language to achieve valuable goals" (90). Indeed, Bacon writes that poesy has "some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind; whereas reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things" (81). Poesy, and therefore imagination, is not only greater than the world, but it is approaching godliness. Yet, for all its worth, poesy is not straightforward, for when he defines the different forms of poesy, such as parable, allusion, images, etc., Bacon calls poesy "paraboli-cal" (81), for it not only illustrates and makes clear, but it also obscures. Poesy simultaneously clarifies and conceals, and it therefore has paradoxical and contrary aims.⁸⁵ Poesy has power to illuminate and

⁸⁵ Bacon's sentiments about the ambiguity of metaphor and poesy are echoed in the oft-quoted opening letter to Raleigh of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. In that letter, Spenser names the *Faerie Queene*, "a continued Allegory, or darke conceit" (15).

obscure, but it is not a judicial form of creativity, Bacon contends. After he describes poesy and imagination, he instructs his reader to “pass on to the judicial place or palace of the mind, which we are to approach and view with more reverence and attention” (83). The imagination may have creative power, but it does not have judicial power as it does not directly affect the will. Poesy and imagination can help the mind to understand and be instructed, even in divine truths by means of parables, but imagination cannot and should not assist the mind in making rational choices.

When Bacon assigns imagination to poesy, he does so not only to assign it importance and value as a part of the mind’s functions, but also to exclude imagination from all other parts of learning. In the conclusion of his section on poesy, he writes that poesy is best suited to the “expressing of affections, passions, corruptions, and customs” (83). He continues, “We are beholding to poets more than to the philosophers’ works” (83). To describe emotion and passion and affection, poets are best suited and poesy best explains and showcases imagination. To Bacon, imagination is a creative force that brings forth poesy, and poesy is the best form to express imagination. Imagination does not apply to science or history, but only to works of creativity and fiction. As inclusive as he is of imagination as an essential part of human learning and understanding, Bacon neatly cuts imagination out of any writing or even thought that is not fictitious. There is no imagination, Bacon contends, that is not creative and literary.⁸⁶

In essays such as “Of Truth,” Bacon associates works of creativity and fiction, such as masques and mummeries (*Essays* 7), to untruth, and untruth correspondingly to imagination. To Bacon, the creative function of imagination shows untruth rather than truth. Bacon casts more aspersions on imagination and poetry in his essay “Of Unity in Religion.” He describes the disorder in heathen religions, and he blames that disorder on the composition of such religions which consist “rather in Rites and Ceremonies; then in any constant Beleeffe” (11). He asks a semi-rhetorical question when he writes, “What kinde of Faith theirs was, when the chiefe Doctors, and Fathers of their Church, were the Poets” (11). Poets cannot define truth, and, he argues, they cannot disseminate truth. The creative workings of the imagination are, to Bacon, dangerous and divisive. Nevertheless, he does say one positive thing about imagination in his *Essays*. He writes that poets are better equipped to write about infinite or non-material objects or ideas, for “in Poesy ... Transcendences are more allowed” (“Of Adversitie” 18). Imagination, through poetry, has the power to see and create beyond the natural world, but Bacon is undecided on whether or not those imaginings are useful or dangerous. The weakness of imagination, according to Bacon, is also its strength, for while it can invent and promote heresies, it also allows people to consider a

⁸⁶ Although best suited to poesy, imagination can still augment historical accounts, Bacon asserts. While history must accord with the natural order of events, poesy, because it is feigned, adds diversity and change: “Because true history representeth actions and events more ordinary and less interchanged, therefore poesy endueth them with more rareness, and more unexpected and alternative variations” (*Advancement* 80-81).

world beyond the physical, so without the imagination, people's conception of the divine would be hazy at best.

Another early modern theorist, Thomas Browne, in *Religio Medici*, speaks somewhat briefly but tantalizingly about imagination. In one of his references to imagination, he connects it to godly devotion: "In my solitary and retired imagination ... I remember I am not alone, and therefore forget not to contemplate Him and His Attributes Who is ever with me, especially those two mighty ones, His Wisdom and Eternity" (12). His imagination gives him the ability to think about God and to ponder God's influence in his life. Browne's assertion contrasts sharply with Hobbes's and Cavendish's, for both demur from imagining God or the divine. Browne, however, has no such compunction, and he describes imagination bringing him closer to God. Sharon Cadman Seelig goes so far as to argue that the relationship between divinity and selfhood is the concern of Browne's entire text: "*Religio Medici* has the self-approving quality of inner monologue, of a man talking to himself about himself, yet judging what he finds there worthy of praise, not for himself, but as a sign of divine providence and beneficence" (*Generating Texts* 66). When Browne ponders imagination's creative power, it is still in the context of the spiritual and divine world. He describes witches and spirits, ascribing many of the discoveries in the natural world to the influence of spiritual beings: "We do surely owe the discovery of many secrets to the discovery of good and bad Angels" (35). Browne echoes Wright's conviction that the imagination and human understanding are directly affected by spiritual beings: "Many mysteries ascribed to our own inventions have been the courteous revelations of Spirits" (35). Nevertheless, Browne's own relationship to the spiritual world comes through his retired imagination, so his imagination accesses the spiritual world, and the spiritual world is the place that brings forth inventions. Although Browne does not ascribe inventions and newness and creativity to the imagination, but rather to the spiritual world, his imagination is still connected to the process, because through his imagination, Browne meditates upon divinity, which is, according to him, the birthplace of invention.

While some early modern authors doubt whether or not imagination can compose new images and ideas, when Robert Burton introduces the faculty of imagination, he immediately associates it with creativity and originality. The imagination creates, according to Burton, images and impressions that the body has not seen, heard, smelled, tasted, touched, or remembered. It recombines what was already present in the common sense, but even more, it adds to that pool of data and is therefore a creative force. Burton describes the faculty of imagination borrowing from other faculties in the brain; it "doth more fully examine the species perceived by common sense, of things present or absent" (1.1.2.7.159) and, "In melancholy men this faculty is most powerful and strong, and often hurts, producing many monstrous and prodigious things, especially if it be stirred up by some terrible object, presented to it from common sense or memory" (1.1.2.7.159). The imagination, then, is the recombinant faculty in the brain, for its primary role and purpose is to incorporate images from the sense and the

memory and mingle them to create newness, as we will see Quarles doing in *Emblemes*. Burton's views on imagination were not unchallenged in the early modern period, for Thomas Hobbes writes in *Leviathan* that because the imagination can only work with images from the senses: "Whatsoever we imagine is *finite*. Therefore there is no idea, or conception of any thing we call *infinite*. No man can have in his mind an image of infinite magnitude; nor conceive infinite swiftness, infinite time, or infinite force, or infinite power" (31). Yet Burton continually asserts that imagination's ability to recombine borrowed images results in originality and invention. He follows his conclusion that imagination can "make new of his own" (1.1.2.7.159) with a further definition of the faculty: "His organ is the middle cell of the brain; his objects all the species communicated to him by the common sense, by comparison of which he feigns infinite other unto himself" (1.1.2.7.159). Because the imagination, by comparing images borrowed from the memory and common sense, can feign infinite newness from that recombination, Burton continues, "In poets and painters imagination forcibly works, as appears by their several fictions, antics, images: as Ovid's house of Sleep, Psyche's palace in Apuleius, etc" (1.1.2.7.159-160). His citation of classical literature is deliberate and rich, for by referring to works of classical literature, he is bolstering the worth of imagination, which had created original texts much valued in the Renaissance. His very act of citing classical examples also emphasizes that, according to Burton, the faculty of the imagination can invent novelty, but that newness is inextricably tied to borrowing and recombining.

Given its articulation of such a link between borrowing and novelty, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* no longer can be considered merely an encyclopedia of classical and medieval thought. Many critics of *The Anatomy* have debated the genre of the text, but perhaps Karl Höltgen describes it best when he writes that *The Anatomy* is "a compendium of classical and Renaissance learning, a treasury of quotations, extended self-revelation on the part of the author, a dialogue with the reader, a sermon on vanity, a treatise on consolation, medical and priestly advice in the event of adversity and suffering, and an attempt at self-healing through the act of writing" ("Literary Art" 2). I propose that Burton's definition of imagination unites—even if uneasily—the different elements of his text, and his tome can be properly named 'imaginative,' according to early modern definitions of that faculty. If imagination, according to Burton, recombines existing data in order to create newness, then Burton's text does the same—he combines current and historical ideas about melancholy, and unites them and recombines them in order to create a new treatise. In line with his conception of the imagination, then, Burton's borrowing is not just a rehashing of acknowledged wisdom, but his act of borrowing and recombining itself makes his text imaginative and original.

The creativity of imagination is not just one facet of the faculty that can be used or ignored at a writer's or reader's whim, according to Burton. For example, when he describes the imagination of poets and painters, he insists that imagination "forcibly works" (1.1.2.7.159). Imagination, in Burton's sentence, is

not the object of the verb, but the subject. According to the syntactical arrangement of the sentence, poets and painters are not using imagination, but imagination is working in poets and painters, and not just working, but forcibly working. The faculty of imagination takes over people who are producing art, and it operates violently and inexorably in those people to create fictions, antics, and images. Burton returns to the power and violence of imagination when he calls the influence of one person's mind on another's "the forcible imagination" (1.2.3.2.257).⁸⁷ The creative force of imagination is irresistible and inexorable.

Yet although Burton, when he defines imagination as a faculty in the brain, names its creativity "forceful," he spends comparatively little time discussing the creative power of imagination in his comprehensive chapter on imagination, "Of the Force of Imagination" (1.2.3.2.253-258). He only speaks of creative work when he describes people who recount dreams and revelation. He asks "how many chimeras, antics, golden mountains, and castles in the air do they build unto themselves! I appeal [sic] to painters, mechanics, mathematicians" (1.2.3.2.254). Burton links painters, mechanics, and mathematicians with his description of the impact of imagination on the body, thus linking creativity and the body, and in the rest of the chapter, Burton focuses his and his reader's attention on the physical influence of imagination. I do not believe that he is dismissing or discounting the creative aspect of imagination as less important than its power over the body, but he is, in fact, emphasizing and reinforcing the consequences of imagination's creativity. If imagination and fiction were commonly associated in the early modern period—as J. Paul Hunter also asserts—then Burton knows his readers will already link imagination and creativity in literary and visual art, and he wants his readers to understand that, if imagination impinges upon the body, and if they already know that imagination is transmitted via creative works, then those creative works, because they are filled with imagination, can influence the body and mind in significant and concrete ways. Perhaps even by not mentioning the creative transmission of imagination in great detail in the section "Of the force of imagination," Burton forces his readers to connect what they know about creativity and what he has explained about power over the body. Reading, seeing, and consuming works of art and literature, because those works and texts are created with the same imagination that can and does affect the body, will influence the mind and body of both the creator—the painter, poet, or even mathematician—and the viewer or reader.

Unlike Thomas Browne, Margaret Cavendish in the epilogue to her *Blazing World*—which Nicole Pohl names a "retreat to fancy and the celebration of the self" (61)—does not demur from naming herself as the source of her

⁸⁷ The violence of imagination working in the imaginant mirrors the forcefulness of much of the imagery in early modern devotional poetry. For example, Vaughan's frontispiece emblem in *Silex Scintillans* pictures a heart under attack. Irina Raicu considers the emblem evidence that, for Vaughan, "God's violence has released the poet's creative spark and has given him 'new life'" (96).

creativity. She explains and promotes the creative power of imagination at the end of her text in order to increase the value of her fictional utopia which is, she writes, “framed and composed of the most pure, that is, the rational parts of Matter, which are the parts of my mind” (250). Moreover, her imagination, and the task she accomplished in writing her text, was “easily and suddenly effected” (250). Imagination is both useful and simple to use, and it allows her to “take more delight and glory” (251). She also emphasizes that because her world is created from “the rational figures of [her] Mind” (251), her world is filled with peace, one religion, one government, one language, and wisdom. The creative power of imagination, then, literally makes new and can make the ideal. Cavendish emphasizes the materiality of the imagination, and she does not dismiss an imagined world as mere thought, without substance. As Gabrielle Starr explains, to Cavendish “Imagination gives the pleasures of autonomy because it gives access through itself and by virtue of itself to the material world and the forms within it *as they really are*: imagination is coextensive with the substance of the world and isomorphic with the forms of the world” (301). Like Bacon, who in *Advancement of Learning* writes that imagination can idealize a story, Cavendish cites imagination as superior even to empires in the physical world. In her imagination, she can esteem virtues over vices, and she can display a world which is, according to her, properly and well governed. Imagination, then, has the power to create new worlds, but it can also point out the defects in our world and in our understanding. Cavendish also considers the relationship between the reader and the author of her imagined world. She writes that “if any should like the World I have made, and be willing to be my Subjects, they may imagine themselves such, and they are such; I mean, in their Minds, Fancies, or Imaginations” (251). Cavendish puts the onus on her readers; if they want to participate in her text, they must use their imaginations in order to do so, and they cannot be a part of her imaginary world unless they also use their imaginations. They cannot be unwilling subjects of her imaginary world, for they must actively place themselves into her text and engage with it in the role that Cavendish has assigned for them. However, she does not limit readers’ imaginations, for she adds, “If they cannot endure to be subjects, they may create Worlds of their own, and Govern themselves as they please” (251). Jay Stevenson observes, “This cagey relativist remark offers a choice among imagined realities and orders. The alternative to Cavendish’s solipsistic empire is some other self-produced power. She suggests, then, that power and order are always self-produced and imaginary” (154). There is both a challenge and a taunt in Cavendish’s clause, for she is implying that, if readers are not satisfied with her world, they may attempt to make one as good, but they will most likely fail. Her world, Cavendish argues, is so wonderful that it would be difficult to create one better, for while she may doubt her reader’s ability to establish power, she does not limit her own ability. She does not curb her readers, however, but rather encourages them to go forth and imitate her creative power, if not her creation. She then adds to those readers who may want to compose their own creative world, “But yet let them have a

care, not to prove unjust Usurpers, and to rob me of mine” (251). She is claiming ownership of her creative imagination; her imagination may be in the public realm, but it may not be taken as someone else’s. It belongs to her—it grew in her mind, and although it entered the public realm by means of her text, the imagination still originates with her and belongs to her. Creativity, to Cavendish, should be considered a valuable object over which she can and does exercise ownership.

In *Poems and Fancies*, as the title of the text signals, Cavendish focuses intently on the nature and utility of the creative imagination. Indeed, almost every poem in her collection self-consciously considers the role of fancy and the poetic form. The best poetry, she asserts, should be neither imitative nor combinatory:

As *Birds*, to hatch their *Young* do sit in *Spring*,
Some *Ages* severall *Broods* of *Poets* bring;
Which to the *World* in *Verse* do sweetly sing.

Their *Notes* great *Nature* set, not *Art* so taught:
So *Fancies*, in the *Braine* that *Nature* wrought,
Are *best*; what *Imitation* makes, are naught.

(“Of Poets, and their Theft” 123)

In this poem, whose sentiments are already clearly portrayed by the combative title, “Of Poets, and their Theft,” Cavendish makes a firm distinction between imitating art and imitating nature, for the creative imagination takes its images only from nature, never from other art. Those who copy lines from other poets, she concludes, “By the *Poets Lawes* ... should be hang’d, / And in the *Hell* of *Condemnation* damn’d” (124). Cavendish writes harshly about poetic imitators to emphasize her own originality and transparency. Her poetry owes no debt to any other poet, she argues, but arises wholly from her own brain.

Her creativity is essential to her poems, for Cavendish proposes that her poems and fancies are material objects. They are not just ideas, thoughts, or sentiments, but have the weight and characteristics of physical entities. She introduces her materialistic view of poetry already in the Dedicatory Epistle to Sir Charles Cavendish and in the Epistle to the Reader when she compares her writing to the spinning of cloth, a metaphor I briefly discussed in chapter 2. Cavendish employs the image of spinning to her advantage by using it to emphasize that the exercise of fancy is especially appropriate to women: “*Poetry*, which is built upon *Fancy*, *Women* may claime, as a *worke* belonging most properly to themselves: for I have observ’d, that their *Braines* work usually in a *Fantasticall motion*; as in their *severall*, and *various dresses*, in their many and singular choices of *Cloaths*” (A3). Notice that Cavendish refers to women in the third person. She does not want to equate herself with women who use their fancies to choose fabrics and costumes; rather, Cavendish’s “*Silke*” (A3) is her writing, which she hopes will “please the *Readers*” (A3). What she creates with

her fancy is as tangible as a cloth spun from threads.⁸⁸ Cavendish demonstrates the materiality of her creative imagination in a poem near the end of her collection. In the poem, “Sir Charles into my chamber coming in,” Cavendish describes a conversation between herself and her brother-in-law. He asks her to give his greetings to Queen Mab, one of Cavendish’s subjects in *Poems and Fancies*. Her reaction portrays her understanding of her poetry:

When I *Queen Mab* within my Fancy view’d,
 My Thoughts bow’d low, fearing I should be rude;
 Kissing her Garment thin, which Fancy made,
 Kneeling upon a Thought, like one that pray’d;
 In whispers soft I did present
 His humble service, which in mirth was sent.
 Thus by imagination I have been
 In *Fairy Court*, and seen the *Fairy Queen*.
 For why, imagination runs about
 In every place, yet none can trace it out. (215-216)

In her imagination, Cavendish can approach and speak with Queen Mab, whose garments she has created in her poetry. Moreover, although “none can trace” the imagination, Cavendish personifies and materializes it by allowing it to “run about.” Although the imagination is untraceable, its effects are powerful and original, and its nimbleness allows Cavendish to “spin ... *Writings* from the *Braine*, / Striving to make a lasting *Web of Fame*” (“The worst Fate Bookes have, when they are once read” 215).

Cavendish does more than fashion her poetic images as material objects, however; she also correlates fancy and language itself. She introduces her conflation of fancy and language subtly. In “To Naturall Philosophers” she apologizes for her lack of knowledge about the English language, but she excuses herself by saying that there are different variations of the English language in almost every shire or village. She protests that even every family has its own language, “giving *Marks* for things according to their *Fancy*” (A6). “Fancy,” in context, is not a synonym here for imagination, but it means instead “preference” or “desire.” Nevertheless, Cavendish chooses her words very carefully, and in a text entitled *Poems and Fancies*, and in one that makes exhaustive reference to

⁸⁸ Emma Rees provides a detailed discussion of the importance of the metaphor of spinning. She argues, “Cavendish’s writing is seen as the natural, almost inevitable, consequence, of having an active imagination which might turn to less proper thoughts and activities if not occupied. Her rhetoric has transformed writing into a respectable pursuit for a woman, and the implication is that it operates with the same force, and to the same ends, as weaving did for Penelope” (173). For a thorough reading of Cavendish’s use of the spinning analogy in order to construct her authorial persona, see Sylvia Bowerbank, “The Spider’s Delight: Margaret Cavendish and the ‘Female’ Imagination,” *English Literary Renaissance* 14.3 (1984): 392-408.

‘fancy’ as imagination,⁸⁹ her use of the word evokes all the arguments she makes about the imagination as a moving, insistent, world-creating force, as I have demonstrated in earlier chapters. All people use “Fancy,” therefore, to define and create language, giving “marks for things.” In the rest of her text, Cavendish places increasing emphasis on the inseparability of language and fancy. After she writes a letter to poets, for example, Cavendish addresses her readers directly and cautions them:

I must entreat my *Noble Reader*, to read this part of my *Book* very slow, and to observe very strictly every word they read; because in most of these *Poems*, every word is a *Fancy*. Wherefore if they loose, by not marking, or skip by too hasty reading, they will intangle the *Sense* of the whole *Copy*. (123).

Cavendish does not write that her words merely contain or describe imagination; her words are fancies, and language and imagination are inextricably united, at least in her writing. While “every word is a *Fancy*” in her poetry, she writes that “Most of our *Moderne Writers* now a daies, / Consider not the *Fancy*, but the *Phrase*” (“Most of our *Moderne Writers* now a daies” 124), and concludes:

But *Fancy* is the *Eye*, gives *Life* to all;
Words, the *Complexion*, as a *whited Wall*.
Fancy is the *Form*, *Flesh*, *Blood*, *Bone*, *Skin*;
Words are but *Shadowes*,⁹⁰ have no *Substance* in.
 (“Most of our *Moderne Writers* now a daies” 125)

Words are nothing, she argues, without imagination, and no one can write anything meaningful if it lacks fancy. She also gives fancy a material form—“*Form*, *Flesh*, *Blood*, *Bone*, *Skin*”—which is possible because her imagination creates physical objects, which means that imagination not only influences the body, as I established in the previous chapter, but is itself a body. Her argument in *Poems and Fancies* is cyclical: fancy makes words material and original and words (because she uses them to craft her poetry and prose) make fancy material.

⁸⁹ For only a few examples of Cavendish’s many poems that discuss fancy and imagination in *Poems and Fancies*, see “The Reason why the Thoughts are onely in the Head” (42), “It is hard to beleive [sic], that there are other Worlds in this World” (43), “Similizing Fancy to a Gnat” (151), “Poets have most Pleasure in this Life” (152), and “The Fairies in the Braine, may be the causes of many thoughts” (163).

⁹⁰ The word “shadow” has a number of different possible connotations. Isabel Rivers writes that “shadow” is an early modern synonym for “type,” but she adds, “There is a problem for modern readers in that ‘shadow’ is sometimes used with a Platonic rather than a typological meaning” (139). Whether Cavendish’s “shadow” is typological or Platonic, fancy is the substance to which words can only point.

To Cavendish, therefore, the most dangerous use of the creative imagination is its non-use, for without it, language is powerless and literally immaterial.

For every valuable application of the creative imagination, many early modern theorists argue, there is abuse. The imagination allows a person to read the physical world as a set of metaphors for the presence and work of God, but because the physical world is flawed, any reading of it is also necessarily incomplete. Imagination can create an idealized world, a world as it should be, but it can also create ideas contrary to the Bible and therefore promote heresy. As well, thinkers question the source of imagination—does it arise from sensory impressions from the Fallen world, or is it inspired by God and angels? Imagination's creativity, because of early modern definitions of the faculty, also arises in unexpected places, such as in the recombined borrowings from previously published sources. Literary and fictional imagination is, according to early modern explanations, ubiquitous in early modern texts, and self-conscious creativity is not exclusive to eighteenth-century and Romantic works. Although early modern thinkers may have debated the value of fiction, they did not damn it or deny its existence in their texts. Instead, because of their concern for the possible immoral uses of fiction, they are all the more self-conscious and self-aware of the implications of imagination's creative possibilities.

Imagination's creative force is the culmination and publicizing of its other characteristics: its location, its control, and its force. Its creativity arises out of and must be considered in connection with its other characteristics, and thus I have looked for imagination's creative power in texts that deal primarily with the philosophical, psychological, and physical nature of the faculty of imagination. The creative elements of imagination result from its central location, are affected by various control structures, and in turn cause physical responses in the body of the imaginant and others. All the understanding of imagination and its effects are transmitted by language, the means by which imagination enters public consciousness. Thus, any discussion of imagination relates to discussions of language—its power, its efficacy, and its communal nature. Language, as many early modern theorists hint at and gesture towards, but Margaret Cavendish states unequivocally, is constituted by imagination, thereby giving imagination incredible power and responsibility. The almost frenzied concern that early modern writers display for precise definitions and clear descriptions of imagination demonstrates their acknowledgement of and unease with the centrality of imagination. As Todd Butler argues, "Through language the imagination enables human communication and the creation of societies, yet without a common authority or definitions, language also provides an avenue for confusion, ambition, and social dissolution" (181). When imagination, through language, leaves the body and mind of the imaginant—when, for example, authors disseminate their texts to readers—authors lose control of the reception and consequences of their imaginations, for it will in turn impact the imaginations of readers. The reader's imagination, then, which is itself an imagined space in the mind of the author, is the site which early modern authors attempt to control in

order to minimize the autonomy of the powerful imagination. While they arouse imagination, they attempt to channel it by means of concrete images, warnings against reveries, and invocations of God's providence. Francis Quarles's *Emblemes* will serve as our example of how an author attempts to navigate himself and his readers through the stormy sea of imagination and fiction towards godly living and devotion.

Francis Quarles's *Emblemes*: Creating Devotion

The creative power of imagination, either consciously or unconsciously, infiltrates every early modern literary work. Francis Quarles's 1635 *Emblemes*, a highly popular text in the seventeenth century, is no exception, for its use of images, its negotiation between borrowing and originality, and its creation of an idealized world depend upon and kindle the faculty of imagination. Of all genres, emblems, I propose, pertain particularly to the imagination because they deliberately appeal to many senses and they demand the conjuncture of sensory data in order to create meaning. Any text, especially in the early modern period, when the majority of poems were meant to be read aloud, triggers the sense of hearing. Although any printed or written text is visual as well as aural because it is printed words on a page, text does not contain the same visual stimulant as does an emblematic image, which demands the silent attention of sight. Emblems, because they feature both an image—the *pictura*—and text—the motto and epigram or poem—accompanying the image, require both the sense of sound and of sight in order for the emblem to be understood holistically and metaphorically. The recombining of the sight and sound sensory data provided by the emblem is performed in and by the imagination.

Quarles's emblem book was an unmitigated success both in his lifetime and after, going through approximately 50 reprints (Gilman, *Iconoclasm* 85), making it one of the most reproduced texts of the seventeenth century. The *picturae* of Quarles's emblems are taken from two Jesuit emblem books, the anonymous *Typus Mundi* and Herman Hugo's *Pia Desideria* (Bath and Willsher 171). Although Quarles's emblems feature some changes to a few of the images, and the poems that accompany each *pictura* are Quarles's own invention, most of his *picturae* are identical to those of *Typus Mundi* and *Pia Desideria* (Höltgen, "Catholic Pictures" 232). The *picturae*, bolstering the poems, are essential to the power and impact of Quarles's emblem book, for, as Elizabeth Hill argues,

The replication, or near duplication, of visual and verbal images reinforces the ideas and attitudes in the poem and is especially helpful in a didactic genre. ... Because of its almost hypnotic effect and highly mnemonic nature, the emblem was really a very powerful genre. ("Joy and Anguish" 17)

Quarles's text has received mixed current critical reception, although commentators have grown increasingly admiring of *Emblemes* in opposition to Rosemary Freeman's often quoted and rightly vehemently opposed assertion that Quarles "had an epigrammatic style, an eye for parallels, a trick of taking the reader into his confidence; he had a fondness for compound epithets which looked impressive and yet could easily be reduced to their simple parts, and thus afforded the reader a pleasant sense of intellectual achievement without overmuch intellectual effort" (126). William McQueen damns Quarles with faint praise when he writes that Quarles's text "is one of the few Emblem books in which the poetry sometimes merits attention for its own sake" (vii), and I.M. Smart displays a similarly lukewarm reaction to Quarles by writing, "Although he is not now considered a writer of outstanding importance, it cannot be doubted that any scholar who ignored his works would form only an incomplete image of Caroline literary tastes" (192). Mary V. Silcox, on the other hand, writes that "it is certainly time for a reconsideration of [*Emblemes's*] virtues" (374) and that Quarles's "verse is ... filled with the clever wordplay of wit" (375). In its self-conscious consideration of the interplay between image and text, and between imagination and devotion, Quarles's text demonstrates a nuanced debate about the role of imagination in forms of meditation.

Like other Protestant writers who use emblems as devotional tools, Quarles wrestles with the relationship between word and image in his text. Ernest Gilman's summary of the discordance between word and image in Quarles's *Emblemes* is worth quoting at length:

Whereas a Leonardo might base a defense of painting on the Platonic and Christian ground, endorsed by Augustine, that the sense of sight is the highest of the faculties, a Protestant reader of Augustine would also find ample reason for distrusting the visual arts: the divine medium is the creating Word, and the Christian must beware of the enticements of the eye and the delusions of the visual imagination. That suspicion is all the more deeply rooted in the great devotional poetry of the seventeenth century, with its preference for notations of the dramatic voice and the mind in motion over composed pictorial structures. (*Iconoclasm* 88)

Like Herbert, Quarles must justify his use of the visual imagination—all the more obvious in his text because of the prevalent picturae—as an allowable Protestant device. Gilman contends that Quarles attempts to use his text to destabilize and overshadow the images, thereby making the emblems self-consuming: "inviting inspection and demolition at the same time" (*Iconoclasm* 93). Later critics have demonstrated that Gilman's analysis is incomplete. Dale Randall, for example, writes,

If one hesitates to call the images that *do* appear here—verbal and pictorial alike—self-consuming, it is not merely because one may return to them again and again or because they are so insistently and universally durable, but also because the poem itself suggests that a continuing awareness of the nature of the meager light which illumines this world is necessary for anyone who aspires to enjoy the brilliance of the light that is to come. (99)

Due to the presence in each emblem of *pictura* and poem—both forms stimulating the imagination—Quarles's text self-consciously negotiates the existence and potential of the creative power of imagination. Because he calls on his readers' imaginations to form and decipher the metaphors necessary for the comprehension of the emblems, and because imagination is so clearly stirred by the pictorial images in the text, Quarles's discussion and defense of imagination as a creative and meditative force is especially urgent for his textual endeavour.

Although Quarles uses the word 'fancy' infrequently and the word 'imagination' never in *Emblemes*, he nonetheless addresses generally the definitions and characteristics of the faculty of imagination as they are designated by writers like Bacon, Burton, and Cavendish. For example, in the Invocation to Book 1, Quarles outlines the relationship between reason and passion: "Let Reason curbe / Thy hot-mouth'd Passion; and let heav'ns fire season / The fresh Conceits of thy corrected Reason" (22-24). Reason, Quarles contends, must control the passions, which are, according to a thinker such as Thomas Wright, deeply influenced by the imagination. When Quarles asserts that reason itself must be corrected by heaven, he echoes the sentiments of men like Thomas Browne and Thomas Wright, who argue that imagination is impacted by supernatural forces. As well as defining the interaction between the passions and the reason, Quarles also recognizes the relationship between the body and the soul or the heart, when he writes to his readers in the same Invocation to Book 1, "Cast off these dangling Plummets, that so clog / Thy lab'ring heart, which gropes in this dark fog / Of dungeon earth" (13-15). He continues, "Let not the frailty of thy flesh disturbe / Thy new-concluded peace" (21-22). Quarles writes that the body can affect the movement and even the salvation of the heart and soul, but its impact is generally negative, so the reader must labour to free, metaphorically, the soul from the detriment of the weighty body. Like Renaissance treatises on the imagination, Quarles's text highlights the mind's relationship with other parts of a person—the passions, the body, the heart and the soul.

Not only does Quarles place the mind in relation to other facets of human existence, he also comments extensively on the nature of the mind itself. In many emblems, Quarles focuses on the characteristics of the mind, and he analyzes its worth as a moral guide and a meditative aid. In one emblem, number 8 in Book 1, which pictures a laughing soul next to a bubble world (see Appendix 2), Quarles speaks of the brain using language familiar from texts by Bright, Wright, and Burton:

The world's a popular disease, that raignes
 Within the froward heart, and frantick braines
 Of poore distemper'd mortals, oft arising
 From ill digestion, through th' unequall poysing
 Of ill-weigh'd Elements, whose light directs
 Malignant humors to maligne Effects. (1.8.1-6)

In this emblem, Quarles describes the effects of the humours on the body and mind, and he metaphorically depicts the world as a disease. Such an imbalance of the humours, which Bright, Wright, and Burton also describe, causes the brain to become frantic, so, like theorists of imagination, Quarles ascribes a frantic brain to a disordered body. Quarles's metaphor demonstrates that ideas about medicine and the relationship between the body and the mind have seeped into literature as well, so while thinkers such as Bright and Burton, for example, attempt to demonstrate and prove that a body-mind connection exists, Quarles takes that connection as a given and uses it as a metaphor for a theological and moral idea about the malignancy of the world. Then, following his comparison of the world to a disease, in the next emblem, which depicts death and time stepping on an overturned world (see Appendix 3), Quarles illustrates and doubts the solidity and permanence of the brain. He opines,

Nor length of dayes, nor solid strength of Braine
 Can find a place wherein to rest secure;
 The world is various, and the Earth is vaine;
 There's nothing certaine here; there's nothing sure. (1.9.41-44)

The brain, Quarles concludes, can give no solidity to the searching soul, the soul seeking a secure home in God. The brain cannot provide such a resting place; rather, "braine" rhymes in the following line with "vaine," so the brain, like the earth, is vain, and in itself can provide no salvation or security to the soul. The brain, which can easily be made frantic by the body, is itself untrustworthy and changeable, according to Quarles.

Highlighting the lack of solidity in the brain, emblem 2 of book 2, picturing an imp unable to stretch his arms around the earth (see Appendix 4), characterizes the brain as motion, just as Cavendish does in *Poems and Fancies*. In emblem 2.2, Quarles calls the brain "the busie Mint" (10). Calling the brain a "mint" ascribes to it the ability to create, to make new coins that are valuable and worth trading, thereby calling attention to the creative power of the imagination. However, as Quarles writes,

The busie Mint
 Of our laborious thoughts is ever going;
 And coyning new desires, desires, not knowing

Where next to pitch; but, like the boundlesse Ocean
 Gaine, and gaine ground, and grow more strong by motion. (2.2.10-14)

Such motion is not like a physical mint, helpful or productive, but instead it causes restlessness and useless toil; rather than coining valuable currency, the brain produces only “new desires.” The motion of the brain, according to Quarles, while it may be creative, is not a source of security or rest, but an agitated force that keeps us from God. In a later emblem, book 3, emblem 11, featuring Divine Love rescuing the soul from an engulfing flood (see Appendix 5), Quarles again assigns motion to the brain when he, like Burton, compares a person to a ship: “The world’s a Sea; my flesh, a ship, that’s man’d / With lab’ring Thoughts; and steer’d by Reasons hand” (3.11.1-2).⁹¹ According to the metaphor, Quarles writes, “The Top-saile is my Fancy; and the Gusts / That fill these wanton Sheets, are worldly Lusts” (3.11.5-6). The fancy, to Quarles, is especially susceptible to lusts, and as a guide to the ship of flesh, it leads in a worldly direction because it is propelled by lusts rather than by winds that could be directing the soul on its pilgrimage to God, a journey the text generally describes. In his text, then, Quarles’s approach to imagination is not to dismiss it, but to assign it to the world, a part of the struggles that keep a person grounded in this world rather than in heaven, where God is. Yet Quarles demands that his readers use their imaginations to conflate pictura and motto and poem, and likewise compels them to use their imaginations to understand the metaphors that litter his book. Imagination, therefore, is in a fraught position in Quarles’s text; it is both part of the world that keeps his readers from heaven, and also part of the text and the emblematic form that lead his readers to a deeper understanding of God.

Yet can Quarles’s emblems even be considered an example of creative imagination? His text is full of, indeed, primarily composed of, borrowed, unoriginal material. As we have seen, his picturae are taken, with only a few exceptions, unaltered from two previously published emblem books, and his emblem’s mottos are likewise borrowed, this time from the Bible. Instead of creating his own adage or aphorism, Quarles takes his emblems’ titles directly from Scriptural sources. In fact, in emblem 9 of book 5, which will serve as well as any other emblem as an example of the arguably unoriginal content of the text, Quarles pairs his borrowed pictura with Philippians 1:23, the same verse Hugo cites in his emblem book from which the pictura is taken. The pictura itself depicts a common emblematic motif: the winged soul reaches towards heaven, but a heavy weight, in this case, the globe, is tied to her leg, pulling her back towards the earth (see Appendix 6). Then, immediately following the poem that accompanies each emblem, Quarles often cites a text from a Patristic source, in the case of emblem 9 of book 5, from Bonaventure. Quarles then ends each

⁹¹ Burton uses a very similar metaphor in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* when he compares people to ships that should be steered by reason—the rudder—as I discussed in an earlier chapter.

emblem with a four line epigram. Of the five parts of each of his emblems, then—motto, pictura, poem, Patristic quotation, and epigram—three are directly lifted from other sources. Like Burton, Quarles composes his work of what we might consider to be unoriginal reuse of previously published material.

Yet Quarles's emblems, like Burton's *Anatomy*, are no simple reproduction of earlier texts. After the borrowed pictura and motto, Quarles supplies an original poem which often complicates the reader's interpretation of the emblem as a whole. In the scriptural context of emblem 5.9's motto, the speaker is Paul, but Quarles's poem assigns another, and perhaps many different other, speakers to take on the first person point of view. The poem begins with a plural voice, which asks about "our carefull parents" (1), who labour in vain to provide us, their children, with an earthly inheritance which is only a burden to their children, already weighed down with the sinfulness of the world. In the first three stanzas of the poem, Quarles makes a deliberate attempt to distance his interpretation of the motif of the winged and weighted figure from the interpretations of earlier emblem writers, such as Geoffrey Whitney who uses a similar pictura to describe the poverty-stricken plight of a poet.⁹² Quarles spends so much time discussing the pitfalls of money and riches in the world that he appears to be setting his emblem as a polar opposite to Whitney's, and thereby proclaiming the non-borrowed status of his emblem, which is still clearly based on borrowed elements. Even his attempt to separate his emblem from earlier emblems using the same motif demonstrates Quarles's awareness of and concern for the borrowed status of the motif. The shifting voice in the poem continues in the second stanza, where the speaker's voice becomes "I," but not the same "I" as the speaker of Philippians 1:23. In the fourth stanza, the speaker mentions another character: "She:" "She darkens my complaints, and drags my Off'ring downe" (28). That "she" appears to be the personified Earth. In the next stanza, "she" is the hawk who, like the soul in the pictura, is restrained in her attempted flight. Then, in stanza 6, "she" is now the soul who cannot rise to God as she wishes. In desperation, the speaker calls out to God, and in the final two stanzas, the speaker and the soul are united, for when the "soule directs her better eye" (36), "I," the speaker cries out, "spread my willing wings, but cannot flie" (38). The proliferation of different voices and points of view in the poem forces the reader to read attentively, to question the identity of the central figure in the pictura, and to take on various points of view within and outside the image. Like the emblem itself, which is composed of connected yet disparate elements, the poem cannot be

⁹² Whitney writes in the epigram of emblem 152, whose *pictura* depicts a man with one winged arm and one arm tied to a rock,

I shewe their state, whose witte, and learninge, ofte
 Excell, and woulde to highe estate aspire:
 But povertie, with heavie clogge of care,
 Still pulles them down, when they ascending are. (9-12)

read without careful attention to the shifting—of multiple speakers, points of view, and themes—in its form and content.

The multiplicity of voices in the poem echoes the interplay between the rest of the elements of the emblem. The quotation from Bonaventure, for example, ignores the poem almost completely and takes up the theme of the motto of the emblem, speaking about the dissolving of the Christian into Christ. Although the speaker of the poem proclaims that the soul has “willing wings,” the following citation addresses Jesus and asks that he cause the soul to desire Christ alone. While the poem asserts that the soul is willing and eager to be united with God, the quotation from Bonaventure implies that the soul’s desire for Christ is not strong enough and needs to be bolstered by Jesus before it can “sweetly rest” in him. The borrowed quotation and the invented poem, then, do not fit seamlessly together, and the emblem’s epigram only compounds the problem. The epigram rebukes the soul and contradicts the poem. The poem seems to align perfectly with the motto and the *pictura*, but the epigram calls that alignment into question, for it chastises the soul for not recognizing the worth of the world that the soul claims is stopping her from reaching Christ. “Art will prevaile where knotty strength denies; / My soule, there’s *Aqua fortis* in thine eyes” (3-4), the epigram scornfully declares. Yet the reader should not accept blindly the authority of the epigrams, which, throughout the text, often disagree or argue with the sometimes multiple speakers of the poems. Michael Bath reminds us that “Quarles is the author of these Epigrams just as he is author of the poems on which they comment and whose voices they so often quarrel with, overturn, or contradict” (213). What is the purpose of the manifold voices in the emblems—the voice of the soul, the speaker who refers to the soul in the third person, the quotations from the Bible and from famous theologians, and the voice of the contentious epigram? Perhaps Quarles is attempting to combat the solitude of the *pictura* of emblem 5.9, which, like some other emblems, depicts a single soul caught in some moral dilemma. Indeed, each *pictura* that portrays only the soul is conspicuous for the absence of the Divine Love.⁹³ The varying voices in the emblems remind the reader that he or she is part of a community, not just of readers, but of Christian pilgrims. The multiple voices also encourage readers to enter into the debate—to take on a single or multiple point of view and become actively involved in the dialogue of the emblems, thereby participating in critical and self-aware devotion.

Quarles’s numerous speakers force readers to engage with the emblems, becoming active participants in the soul’s often frustrated journey. Hill writes, “Quarles’ *Emblemes* are certainly no mere translation or adaptation of a Continental source. ... In a close comparison of the poems it is clear that Quarles artistically transformed his source, and one of his methods is dramatic” (“Quarles

⁹³ The two figures prevalent in *Emblemes* are “Amor divinus or Divine Love and the Soul, the latter being sometimes represented as Amor humanus, Human or Worldly Love” (Höltgen, “*Religious Emblems*” 108).

as dramatist” 174). Höltgen agrees, writing that “Quarles’s emblem pictures look less like compositions of static symbols and more like semidramatic, masque-like *tableaux vivants* or allegorical scenes” (“Critical Perspectives” 12). Like characters in a play, the different borrowed or invented parts of Quarles’s emblems interact with each other, and the originality in the emblem, then, is in that recombination. The motto, pictura, poem, quotation, and epigram do not easily mesh together; rather, they alternately scorn, mock, or ignore each other, leaving the reader to traverse the gaps between the emblem’s different sections. Such gaps, as Tilottama Rajan also argues, compel the reader to engage with the text, for “the emblematic separation of picture from poem, of the riddle from its explanation, forces the mind to struggle in order to decode a metaphysical significance not immediately given in the physical realm” (205). The newness of the emblem, like the newness in Burton’s *Anatomy*, lies not only in the invented, creative parts of the text, but in the interaction between the elements the author borrows from other sources. How that interaction functions relies on and appeals to the reader’s imagination, which is the recombination centre in the brain, so that the novelty in the emblem is an active process that must be carried out in the minds of readers. As demonstrated in Burton and Quarles, then, the distinction between what is borrowed and what is new is blurred and indistinct, for the recombination of borrowings is itself imaginative, and therefore, novel.

Although Quarles creates perceptual gaps between the different elements of his emblems to encourage his readers to make connections of their own, and to deal actively with the text, he is still concerned to mediate his readers’ understanding of the emblems. Quarles does not want to give the creativity of imagination *carte blanche*, for its invention, he demonstrates in a number of emblems, can be misleading and heretical. In emblem 6 of book 2, for instance, Quarles describes a mirror and the misrepresentation it allows (See Appendix 7). He cautions his reader that, without God, “Shee” (23), Vanity, can make the person looking into the mirror seem better, more beautiful, and larger than he or she really is. Such an exaggeration results from the position of light, for when the source of light is far removed, shadows appear longer and larger, but, close to the light source, shadows shrink. Quarles uses properties of light to demonstrate that, in the light of heaven, people appear as they are, and do not look greater than they really are. He writes, “The soule that seeks the noone of Grace, / Shrinks in; but swells, if Grace retreat” (43-44). Readers’ proximity to God, Quarles argues, affects their perception of themselves. Sight, therefore, is untrustworthy, for it will change and distort depending on a person’s relationship with God. Quarles advises his readers: “Looke off; let not thy Opticks be / Abus’d; thou see’st not what shouldst: / Thy selfe’s the Object thou should’st see” (31-33). Rather than having his readers falsely imagine the bounties of the world and the greatness of the individual, Quarles exhorts them to have their sight and understanding—two faculties closely tied to the imagination—dependent upon God. In emblem 2.6, Quarles agrees with Bacon and Sidney that the creativity of imagination can idealize the world and can make a story moral rather than factual. Nevertheless,

Quarles warns against such use of imagination because it can inflate the value of the self, and can make people believe they are greater than or as great as God. Nevertheless, just as in emblem 5.9, in which the different elements of the emblem fit together uneasily, so in emblem 2.6, the quotation from Hugo accompanying the emblem exhorts the soul to imagine its self rather than God. “The best looking glasse wherein to see thy God, is perfectly to see thy selfe,” the citation reads. The word “perfectly” brings the quotation into alignment with the poem and epigram, however, for it urges people to see themselves as they really are, not as they would like to be. Rather than being uplifting, as Bacon argues imagination can be when it portrays the ideal instead of the real, Quarles argues that imagination creates only shadows. Those imagined shadows are not harmless fancies, but have deadly consequences, for, according to Quarles, imagination’s creative power is a dangerous source of heresy when it raises up what should be lower than God.

Quarles argues in *Emblemes* that the imagination can do more than lead a person away from God; the imagination can itself be misled. Already in the beginning of the text, in the letter to “My much honoured, and no lesse truly beloved Friend Edw. Benlowes *Esquire*,” Quarles writes that “Toyish Ayres please triviall eares; They kisse the fancy, and betray it” (A2V). The fancy is susceptible to trivialities, but it will be betrayed by such “toyish ayres.” What at first seems attractive to the imagination and captivates it will lead it away from God, Quarles cautions. Indeed, after the toyish ayres “kisse the fancy, and betray it,” “They cry, *Haile*, first; and, after, *Crucifie*” (A2V). In his metaphor, Quarles emphasizes the vulnerability of imagination and its attraction to new, fanciful conceits, but he also compares the fancy to Christ, who was also betrayed and crucified. Yet in the context of the letter, the crucifixion of the fancy does not share the positive results of Christ’s crucifixion, for the betrayal of the fancy brings no redemption or salvation. Instead, the misleading of the fancy leads a person away from the true crucifixion of Christ, and causes a person to needlessly suffer, in vain. Quarles’s comparison between the fancy and Christ’s crucifixion is two-fold, then. Not only does Quarles highlight the gravity and deadliness of the betrayal of the fancy by toyish ayres, but he also uses familiar language to demonstrate how those toyish ayres could mislead the fancy. Like the mirror in emblem 2.6 that both reflects and distorts, toyish ayres represent themselves using biblical language, but they have no substance, and therefore betray the easily confounded fancy. Through his prefatory letter to Benlowes, then, Quarles distances his own text from dangerous toyish ayres, and he warns his readers to protect their imaginations from grand-sounding but meaningless trivialities. Throughout his text, Quarles emphasizes the dangers in and to imagination, for when imagination leads the reader away from God, by means of trivial or untrue novelties, then imagination must be stopped from either producing or accepting heresy.

As he considers the imagination’s position as both the creator and the victim of heresy, Quarles continues to struggle with the position of the world and

the imagination as a possible meditative tool. Throughout his text, he describes the importance of reading the world, but also the danger of dwelling upon the world and using it emblematically. For example, in his “To the reader,” Quarles asks, “And, indeed, what are the Heavens, the Earth, nay every Creature, but *Hieroglyphicks* and *Emblemes* of His Glory?” (A3). All creation, Quarles opines, is profitable as an emblematic reflection of God’s glory, and the world is therefore a book to be read in order to understand God metaphorically. Quarles demonstrates such a reading of the world in emblem 9 of book 4, in which he tells his readers to read the face, expressions, and sounds of an infant in order to understand the sacrifice of Christ and the magnitude of each person’s sin. The baby, a part of creation, is to be read as a text, just as Quarles’s book is to be read. Quarles considers his emblems tools with which his readers can read the entire world metaphorically to see the importance of Christ and their own salvation all around them in nature and in different situations. In fact, in the poem of emblem 2.2, Quarles addresses readers directly and tells them to put what they have learned from the emblem book into practice: “Now, reader, close thy Booke, and then advise: / Be wisely worldly; be not worldly wise” (2.2.45-46). The reader must not end with Quarles’s book, but must use it as a beginning in order to read the world all around and to encounter the world creatively and actively. Although Quarles feels concern for the imagination’s ability to misrepresent the self, like Bacon he exhorts his readers to use their imaginations to see the world how it should be, rather than as it is. The imagination and its creative power can and must read morality and ethics into the world.

Quarles qualifies his instruction, for he advises that reading the world must be done selectively and creatively. In the Entertainment of Book 3, Quarles considers the place of the earth as a devotional tool: “Shake hands with earth, and let your soule respect / Her Joyes no further than her Joyes reflect / Upon her Makers Glory” (23-5). As he does in “To the Reader,” Quarles encourages Christian pilgrims to see the world as a representation of God’s glory, but he also warns them not to idolize the earth, but to read the earth only inasmuch as it reflects upon God. The creativity of imagination is therefore only good and useful in a devotional context when it is limited by the earth itself, which only represents the glory of God in an incomplete manner. Hobbes likewise asserts that imagination is constrained by the physical world. Imagination should creatively emphasize only what is devotionally useful and to God’s glory in the earth. Allowing his readers no misunderstanding, Quarles again discusses the importance of the world in emblem 6 of book 5, where he describes both the utility of the earth and the relationship of the earth and the speaker. He gives an encouragement and a warning when he writes, for example, “She [the earth] is my tender Nurse; she gives me food: / But what’s a Creature, Lord, compar’d with Thee? / Or what’s my mother, or my nurse to me?” (5.6.4-6). The earth, while useful because it is given by God, is still inadequate because it is not God himself, but is only a creation of the Lord. Nevertheless with God’s presence, Quarles argues, earth is more than simply non-dangerous; it gives spiritual refreshment

and recreation. Quarles writes, in the same emblem, “Without Thy presence, Earth gives no Refection” (5.6.25). Only when the earth is redeemed and made useful by God is it an aid for meditating on God and can it offer succor to the suffering soul.

Yet although Quarles advances the world as a profitable source of meditation, he also continually emphasizes the dangers of reading the world, and he highlights the trap that the world can be to unsuspecting Christians. The false seductions of the world and the pitfalls of earthly delights figure strongly in many emblems in the text. In emblem 3 of book 1, for example, Quarles compares the world to a bee hive: “The world’s a Hive, / From whence thou canst derive / No good, but what thy soules vexation brings” (1.3.7-9). He exclaims: “What’s earth? or in it, / That longer than a minit / Can lend a free delight, that can endure?” (1.3.37-39). According to Quarles, the world is only a source of pain and confusion, so while reading it as a meditative tool is possible and necessary, it is also dangerous. He warns his readers not to place their trust in the world, which is only an uneasy devotional object, in the epigram of the following emblem, which depicts the world and a bubble weighed in a scale:

My soule; What’s lighter than a feather? Wind:
 Than wind? The fire: And what than fire? The mind:
 What’s lighter than the mind? A thought: Than Thought?
 This bubble-world: What, than this Bubble? Nought. (Epigram 1.4.1-4)

Thought, or imagination, is only one degree weightier than the world itself, which is but a bubble, a metaphor that Quarles uses often in his text to describe the world. To place one’s trust in a bubble is utter foolishness, and thoughts are almost as light and as untrustworthy as the earth itself. If thoughts are so light, then thinking about earth and even thinking about heaven is of little worth, for thoughts have no power to redeem. Thoughts themselves are trapped in the weightlessness of the world, so Quarles presents a thorny problem to the reader: how can a person use his or her very light thoughts to meditate upon God? If the world is light, and thoughts are only slightly heavier, then reading the light world with light thoughts is almost a futile endeavour. Quarles expands his paradox in emblem 5.9, in which he writes that the earth is not only light, but it is also corrupt. The speaker of the poem of emblem 5.9 concludes, “I cannot think a thought which earth corrupts not; / I cannot speake a word which earth prophanes not” (5.9.23-24). Not only is reading the world dangerous because it can lead a person away from God, but thoughts themselves have no power to redeem the world in a useful manner, to see only the good in the world, because thoughts are simply too light to perform such a task. Moreover, thoughts are also corrupted by the world from which they arise. Quarles thus destabilizes the value of his own text, for it too is part of the bubble-light world and the corrupt earth. How, then, can it lead readers to a better understanding of themselves, and of God and the means to God? Instead of simply writing that imagination’s creative power is only

good when directed towards understanding God, Quarles doubts that imagination, or the reader, has any power to approach God at all, for we are grounded as a part of the world. How, then, can readers create the necessary distance between themselves and the world in order to read creation as a means to God? If readers are so much a part of this world that they cannot examine the world without seeing themselves—like looking in a mirror—how can they reflect the glory of God rather than the vainglory of the self?

According to Quarles, neither he nor his readers can do any reflecting or reading without assistance. If reading the world is both a necessary devotional activity and a dangerous trap, then Quarles needs a way of raising his work and his readers' perception so that they cherish what is good in the world and can recognize what is evil. Yet, Quarles argues, he cannot achieve any distance from the world on his own, for he is inextricably linked to the Fallen earth. Instead, in emblem 14 of book 5, which is the third from last emblem of the text and depicts the soul looking into the opened gates of heaven (see Appendix 8), Quarles asks God to redeem his emblem book and also to allow Quarles, as author, to use imagination in a God-honouring, creative, and meditative sense. Quarles addresses God, "The Ancient of dayes" (5.14.1), and testifies that he is "farre beyond the height / Of puzzled Quils, or the obtuse conceit / Of flesh and Blood" (5.14.5-7). Because God is beyond his understanding, in order for his emblem book to have any validity, Quarles entreats God: "Ravish my Fancy, and inspire my heart, / Excuse my bold attempt, and pardon me / For shewing Sense, what Faith alone should see" (5.14.10-12). According to Quarles, imagination can only have worth, and indeed, can only be creative, when God changes it. He does not reject imagination or request God to bypass imagination, so imagination, like all else on the sinful world, only has value and benefit when redeemed by God. Because of imagination's potential danger, which Quarles has already depicted in his text, Quarles describes God's redemption of it in violent language, similar to Burton's description of "forcible imagination." Like John Donne, who in "Holy Sonnet: XIV" writes, "Batter my heart, three person'd God," (1) and "for I / Except you'enthral mee, never shall be free, / Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me" (12-14), Quarles acknowledges that his distance from God is so great and his imagination so depraved, that God must "ravish" it in order to make it again useful.

Quarles continues to debate the role of God in the relationship between Quarles's imagination and readers. In emblem 11 of book 5, whose pictura portrays the soul on a deer, riding towards Divine Love by a fountain (see Appendix 9), Quarles again self-consciously questions his role as author, the position of imagination, and the value of his text. He asks,

What Muse shall I invoke, that will inspire
 My lowly Quill to act a lofty part!
 What Art shall I devise t'expresse desire,
 Too intricate to be exprest by Art!

Let all the nine be silent; I refuse
 Their aid in this high task, for they abuse
 The flames of Love too much: Assist me *David's* Muse. (5.11.3-9).

Who is David's muse except for God? Like Thomas Browne, who writes that imagination must come from God and angels, Quarles asserts that without God acting violently on the imagination, its creativity is either non-existent or non-devotional. Indeed, Quarles emphasizes the very limitations of the creativity of imagination, when he writes in the epigram of 5.14,

My soule, pry not too nearely; The Complexion
 Of *Sols* bright face is seen, but by Reflexion:⁹⁴
 But wouldst thou know what's heav'n? Ile tell thee what;
 Think what thou canst not think, and Heav'n is that. (Epigram 5.14.1-4)

Here, Quarles clearly expresses the paradox that haunts his entire text: the only way to understand God and heaven is to acknowledge their unknowability. Quarles asks, how can a person think what he or she cannot think? It is impossible. Thus, the creativity of imagination is essentially limited in its use as a devotional tool because it can never reach heaven, Quarles contends. Yet when God ravishes the fancy, Quarles can lead his readers to understand that they can see the reflection of God in creation, and they can use their imaginations, even if only to understand the limits of imagination. Huston Diehl, commenting on emblem 4.2, which depicts the soul in a labyrinth trying to find her way to God, writes that Quarles doubts the possibility of humans ever perceiving God through creation:

Although God's clue offers man a hope of escape, its presence can only be perceived indirectly, through signs that man must recognize and interpret. ... Yet the human condition is so fallen, Quarles questions whether men can even apprehend such indirect signs of God. (286)

Without God ravishing the imagination, Diehl's reading of Quarles would be correct, but Quarles does not end with emblem 4.2. God, Quarles argues, can even redeem the imagination to such an extent that it can comprehend and even represent God's indirect signs. Quarles does not provide any easy solutions to the paradox inherent in devotional imagination—the disjuncture between the

⁹⁴ In the epigram, Quarles allows a possible connection between "soule" and "*Sol*," not only because they are homophones, but also because of their similar syntactic position in lines 1 and 2. If soul and Sol can and should be equated in the epigram, then Quarles is suggesting that the soul's position in heaven, which cannot be imagined, is as bright as the position of Sol, the sun.

possibilities, necessities, and fallibilities of imagination—for any easy solution would preclude his readers' active involvement in the text. His readers must participate in his text by continuing to struggle with the paradox Quarles presents. Quarles encourages his readers to use his text as a starting point: "Here stay, my soule, and ravish in relation: / Thy words being spent; spend now, in Contemplation" (5.14.51-52). The purpose of his emblem book is not to provide resolutions, but to supply his readers with questions upon which they can contemplate, thereby bringing them meditatively closer to God.

Not only does God have to repair Quarles's fancy in order for Quarles to be an effective author, but God must also provide his fancy originally. Concerning the source of imagination, Quarles agrees with Browne rather than with Burton, Hobbes, or Cavendish. Imagination, according to Quarles, is not simply the recombination of sensory data, but it is provided by God. At the beginning of *Emblemes*, for example, Richard Love writes in his dedicatory letter that "The Muses Font is consecrate by Thee, / And Poesie, baptiz'd Divinitie" (A3V). He writes also, "But O, the Sayle / Is fill'd from heav'n with a Diviner Gale" (A3V). Love emphasizes in his letter that Quarles's poetry is inspired divinely, by God, and thus the source of his creative imagination is from God rather than from himself. In the Invocation to the first book, Quarles also writes about the basis of his imagination:

and let my thoughts controule
My thoughts: O, teach me stoutly to deny
My selfe, that I may be no longer I;
Enrich my Fancy, clarifie my thoughts,
Refine my drosse; O, wink at humane faults;
And, through this slender Conduit of my Quill,
Convey thy Current, whose cleare streames may fill
The hearts of men with love, their tongues with praise. (40-47)

His request is addressed to Theanthropos: "Thou great *Theanthropos*, that giv'st and crown'st / Thy gifts in dust; and, from our dunghill, own'st / Reflected Honour" (33-35). "Theanthropos" refers to Jesus Christ as both God and man. Emphasizing Christ's divinity and humanity allows Quarles to again redeem the imagination. As a man, Jesus had a human brain, which includes, according to early modern medical theory, the faculty of imagination. Because his imagination, as God, was also perfect, Quarles can ask Jesus to "clarify [Quarles's] thoughts." Although Quarles asks Theanthropos to "enrich my fancy," he also asks that his thoughts may "controule my thoughts." Although he needs assistance, Quarles does not deny his own responsibility for his imagination and its use. He also emphasizes the consequences of the devotional use of his text through the "slender Conduit of my Quill." His text has an active purpose, to fill "The hearts of men with love," which in turn cannot fail to evoke a response, causing their "tongues [to] praise" God. The creativity of imagination as expressed in Quarles's

emblem book, then, demands resultant action. Imagination's purpose in a devotional text is not just to meditate statically upon God, picture heaven, and idealize creation, but to inspire a reaction. The creative imagination in Quarles's text therefore has power over the body, moving the heart and tongue of those who read it to praise God.

Quarles's *Emblemes* is certainly no *Faerie Queene*, filled with satyrs, form-changing witches, and magic mirrors. Yet, it, like every other early modern text, is composed of imagination. Indeed, considering Cavendish's definition of language as fancy, Quarles's text is imaginative simply because it uses language. *Emblemes* clearly evokes imagination through its pictorial images—the *picturae*—which are similar to the ekphrastic descriptions of *The Faerie Queene*, such as the image of Acrasia in Book 2 (2.12.77-78). Yet creative imagination—producing fiction—is disguised by *Emblemes*'s devotional purpose. Because readers could miss or even dismiss the fancy in his text, Quarles emphasizes it all the more, repeatedly calling his readers' attention to it. Because his text is meditative in nature, it is not lacking in imagination; on the contrary, he is hyper-conscious of the role of imagination in devotion, and he acknowledges that devotional literature, too, contains fiction. Quarles avers that, because fiction both uses creation metaphorically and arises from God, it is at once helpful and harmful; but, above all, it is active, and through the mind, Quarles hopes, affects the body and the soul.

CONCLUSION

Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene* sums everything up

This dissertation has already been quite a whirlwind tour of early modern documents. I have emphasized the importance of position in George Herbert's *The Temple*, the necessity of control in Richard Brome's *The Antipodes*, the connectivity of the body in Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*, and the consequences of creativity in Francis Quarles's *Emblemes*. My dissertation's purpose has been to demonstrate the importance and the prevalence of imagination in early modern works of literature, and the very variety of my primary texts has demonstrated the ubiquity of imagination and its usefulness as a reading tool. Examining imagination in literature has also revealed that imagination is most apparent when it is disordered. As Robert Dent writes when describing imagination in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, for example, "In watching the lovers ... we tend to be aware of the imagination's activity only when it is ... failing in its proper function" (116). Early modern theorists and authors also do not use the imagination without caution, for they highlight its dangers as well as its utility. Imagination, they contend, is only useful as a reading tool when carefully controlled. Nevertheless, reading early modern texts through the lens of early modern imagination can reveal significances previously overlooked by critics.

Is it wise, then, to add another to this already long list of early modern texts? When interrogating imagination, it is necessary to examine many primary sources, for as J.J. Mooij writes, "During the 17th century, even if we consider only a few major philosophers, the ideas about the imagination are very complex indeed. This is partly due to the complexity of the concept of the imagination itself" (12). Therefore, although in this dissertation's introduction I posited my intention to avoid canonical works of the imagination such as *The Faerie Queene*, I turn to one section of Spenser's tome to establish the utility of imagination—with all its early modern characteristics—as a means of access to Renaissance literature. By displaying the position, control, bodily power, and creativity of imagination in *The Faerie Queene*, I can unite and solidify my arguments about imagination—its characteristics and significance, and demonstrate that *The Faerie Queene* is anything but a rehashing of earlier, hackneyed tales; it is a beautifully crafted example of the recombinatory powers of the creative imagination.

Critics of *The Faerie Queene* have rightly pointed out instances and discussions of imagination within its many pages. In "A letter of the authors expounding his whole intention in the course of this work," Spenser calls his work "a continued Allegory, or darke conceit" (15), for he presents his text "clowdily enwrapped in Allegoricall devises" (16) as he attempts to portray or create a virtuous gentleman. To achieve his goal, he uses the history of King Arthur,

which he considers the “most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historicall fiction, the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter, then for profite of the ensample” (15). Spenser’s goal is didactic, but by means of delight. Spenser’s “darke conceit” explains his use of imagination in allegory, for as James Engell argues, Spenser “presents [the mind’s inner life and experiences] in an allegorical or archetypal framework that use[s] the trappings of the external world” (11). As Spenser himself explains in his opening letter, he is employing allegory to portray the inner world of a virtuous gentleman, and he demonstrates in the body of his text that he uses his “darke conceit” to both illuminate and obscure the workings of the mind. Why does Spenser, even before the reader reaches his text, announce his intention to focus on his and his readers’ imaginations? Harry Berger’s arguments about Spenser’s announcement are worth citing at length, because Berger masterfully outlines Spenser’s—and other early modern authors’—complex preoccupation with imagination:

By announcing that his world is imaginary, the poet, playwright, or painter simultaneously affirms his limits and asserts his power; he reminds his audience that it is all only play, but it turns out to be serious play. In separating imaginary space from the space of readers or spectators, in establishing controlled lines of communication between the two, in manipulating the two worlds through constantly shifting relations of detachment and involvement, the artist may suggest that the audience will see an image of itself as in a mirror, or an analysis of itself refracted through a prism. At the same time he jealously isolates his own domain, proclaims its autonomy, and demands his audience to attend to the work for its own sake. (55)

By calling attention to his use of imagination, Spenser cautions against and apologizes for imagination, but at the same time he controls and manipulates it, creating, as Berger aptly names it, “serious play.” Spenser’s text—and through it, his stimulation of the imagination—is therefore both delightful and didactic, playful and purposeful.

Although *The Faerie Queene* has much to say about imagination, it never uses the word “imagination.” Instead, it focuses much attention on “fancy”, both as an adjective and a noun, even, at times, a noun personified. Many of Spenser’s opaque uses of “fancy” in *The Faerie Queene* seem to corroborate the opinions of those early modern scholars who state that Renaissance thinkers regarded imagination only with suspicion and mistrust. For example, as Redcross falls deeper under the enchantment of Duessa, Spenser writes this of Redcross’s reaction to Duessa: “And in his falsed fancy he her takes / To be the fairest wight, that lived yit” (1.2.30.3-4). Spenser again uses the phrase, “falsed fancy” to describe one person’s enchantment with another, this time Malecasta’s infatuation

with Britomart. When she sees Britomart, Spenser writes, Malecasta “greatly gan enamoured to wex, / And with vaine thoughts her falsed fancy vex” (3.1.47.4-5). Spenser continues to use the word “fancy” to describe Malecasta’s emotions: “Therewith a while she her flit fancy fed, / Till she mote winne fit time for her desire” (3.1.56.1-2). Spenser then associates “fancy” with lust when he describes the giantess Argante, who “over all the countrey ... did raunge, / To seeke young men, to quench her flaming thirst, / And feed her fancy with delightfull chaunge” (3.7.50.1-3). In *The Faerie Queene*, especially when he uses the word “fancy,” Spenser connects the imagination to lust and infatuation, intensifying his use of the word from Redcross’s enchantment to Malecasta’s lust to Argante’s predatory sexuality. Yet when Spenser writes about “fancy” in these instances, he is writing about a corrupt fancy, one that has been tricked or one that is corrupted by—especially sexual—evil.

Fancy itself is featured in *The Faerie Queene*, appearing in Book 3’s masque of Cupid, continuing and expanding Spenser’s association of fancy and love or lust. Fancy appears as a beautiful and desirable boy, loved by all, even Love. Of all of the masquers, Fancy’s description is the lengthiest, and I cite one verse in its entirety:

His garment neither was of silke nor say,
 But painted plumes, in goodly order dight,
 Like as the sunburnt *Indians* do aray
 Their tawney bodies, in their proudest plight:
 As those same plumes, so seemd he vaine and light,
 That by his gate might easily appeare;
 For still he far’d as dauncing in delight,
 And in his hand a windy fan did beare,
 That in the idle aire he mov’d still here and there.
 (3.12.8)

Fancy, as can be expected, is vain and light, and can move quickly through the air. He is also attired beautifully, reflecting Spenser’s use of ekphrasis. Ekphrasis is especially appropriate for the representative of Fancy, which often appeals especially to sight.⁹⁵ More remarkably, Fancy reflects and causes delight, and even his gait reveals his joyfulness. Spenser could be punning on “delight” and “the light,” implying that Fancy dances not only in the air, but especially in the light. Such light is necessary to see, gather sensory data, and therefore stimulate the imagination.

Although Spenser gives Fancy much attention in the masque of Cupid, I will focus all of my consideration now on another episode: Britomart spying

⁹⁵ For a further discussion of Spenser’s negotiation of images in *The Faerie Queene*, see Ernest B. Gilman, “A Theatre for Voluptuous Worldlings (1569) and the Origins of Spenser’s Iconoclastic Imagination,” in *Imagination on a Long Rein: English Literature Illustrated*, Ed. Joachim Möller (Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 1988) 45-55.

Arthegall in Merlin's mirror. I will examine the incident in the light of Spenser's use of fancy elsewhere in *The Faerie Queene*, but even more so in connection to early modern characteristics of imagination as we have seen them set forth by theorists and explored in literature: the significance of the faculty's physical location in the brain, the control over imagination, imagination's relationship with the body, and the creative power of the imagination. I have chosen to peel back the imaginative layers of Britomart's first glimpse of Arthegall because this episode features a mirror,⁹⁶ which emphasizes visuality and interiority—both very important to imagination—and because it describes Britomart's love, which Spenser generally associates with imagination. Britomart's mirror is the “finest literary expression” of a magic mirror “employed for the divination of love-matches and marriages” (Grabes 129). It is, Spenser pens, “Like to the world it selfe, and seem'd a world of glas” (3.2.19.9). The mirror is the world in miniature, and a world turned entirely into images. The mirror is the trigger of Britomart's fancy, for when she sees the image of Arthegall in the mirror, her imagination causes her to fall in love. She cannot remove the image—the sensory impression—of Arthegall from her mind. His image is trapped in her imagination and consumes her thoughts.

Arthegall's image can obsess Britomart because of imagination's position within her brain. It is in the centre of her consciousness, between sense perception and memory, and therefore affects all of Britomart's thoughts. After she sees the image of Arthegall and the sensory data penetrates her brain, she can think of nothing else because of her imagination. As Wright would describe it, the image of Arthegall's face is caught in the gated court of her imagination, colouring all of her impressions and actions. She even has dreams filled with “fantasticke sight” (3.2.29.4), and when she wakes and recovers from her nightmares, she begins “to renew her former smart, / And thinke of that faire visage, written in her hart” (3.2.29.8-9). Spenser's word choice is very deliberate here: Arthegall's visage is written, not drawn, in her heart. Spenser is not giving the visual full supremacy over the written, for he is still in control of his poem. Arthegall's image may be central to Britomart's being, as it is located in her heart, but it is ultimately Spenser who created it there, and whose words have control over his images. In one line, then, Spenser merges image and word, demonstrating as well the combinatory power of the centrally placed imagination. Spenser also highlights the merging abilities of the imagination in its allegorical representation, the mirror. The mirror, Spenser writes, “virtue had, to shew in perfect sight, / What ever thing was in the world contaynd, / Betwixt the lowest earth and heavens hight” (3.2.19.1-3). The mirror occupies middle space between heaven and the lowest earth, but that centrality does not limit it; rather, the mirror can picture anything visible in the human realm. Anything that can be pictured, the mirror can

⁹⁶ In emblem 2.6, Francis Quarles also uses the metaphor of a mirror to describe imagination, as I described in the previous chapter.

represent. The middle space of the imagination, represented by the mirror, gives it power and range, allowing, in this case, Britomart to fall in love with a man she has never met.

Britomart is upset because of her preoccupation with the image of an unknown man, and she accordingly seeks to control her imagination. By this point in the story, Britomart's nurse is involved and is advising Britomart on control and comfort. Britomart fears that her reason will not be able to overcome her love, saying, "But mine is not ... like others wound; / For which no reason can find remedy" (3.2.36.1-2). Her nurse encourages her to try to overcome her love with reason, but then advises her that if she cannot, she must seek out her love, and thus overcome imagination with action. Britomart complains that the man she loves, "No man ... is, nor other living wight: / For then some hope I might unto me draw, / But th'only shade and semblant of a knight" (3.2.38.1-3). Spenser, elsewhere in *The Faerie Queene*, had assigned fancy to love, but Britomart's situation is even more removed from reality and reason: she is in love with an image contained in her imagination. Her nurse, however, warns her not to "make ... such Monster of [her] mind" (3.2.40.2), hating her imagination and its corresponding love. Instead, the nurse advises, she should rejoice in the purity of her love, and should set out, if she cannot reason away her obsession with Arthegall, to find the man whose image she has seen.

Britomart's nurse can see that she is in love because her imagination has an impact upon her body. Immediately after she views the image in the mirror, Britomart is unchanged, but soon her spirits begin to droop: "Sad, solemne, sowre, and full of fancies fraile / She woxe; yet wist she neither how, nor why, / She wist not, silly Mayd, what she did aile" (3.2.27.5-7). Britomart thinks that she is suffering from melancholy, but she is actually in love, two conditions closely connected to the imagination. Her state of mind quickly begins to appear on her body, not only through her "sad sighes" (3.2.28.6) and "trembling ioynt[s]" (3.2.34.3), but through the wasting away of her body, for "She shortly like a pyned ghost became" (3.2.52.5). The nurse, in response to Britomart's pain, takes her to church in an attempt to control her imagination. There, the nurse "said many an idle verse, / Out of her daughters hart fond fancies to reverse" (3.2.48.8-9), but Britomart's unruly imagination resists such prayers for, even in church, "Her love-sicke hart to other thoughts did steale" (3.2.48.7), and when they return home, Britomart falls "into her former fit" (3.2.49.2). In desperation, the nurse creates a potion and physically turns Britomart's body around, seeking to undo her love. Her attempted cure, which fails miserably, tries to control Britomart's imagination via her body, and to manipulate her body into influencing her mind and curing her of her love. Britomart's imagination, however, resists even this cure of the nurse's invention, and her imagination continues to adversely affect her body and her mind.

Because Britomart's imagination shows on her body, her nurse can read her. The nurse tells her that she knows that Britomart is in love, saying, "as sure I read / By knowen signes and passions" (3.2.33.2-3). Again, just as Spenser

strategically uses the word “written” when he describes imagination’s residence in Britomart’s heart, he also significantly uses “read” to describe the nurse’s assessment of Britomart’s mental state. The nurse can read Britomart’s inner mind, just as Spenser uses allegory to allow his readers to “read” the inner minds of the characters of *The Faerie Queene*, and by extension, their own inner minds. Nevertheless, Spenser remains in complete control of his reader’s association with the text, and he carefully manages all the reading and writing, using but controlling the creativity of imagination. Only through him, Spenser implies, can the reader have any connection at all with the story, and so the reader’s imagination is under his authorial thumb.

Yet is Spenser’s text creative? Is it novel? Although Spenser himself states that he is drawing on classical and medieval sources, he newly recombines them with contemporary English versification, cultural references, and political structures. The mirror that causes Britomart’s love also expresses Spenser’s creativity. A mirror does not seem able to create or express originality, for it can only reflect what already exists. Yet in his exhaustive study of mirror metaphors in Medieval and Renaissance English literature, Herbert Grabes explains how mirrors were used as a metaphor for creativity. In early modern literature, he argues, mirror metaphors were used in four ways: “the mirror reflects things as they are, ... it shows the way things should or should not be, ... it shows the way things will be, [and] ... it shows what only exists in the mirror or in the writer’s imagination” (39). Spenser’s mirror demonstrates all four characteristics: it shows Arthegall as he is, it shows Arthegall as a knight should be, it shows Arthegall as the man Britomart will marry, and it shows Arthegall and the world that exists in Spenser’s imagination. Like the mirror that reveals to Britomart her future husband, *The Faerie Queene* is the mirror that reflects Spenser’s imagination. The mirror, described in Spenser’s carefully composed stanzas, also reflects the order he has imposed over his imagination. George Puttenham writes that the imagination or fantasy is a potent poetic force, as long as it is organized and restrained: If it “is well proportioned, and so passing cleare, [then] by it as by a glass or mirrour, are represented unto the soule all maner of bewtifull visions, whereby the inventive parte of the mynde is so much holpen, as without it no man could devise any new or rare thing” (15). Then, readers must look into the mirror of Spenser’s text not only to see and appreciate his imagination, but to be influenced by it and to move into action, as Britomart did after she gazed into Merlin’s mirror. The imagination reflected in *The Faerie Queene*—because of its location, its control, its impact, and its creativity—then enters into the public consciousness of its many readers and demands an active, public response.

The imagination Spenser presents and discusses in *The Faerie Queene*, like Herbert’s in *The Temple*, Brome’s in *The Antipodes*, Nashe’s in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, and Quarles’s in *Emblemes*, focuses intently on the physical world. Even when early modern writers use their imaginations to create new, idealized worlds, they do so to test and define their relationships to their readers, God, and themselves. Writers use the complex and at times contradictory

characteristics of imagination laid out by their contemporaries—philosophers, theologians, and faculty psychologists—to move their readers to mental and physical action, to explore how they and their readers can know and communicate with each other and with God, and to understand how their minds and bodies work. Understanding imagination and its consequences was urgent to early modern theorists and literary writers—and should also be for critics of the English Renaissance—because imagination had immense sway over people’s bodies and minds. To early modern people, the imagination had an enormous and visceral force, and its powers were at once exciting and frightening. And, when transmitted through texts, imagination’s influence became public, and therefore culturally, politically, and religiously charged. Early modern characterizations of the faculty make imagination vital for any understanding of the world, for, as Bacon writes in *The Advancement of Learning*, “[God] hath placed the world in man’s heart, ...[and] hath framed the mind of man as a mirror or glass, capable of the image of the universal world” (7).

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Appendix 1

Additional Early Modern English texts on imagination

- Barrough, Philip. *The methode of phisicke conteyning the causes, signes, and cures of invvard diseases in mans body from the head to the foote. VWhereunto is added, the forme and rule of making remedies and medicines, which our phisitians commonly vse at this day, with the proportion, quantitie, & names of ech [sic] medicine.* 1583.
- Batman, Stephen. *Batman vppon Bartholome his booke De proprietatibus rerum, newly corrected, enlarged and amended: with such additions as are requisite, vnto euery seuerall booke: taken foorth of the most approued authors, the like heretofore not translated in English. Profitable for all estates, as well for the benefite of the mind as the bodie.* 1582.
- Boorde, Andrew. *The breuiary of healthe, for all maner of sicknesses and diseases the which may be in man or woman, doth followe Expressyng the obscure termes of Greke, Araby, Latyn, and Barbary, in Englishe concernyng phisicke and chierurgerie, compyled by Andrewe Boorde, or phisicke Doctour, an Englishe man.* 1552.
- Charron, Pierre. *Of wisdom three bookes written in French by Peter Charro[n] Doctr of Lawe in Paris. Translated by Samson Lennard.* 1608.
- Davies, John. *Nosce teipsum this oracle expounded in two elegies, 1. Of humane knowledge, 2. Of the soule of man, and the immortalitie thereof.* 1599.
- Elyot, Thomas. *The castel of helthe gathered, and made by Syr Thomas Elyot knight, out of the chief authors of phisyke ; whereby euery man may knowe the state of his owne body, the preseruacion of helthe, and how to instruct well his phisition in sicknes, that he be not deceyued.* 1539.
- Harward, Simon. *A discourse concerning the soule and spirit of man Wherein is described the essence and dignity thereof, the gifts and graces wherewith God hath endued it, and the estate thereof, aswell present as future. And thereunto is annexed in the end a bipartite instruction, or exhortation, concerning the duties of our thankfulness towards God.* 1604.
- Huarte, Jean. *Examen de ingenios. = The examination of mens vvits In whic[h] [sic], by discouering the varietie of natures, is shewed for what profession each one is apt, and how far he shall profit therein. By Iohn Huarte. Translated out of the Spanish tongue by M. Camillo Camilli. Englished out of his Italian, by R.C. Esquire.* 1594.

Lemnius, Levinus. *The touchstone of complexions generallye appliable, expedient and profitable for all such, as be desirous & carefull of their bodylye health : contayning most easie rules & ready tokens, whereby euery one may perfectly try, and thoroughly know, as well the exacte state, habite, disposition, and constitution, of his owne body outwardly : as also the inclinations, affections, motions, & desires of his mynd inwardly / first written in Latine, by Leuine Lemnie ; and now Englished by Thomas Newton.* 1576.

Lyly, John. *The Woman in the Moon.* 1597.

Mornay, Phillipe de, seigneur du Plessis-Marly. *The true knowledge of a mans owne selfe. Written in French by Monsieur du Plessis, Lord of Plessie Marly. *And truly translated into English by A.M.* 1602.

Nemesius, Bp. of Emesa. *The nature of man A learned and usefull tract written in Greek by Nemesius, surnamed the philosopher; sometime Bishop of a city in Phoenicia, and one of the most ancient Fathers of the Church. Englished, and divided into sections, with briefs of their principall contents: by Geo: Wither.* 1635.

Nixon, Anthony. *The dignitie of man both in the perfections of his soule and bodie. Shewing as well the faculties in the disposition of the one: as the senses and organs, in the composition of the other.* 1612.

Reynolds, Edward. *A treatise of the passions and faculties of the soule of man With the severall dignities and corruptions thereunto belonging.* 1640.

Rogers, Thomas. *A philosophicall discourse, entituled, The anatomie of the minde.* 1576.

Rowlands, Samuel. *Democritus, or Doctor Merry-man his Medicines, against Melancholy Humours.* 1607.

Rymer, Thomas. *An essay, concerning critical and curious learning in which are contained some short reflections on the controversie betwixt Sir William Temple and Mr. Wotton, and that betwixt Dr. Bentley and Mr. Boyl.* 1698.

Strode, William. *The Floating Island.* 1655.

Tomkis, Thomas. *Lingua: or The combat of the tongue, and the fiue senses for superiority.* 1607.

Walkington, Thomas. *The optick glasse of humors. Or The touchstone of a golden temperature, or the Philosophers stone to make a golden temper wherein the foure complections sanguine, cholericke, phlegmaticke, melancholicke are succinctly painted forth, and their externall intimates laide open to the purblind eye of ignorance it selfe, by which euery one may iudge of what complection he is, and answerably learne what is most sutable to his nature.* 1607.

Appendix 2

32

EMBLEMES.

Book

VIII.



Et risu mecat.

W. Marshall. Sc.

Francis Quarles, *Emblemes* (London: 1635) 1.8.

Appendix 3

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EMBLEMES,

Bot

IX.



Frustea quis stabilem figat in orbe gradum?

Wm. Marshall. sculp.

Francis Quarles, *Emblemes* (London: 1635) 1.9.

Appendix 4

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EMBLEMES.

Book;

II.



Donec totum expleat orbem.

will: Marshall sculp:.

Francis Quarles, *Emblemes* (London: 1635) 2.2.

Appendix 5



*Let not the water-flood overflow me,
neither let the deepe swallow me up:
Ps: 69. 15. Will: Simpson sculpsit*

Francis Quarles, *Emblemes* (London: 1635) 3.11.

Appendix 6

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EMBLEMES.

Book 5.

IX.



*I am in a Freight betwixt two haueing a
Desire to Depart & to be wth Christ.
Phil: i. 23. Will: Simpson. Sculpsit.*

Francis Quarles, *Emblemes* (London: 1635) 5.9.

Appendix 7

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EMBLEMES.

Book 2.

VI.



Sic decipit orbis.

Will. Marshall. sculpsit.

Francis Quarles, *Emblemes* (London: 1635) 2.6.

Appendix 8

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EMBLEMES.

Book 5.

XIV.



*How amiable are thy Tabernacles O Lord
of Hosts, my Soule longeth, yea, euē
fainteth for the courts of the Lord:*
Ps. 84. 1 *Will: Marshall. Sculp.*

Francis Quarles, *Emblemes* (London: 1635) 5.14.

Appendix 9

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EMBLEMES.

Book 5.

XI.



*As the Hart panteth after the waterbrooks,
so panteth my soule after thee O Lord.*
Will: Simpson. Sculp.

Francis Quarles, *Emblemes* (London: 1635) 5.11.