‘POISINING THE VIEWER’: THE STATUS OF DRAMA AND DRAMATISTS, PAINTINGS AND PAINTERS IN RENAISSANCE ENGLAND

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation examines representations of artistic professionalization in Early Modern English drama. Focused on the *paragone*—a series of sixteenth and seventeenth-century treatises that argued for the superiority of one artistic medium over all others—I approach drama from a sociocultural perspective, utilizing a textual archive that includes drama, antitheatrical texts, emerging artistic history, and rhetorical manuals. Bridging the theoretical gap between Early Modern literary and cultural studies and contemporary revisions of theories on visual culture, this project argues for the cultural efficacy of the rising multimedia artist, the dramatist. While my interdisciplinary study builds on scholarship related to print and performance, idolatry, and art history, my project responds to current interest regarding the significance of multimedia perspectives. My research opens up traditional analyses of textual rhetoric to the realm of the visual and sheds light on the relation between aesthetics and cognitive processes in the Renaissance. Departing from previous reflections on the role of the verbal and visual in Early Modern drama, I conceptualize more specifically the tie between the rising visual and verbal artist and the ways in which this connection gets expressed in performance during England’s tumultuous religious and political Renaissance.

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
- *Hamlet* (1.5.167-8)

For those who came before me, whose hard work has made *my* work possible:
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Introduction: The *Paragone* in Renaissance England

"Painting is an instrument under which the treasury of the memory is contained, insomuch as writing is nothing else but a picture of white and black" (5).[1]

In 1598, physician and art enthusiast Richard Haydocke translated Italian author Paolo Lomazzo's 1584 treatise, *Trattato dell'Arte* into English. The publication of that translation denotes the beginning of visual artistic theory in England and marks the first time an English text argued for the significance of painting and a wider appreciation of the visual arts. Moreover, the text clearly defines the role of the artist and explains his rank in a hierarchical society, thereby taking an active position concerning the *paragone* (comparison) debates that circulated across Italy in previous centuries. Before England's adoption of this intellectual debate—which centered on the relative merits of the arts and artists of differing media—the *paragone* (as scholars refer to it today) included a corpus of texts written by Italian visual artists including Leon Battista Alberti, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Giorgio Vasari. To varying degrees, these texts included a series of arguments pertaining to the creation, purpose, and perception of the visual form and placed painting's perceived excellence in contrast to the supposed weaker media of art, including mainly sculpture and poetry. When *paragone* arguments reached England via Haydocke's translation, the debate circulated within a vastly different social, economic, cultural, and religious landscape and was revised to suit conditions particular to England.[2]

[1] See Haydocke's translation of Lomazzo, *A tracte containing the artes of curious paintinge caruinge buildinge*
[2] Of course a series of texts from antiquity inspired both Italian and English *paragone* debates. Notably, Aristotle's *Poetics* and Horace's *Ars Poetica* and specifically his theory of "Ut pictura poesis" influenced later discussions on the relationship between the arts.

After Haydocke's translation was published, a body of English-authored *paragone* texts emerged. At this time, English painters strove to make sense of their professional identities as the landscape for creative writing also developed, most notably evolving to reflect the expediential rise in the popularity of commercial drama. Artists of both forms mobilized preceding Italian arguments and in a variety of ways modified or established new theories pertaining to the role and significance of the arts within English society.[3] While the debate had largely dissipated within Italian artistic culture by this time, it was prime for revised or new arguments in England during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Working to separate themselves from their continental predecessors, English artists attempted to define their medium through a new wave of theoretical texts that deviated from previous English texts which focused solely on practical methods of the *craft* of painting.[4] Evident in these texts is their struggle to be seen as artists as opposed to mere craftsmen, emphasizing a primary strain in *paragone* literature—emphatic arguments made for the economic and social mobilization of artists.[5] In part, this meant that *paragone* texts focused on the *intellectual* labor that went into creating art; this effort resulted in a new conversation regarding the role of the arts, artists, and their viewers.

While visual artists often elevated their form by criticizing others, I have found that rhetorical manuals from the same period also engage in attacks against other media in favor of their own. The English Renaissance—a time of magnificent artistic revitalization—allowed artists of both textual and visual forms to flourish, and so it seems fitting that during a period in

[4] Leonardo da Vinci, Leon Battista Alberti, and Michelangelo, among others participated in these debates.
[4] The earliest printed English Renaissance artistic guide that we have access to today is *A very proper treatise, wherein is briefly sett forthe the arte of limming which teacheth the order in drawing [and] tracing of letters* (1573). The text is focused solely on praxis, instructing the reader on the process of creating colors from pigments. Subsequent texts elevated the form from a practice to an art, including not only practical information but also theories pertaining to the purpose of art itself.
[5] This desire was rooted in Italian *paragone* debates as well, with Leonardo da Vinci and Leon Battista Alberti making similar pleas.

which artists were attempting to find themselves within a newly revised artistic culture, rivalries developed as artists searched for their place within the great chain of being.[6] Fueled by the prospect of economic gain, patronage-seeking artists were also highly motivated by establishing themselves as artists in a cultural and intellectual sense. Downtrodden by the perception that they were manual laborers who hawked their work for profit alone, artists during this time worked for cultural reverence, and *paragone* texts offered a way for them to air their grievances and present their case for social acceptance.

Significantly, the rise of the visual artist in Renaissance England coincides with the emergence of commercial drama, which established a new profession for the verbal artist—that of dramatist. Marked by his multimedia considerations—he had to write lines that would be both heard *and* seen on stage—this new profession had much in common with the visual artist. Because of this, I've observed that Renaissance dramatists appear to be in a liminal artistic space, owing much to the profession of visual artists, but also largely by considering themselves textual/verbal artists.[7] This blurring of professional and artistic boundaries problematizes the very roles the *paragone* aimed to defend. The tension this created for the dramatist is in fact the topic of this dissertation. His role was complicated by the fact that he used both verbal and visual means to express himself; therefore the dramatist was not clearly categorized into the binary roles outlined within *paragone* texts. In fact, *paragone* arguments refer to every type of creative writer specifically as *poet*, no matter his actual genre of writing, even when it is clear that a dramatist is being discussed. And while the dramatist certainly included poetry within his writing, some lines, scenes, or even entire plays may have been considered licentious due to their more casual use of language, suggestive topics, and/or bawdy jokes. Of course these elements, in

[6] While belief in the Chain is contested, see Arthur O. Lovejoy's seminal study on this hierarchical structure.
[7] Of course dramatists were also poets and writers of masques and/or prose.

addition to the visual spectacle of the form, distinguished it from poetry. Moreover, the dramatists' visual presentation included costumed boys presenting themselves as women and "rogue" actors as royalty, who interacted with each other on stage through suggestive body movements, creating moving tableaus ripe with meaning. These spectacles attracted at times questionable audience members who rushed to the outskirts of London to participate in the all-encompassing sensorial experience of theater. When considering these differences alone, the ways in which drama diverged from the more traditional practice of poetry—even when it is recited—is abundantly clear. Occupationally, the theater diverged in numerous other ways related to profitability, collaboration, publication, and patronage. The resulting creation of new professional networks meant that the conditions under which drama was written, supported, and received contrasted from that of both poetry and visual art. Although drama related to both forms, it was distinct from both media in many ways.

While working to understand how drama and painting and their related media work with or against each other in the Renaissance, I have considered the commonalities shared amongst *paragone* texts. Although texts vary from each other according to the profession and experience of the author and the date and location of their authorship, I have found that *paragone* arguments are alike in three distinct, and yet related ways. Effectively, considering these commonalities—and the way in which they are mobilized in Renaissance drama—offers scholars an entry point to understanding media and the rise of the verbal and visual artist in new and more thorough ways. Therefore, I conclude that *paragone* arguments can best be situated into the following three categories:

1. An attempt to define the way in which artistic expression and meaning transfers from the creator to its audience with particular attention paid to the creator's labor and the perceived sensorial/cerebral limitations of the audience
2. An argument made regarding the professionalization of the artist including his special training, talents, and abilities that qualify him to be regarded in particular ways that supersede his *actual* position as a craftsman/laborer
3. An examination of the overall role of the arts, including their purpose and significance to individuals and society

Senses and the Function of Verbal and Visual

Establishing the ways in which art is transferred mentally and/or sensorially from creator to audience/viewer is the first primary function of *paragone* arguments. Concerned with the way that the mind and eye of the viewer actually perceive and interpret a piece of art—whatever its medium—*paragone* texts worked to theorize how this exchange takes place. Alberti famously concluded that one of painting's supreme qualities is its ability to reach everyone: painting "is equally pleasing to both learned and unlearned; and it rarely happens in any other art that what pleases the knowledgeable also attracts the ignorant" (63).[8] Inherent in Alberti's assessment of painting—and indeed this is true throughout *paragone* texts—are references to an implicit hierarchy related to learning and one's ability to view art "correctly" as deemed by the artist. In a time when literacy was not to be taken for granted, painters often cited the ability of their work to reach the masses in ways that poetry could not.[9] Likewise, Leonardo's text recalls the

[8] Alberti, Leon Battista, *On Painting*

[9] However, far from an egalitarian point of view, painters also criticized viewers of their work as not being knowledgeable enough to truly understand their paintings. Separating the immediate impression everyone can experience when first viewing a painting, painters contended that one must be trained in the practice of receiving an image fully in order to understand and appreciate it. For example, Paolo Lomazzo's *Trattato dell'Arte* and Baldesar Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* discuss the ability of a viewer to train their senses, specifically their eyesight in order to better create and view paintings as a professional.

immediacy to which painting reaches the viewer upon a single look. And more directly than his predecessor, Leonardo makes the repeated claim that the sense of sight is far superior to the sense of hearing, thereby concluding that painting is the better form simply because it moves through the greater sense:

> Painting immediately presents you with the demonstration by which its maker generated it, and gives that pleasure to the greatest sense, as anything created by nature can. And in this case, the poet, who sends the same things to the common sense but by the lesser sense of hearing, does not give the eye any pleasure other than the pleasure of hearing a thing recounted […] Even if things by poets are read over long internals, often there are times when they are not understood and so several commentaries are needed on them. These commentators very seldom understand what was in the poet's mind and many times the readers will read only a small part of their works for want of time; whereas the work of the painter is comprehended immediately by his onlookers (219-221).[10]

Like Alberti's claim that even the unlearned can enjoy paintings, Leonardo contends that the immediacy of viewing a painting makes the form superior to that of poetry, which requires more time, effort, and commentaries simply to understand it. This argument, we observe, is passed down in various ways throughout *paragone* debates. Clearly this sense of immediacy had its benefits and at times provided painting with the upper hand in the debate. This is the very argument that gets mobilized in the opening scene of William Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens,* a play that I discuss in my third chapter. In it, Timon's senses are overcome by a flattering portrait of himself while he all but ignores the more laborious task of engaging with a poem written on

[10] Leonardo da Vinci's treatise, in which he argued for the supremacy of painting over other arts is known today as his *Paragone*. For a comprehensive English translation, see Claire J. Farago's edition (Leiden: Brill, 1992)

his behalf. Dramatizations regarding the transcendental quality of an appealing image occur throughout Renaissance drama due to this belief.

This element of *paragone* texts not only compares the senses to one another but also seeks to theorize just how the sense of sight operates. Moreover, *paragone* texts were pushed to demonstrate and sometimes defend how images were thought to enters one's eyes, thereby affecting the viewer in various—sometimes dangerous—ways. Opposing views concerning the physiological process of humans' sense of sight from antiquity and beyond certainly informed Italian *paragone* writers who then went on to influence the English. Theories of extramission—which contend that light emitted from the eye of the viewer—were favored by Plato and Lomazzo while intromission theories—more refined hypotheses concerning the refraction of light outside of the eye—were derived from Aristotle and adopted by Henry Peacham. And yet, these converging theories were often manipulated in order to criticize the visual form due to the period's contentious relationship with visuals, specifically regarding religious artwork which was condemned in a post-reformation England.[11] Clearly attacks against the visual were used towards the multimodal form of drama as well, and antitheatrical texts from the time demonstrate that fears concerning the visual's ability to affect the viewer negatively operated in both a religious and dramatic sense. This very fear is discussed in my second chapter on *Arden of Faversham*, which dramatizes both a poisoned painting and crucifix, thereby representing the dangers of visuals from both artistic and religious registers.

Professional Labor

Also implicit throughout *paragone* texts are arguments for the artistic, cultural, and economic mobilization of artists of both media. In some cases, artists generated defenses of their

[11] For more on iconoclasm and its relation to Renaissance theater, see Michael O'Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye*.

medium by systematically disassembling the significance of their rivals. Nicholas Hilliard, the famed Elizabethan miniaturist, circulated *A Treatise Concerning the Arte of Limning* (c. 1600) in which he categorically argues for the act of painting to be regarded as a gentleman's pursuit. He goes on to argue for the superiority of painting—specifically limning, or painting in miniature—over sculpting. He contends that only "men Ingeniously borne, and of sufficient means [not subject to] comon cares of the world for food and garment" should participate in limning because it is "sweet and cleanly to usse, and it is a thing apart from all other Painting or drawing and tendeth not to comon mens usse, either for furnishing of Howsses, or any patternes for tapistries, or Building, or any other worke what soever" (15-6).[12] Distinguishing his medium from other visual forms, Hilliard represents his own profession as that of a gentleman, privileging his profession over others within the same category. He claims that limners should not be dependent upon their art for monetary gain in order to satisfy their basic needs, citing an argument that is repeated throughout discussions of art in the Renaissance. That is, while courtiers were encouraged to be accomplished in a variety of artistic and educational pursuits, making a living off one's art was inherently vulgar.

Likewise, this sort of artistic snobbery is reflected in Henry Peacham's 1606 treatise, *The art of dravving vvith the pen*, which criticizes "caruing, which thus farre differeth from painting […] because it is more rude and rough in exercise, and worketh not with so fine judgement [as painting]".[13] Here, Peacham utilizes common *paragone* arguments meant to distinguish painting as the superior form, due to the painters' ability to remain relatively dignified during their process of creating. Conversely, sculpting was often described as a lesser art because of its more

[12] Hilliard, Nicholas. *Art of Limning*. He goes on to distinguish his "sweet and cleanly" art form as separate and altogether different from craftsmen who paint decorative interiors.
[13] Peacham, Henry. *The Arte of Dravving vvith the pen.* London, 1606, Chapter 2.

manual nature; it required that the artist's clothing get soiled and meant that the sculptor might suffer the misfortune of breaking a sweat during the creation of his work.[14] *Paragone* texts that contain thinly-veiled attacks against other media are clearly meant to promote their own form, and while the absurdity of their arguments might be laughable to today's readers, we should not overlook the valuable information these arguments provide regarding not only the reception of art during England's Renaissance, but the status of artists as professionals participating actively in not only artistic, but also economic and social systems. These texts alert us to the ways in which these circles operated: how artists perceived and interacted with one another, how artists thought of their own work, and how those outside artistic circles may have understood their roles. Ultimately, understanding these complex relationships not only helps us to understand Renaissance visual culture, but by comparison and through multi-media art, we also begin to understand other forms more fully as well.

Throughout the texts discussed in this dissertation are painters and sometimes poets who are in fact maligned, dramatized as hangers-on and greedy men hungry for payment and little else. Inevitably, the question of why a dramatist would choose to present his profession in this way persists. In one way, I believe that dramatists were simply responding to the current climate in which their profession operated. As a concern relevant and immediate to their livelihood, dramatists understandably responded to criticism of their work *within* their work. Sometimes this is done in jest, most notably by Jonson, whose opinions on particular topics, not least of all himself and his profession, are utterly translucent throughout his corpus. But to consider why

[14] Castiglione, Baldassare. *The Book of the Courtier*. Ed. Daniel Javitch and Charles S. Singleton, 77-82. Castiglione brings up this very debate between painting and sculpting. For several pages in Book 1, he stages a debate between the two forms, and although he declares that both forms "spring from the same source, namely, good design," subsequent arguments concerning perspective, dimensional art, labor, ornament, proportion, materials, line, and color serve to represent the *paragone* arguments that pervaded both Italian and English artistic cultures.

other dramatists—who straddle the professional divide between poet and visual artist—consistently present poets and/or painters negatively, it is helpful to consider Patrick Cheney's concept of "counter-authorship." He concludes that some authors, including Shakespeare, did not engage in self-presentation, but rather a form of self-representation that

> allows the author to hide behind the veil of his fictions, while allowing us to follow him, through tracks he himself leaves—in his diction, images, myths, and so forth—some of them presumably 'conscious' but hardly all of them. While we may occasionally glimpse the man behind the words, more palpably we can attend to the textual character of his authorship (14).[15]

That is, by showing and not telling, Shakespeare—and in my view, other dramatists—demonstrate the talents of verbal/textual artists through the very criticisms they dramatize. As Cheney argues, while lines mock the poet, the dramatist uses speech that relies on poetic language in order to "authorize the very artist being ridiculed" (80). This paradoxical presentation—that of a character mocking a poet while the dramatist subtly elevates him through his own medium—results in fascinating moments of self-reflexive praise. This metadramatic technique is recursive and is of primary interest when examining the ways in which drama reflects and defines the *paragone*.

A Larger Purpose

The final binding element that I find throughout *paragone* arguments is the desire to define the ultimate purpose of the arts. Views on the function of the arts are often accompanied

[15] While Cheney seeks moments in which Shakespeare engages in intertextuality—when he crafts "his text out of the texts of other authors, reading those authors and rewriting them through pressures from his own literary environment,"—I extend this interest to examining moments when dramatists engage with visual art specifically.

by attempts to define each medium; interestingly, definitions of each form often comprise comparisons to other forms. In effect, I find that more often than not, forms are defined by their relation to other media, thereby connecting the arts within the very arguments that wish to distinguish them from one another. Even when we consider Sir Philip Sidney's well known speaking picture analogy[16], we see that, ultimately, it serves to draw greater connections between media rather than separating them from one another.[17] While Sidney's defense of poetry is rooted in comparisons between the textual/oral/aural modes of history and philosophy, he also cites poetry's ability to evoke visual stimulation through verbal means, thereby once again connecting media. He uses the example of describing a rhinoceros or elephant, and how descriptions of each animal allow the imagination to be "illuminated or figured forth by the speaking picture of poesy" (16). By praising poetry's ability to evoke the visual, Sidney subtly praises the visual medium. In his view, one of the ways in which creative literature is superior to forms of fact-based writing (such as historical writing), is that it has the power to evoke a visual response within those who experience it. For Sidney, this is the defining feature of a creative command of language and what makes poetry the superior form. Ultimately, when we consider Sidney's view on the larger purpose of art, which is to "teach and delight" we recognize its moral and aesthetic purpose is bound up in its relationship to other forms.

Continuing the compulsion to define one form by citing another, even Ben Jonson's infamous quarrel with his masque set designer and collaborator, Inigo Jones, is marked by

[16] Sidney, Sir Philip. "An Apology for Poetry". *Sir Philip Sidney's Apology for Poetry and Astrophil and Stella: Texts and Contexts*. Ed. Peter C. Herman, 10. Sidney cites Aristotle's definition of mimesis in order to define poetry's meaning and purpose as a form that speaks metaphorically; "a speaking picture – with this end: to teach and delight."

[17] As indebted to Plutarch. Horace, too, serves as an example of artistic comparison from antiquity. These comparisons seemed to serve rhetorical purposes; they were made to help readers understand the arts. It seems that in the Italian and English Renaissance periods, when artists worked to establish themselves, they took these comparisons and charged them with a competitive edge in order to make a case for their own art.

Jonson's admission of the similarities between forms. Jonson states that both poetry and painting "are arts of a like nature and both are busy about imitation."[18] Like Sidney, he cites Plutarch's speaking picture/mute poesie analogy before expanding on both forms' ability to "invent, feign, and devise many things" (34). And yet, Jonson ultimately draws upon earlier Italian *paragone* debates by concluding that "the pen is more noble than the pencil; for that can speak to the understanding, the other but to the sense."[19] By distinguishing the mind from the senses, and using the substance/surface binary to separate ones' response to each medium, Jonson privileges his form, but in a way that seems quite mild for a figure that has come to be so strongly associated with the contentious debate between verbal and visual.[20] Through these primary examples, we gain an awareness of the paradoxical nature of *paragone* debates; at once these texts reinforce *paragone* arguments by exploring their comparative divide, while also circumventing traditionally held ideals concerning this binary when divisions between media collapse through the consistent use of comparative analogies.

Methodology

I approach Renaissance drama from a sociocultural perspective, utilizing a textual archive that includes drama, antitheatrical texts, emerging artistic history, and rhetorical manuals. While my interdisciplinary study builds upon scholarship related to performance, dramatists' artistic identity and professionalization, idolatry, and art history, my project responds to more current

[18] Jonson, Ben. *Timber, or Discoveries.* Ed. Ralph S. Walker.
[19] Jonson's text is full of his insights into the nature of language. He often compares language, especially ornamental language to visual forms. He suggests that language mirrors man's appearance, "Language most shows a man: 'speak that I may see thee' […] No glass renders a man's form or likeness so true as his speech" (46). He reference his Italian *paragone* predecessors by citing their distinction between seeing and understanding, "The conceits of the mind are pictures of things, and the tongue is the interpreter of those pictures".
[20] Likewise, Castiglione proposes that an orator can deliver his intended message effectively by elevating his words to appeal his audience; by focusing on style, the orator can shape his words "to his purpose like so much wax, he can give them such disposition and an order such as to cause them to reveal at a glance their dignity and splendor, like paintings when placed in a good and natural light" (54).

interest regarding the significance of multimedia perspectives. Departing from previous reflections on the role of the verbal and visual in Renaissance drama, I conceptualize more specifically the tie between the rising visual and verbal artist and the ways in which this connection gets expressed in performance during England's tumultuous religious and political Renaissance. While I consider the classical influence philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle had on both Renaissance periods, my project's inspiration is of course rooted in English drama. However, my work was given a true focus when I discovered the bombastic writings of the Italian painters who ignited the *paragone* debate. Therefore, Alberti, Leonardo, and Lomazzo remain significance sources to draw upon as I move into a consideration of English *paragone* writers including Peacham, Hilliard, Puttenham, and Sidney. These primary texts are my main sources of engagement as I consider how dramatists engaged with their arguments theatrically.

Because my interest centers on the nexus of verbal and visual forms, drama was a natural choice when deciding on a genre for which to focus. Moreover, I observed that the profession, not only the art itself, demonstrated consistent similarities to the visual artist; this discovery made focusing on drama the most logical conclusion. The plays chosen for each chapter, I felt, were the most deserving of chapter-length studies due to their creative and/or problematic use of the *paragone*. Additionally, each play attends to different facets of the *paragone* and in total, it is my hope that this project facilitates a discussion on each of these areas. Additionally, I recognize that focusing on drama alone does not exempt poetic concerns. Of course drama contains poetic lines and the textual may become the verbal when recited, thereby shifting from visual to verbal modes. I am not under the assumption that definitions to words such as *textual, visual, verbal, poetic, dramatic,* are static. Rather, these complicated terms evoke a variety of meanings that do shift in tone throughout the Renaissance. Clearly an understanding of these terms change

according to the author, time, and the conditions of the art in question. However, this exciting shift is what positions the topic as a fruitful line of inquiry deserving of critical attention. In each chapter these definitions shift, and so considerations pertaining to the specific usage of these terms, related connotations, and their potential limitations are addressed accordingly.

When beginning to think about the professionalization of dramatists and the way in which they conceived of themselves and their work, I turned to a number of scholars who clarified my understanding of the status of artists in Renaissance England. Primarily, Richard Helgerson's work provided a foundation upon which to build. His understanding of various authorships—including the self-crowned laureate track—and the conditions under which writers worked informed my arguments concerning the occupational similarities dramatists shared with visual artists.[21] Other scholars have refined my view of dramatic authorship. In arguing that "Shakespeare uses books, poetry, and theater to make a case for the cultural, spiritual unity of his own art in the formation of early modern identity," Patrick Cheney argues for a breaking of boundaries and traditional occupational limitations forced upon writers (233). Likewise, Lukas Erne's earlier work regarding the stage/page intentions of dramatists—here, Shakespeare in particular—reads the bard not in contrast to Jonson's self-fashioned career, but instead argues for a more refined consideration of Shakespeare as a performance and print dramatist. In my view, this distinction lends itself to discussions concerning the *paragone,* as it attempts to break down boundaries between these professions.

On a related issue pertaining to labor and economic networks that included dramatists, Laurie Ellinghausen's research on the intellectual labor associated with writing in the Renaissance aligns with my own interests concerning the hierarchical ordering of artists at this

[21] Richard Helgerson *Self-Crowned Laureates* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

time. Her attention to the fact that the Renaissance is in part defined by an emergence of the way in which professionals "formed ideas of themselves largely in relation to conventional presumptions about occupation"[22] has been especially useful, particularly when writing about Jonson and his working relationship with Inigo Jones. Similarly, Stephen Orgel's extensive contributions to the field, specifically his work regarding the relationship between performance and political, royal, and economic structures has broadened my work on the *paragone* to consider the wider implications of playwriting in Renaissance England.[23] His collaboration with Roy Strong has proven to be useful, especially when I conducted archival research at Chatsworth House, the location of Inigo Jones' drawings of Jonson's masque characters.[24]

Concerning the relationship between the textual and visual, my project owes much to the work of Judith Dundas and Marguerite A. Tassi.[25] While each—in their own way—discuss how the *paragone* operates within Renaissance texts, my work departs in both subject and focus. And while Tassi argues that dramatists "sought to defend themselves by subtly critiquing or undermining painting, and by aligning themselves, at times, with the Reformed emphasis on the word," (22). I instead read these texts as dramatists aligning themselves *with* the visual artist. Although Richard Meek is interested in the multimodal tropes of ekphrasis and enargia, while my own work is concerned with material appearances of portraits on stage, his deep interest in the relationship between visual and verbal—and especially the connection between the aural and visual—informs my understanding of how original audiences engaged with these texts.[26] Meek's analysis of Shakespeare's ability to evoke the visual through verbal means is an

[22] See Ellinghausen, *Labor and Writing in Early Modern England, 1567-1667*, 12.
[23] Orgel's slim but impactful book, *The Illusion of Power* is especially useful when considering Jonson's masques.
[24] See Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones*. This text has identified Jones' drawings, providing commentary on the particulars to which they relate to Jonson's masque oeuvre.
[25] See Dundas, *Pencils Rhetorique* and Tassi, *The Scandal of Images* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993).
[26] See Meek, *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare* (Farnham: 2009).

important study to consider when examining the ways in which drama engages with the visual in other ways as well. Additionally, of course Leonard Barkan's interdisciplinary corpus, including several journal articles on the topic of the nexus of verbal and visual art, has inspired my own work. His latest book summarizes a view I share that theater "is a visual art not just because it happens inside architecture and not just because it can be pictorially composed but because its essential understanding of itself requires the analogy to painting."[27] Lastly, John Peacock's book on the artistic history and significance of Inigo Jones not only provides readers with a biography of Jones, but concurrently depicts the conditions under which Renaissance artists and writers collaborated during the time. His book exists as the authoritative text on Jones' artistic significance. His attention to each genre of Renaissance art under which Jones worked emphasizes the common expectations and structures in which artists created.[28]

Chapters

In the first chapter, "*Campaspe*'s Antithetical Prose: 'Honoured, not Obtained; Painted, not Possessed,'" I explore John Lyly's 1584 comedy, *Campaspe*, which engages in *paragone* discourse through a series of arguments between philosophers, artists, and the king. Often centering on debates regarding the value of the liberal arts and the contentious relationship created *between* the arts and artisans of different media, the play includes many antithetical statements that superficially support the separation of media condoned in *paragone* texts. However, under scrutiny, these statements actually demonstrate a marriage between style and content, visual and verbal, and show how this partnership established a new status for the

[27] Barkan, *Mute Poem, Speaking Picture*

[28] In researching for individual chapters, I turned to a variety of scholars with interests including metadrama (see Jonas Barish and James L. Calderwood, *Shakespearean Metadrama*), personification (see James J. Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification*), idolatry, and the often complicated relationship between stage and/versus page. In particular, David Hawkes and Michael O'Connell reveal the complicated implications of Renaissance religious idolatry and how this ideology echoed within drama.

emerging role of the playwright. Therefore the play indicates a binding of media not only through its use of comparative antithetical statements, but also through the act of staging itself, which combines verbal and visual forms. I argue that plays such as *Campaspe* are venues for exploring the unique position playwrights craved for themselves during the emergence of their medium. Furthermore, I suggest that recognizing dramatists as multimedia artists affords contemporary scholars with a fuller understanding of texts like *Campaspe*, which so richly reaffirm the paradoxes and realities of a counter-*paragone* English society.

Chapter two, "Visual vs. Verbal: The Nature of Objects of Devotion and Idolatrous Effects in *Arden of Faversham*," engages with emission theory (one of the Renaissance theories of vision) and to a greater extent, the relationship between drama and idolatry in a post-reformation English society. Examining the anonymous 1592 domestic drama, I demonstrate that the binding characteristic between verbal and visual is their potential to harm, and that the related fear of idolatrous consequence—both on and off the stage—is what drives the narrative of the play. *Arden* dramatizes the dangers of verbal and visual art through the use/misuse of objects of devotion, resulting in questions concerning the complicated relationship between Renaissance works of art and those who engaged with them, especially through dramatic means. By considering the differences between object and content as potential vessels for dangerous effects on the viewer, one sees clearly how the *paragone* and issues of idolatry converge. Because the *paragone* directly questions the link between verbal and visual, it correlates to what we understand today as Renaissance idolatry. As *Arden* stages both the textual and visual through the use of a book and idol, it illuminates the issue of verbal and visual metadramatically as it presents these debates through its own multimodal form.

My third chapter, "Verbal and Visual Performed: Dramatic Personification of the *Paragone* in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*" takes a decidedly more performance-based approach to consider the effects of dramatic personification as actors representing a patronage-seeking painter and poet open the play. These characters, I argue, represent the entirety of their respective professions, thereby personifying the *paragone* as they argue for the superiority of their artistic form over all others. As the Painter and Poet describe the relative downfalls of the other's medium, they give voice to the larger totality of the arguments made by those within their respective fields. Soon, the scene reveals its metadramatic purpose as personification—a trope that is used to bind verbal with visual—dramatizes a concept that deliberately pits these two forms against each other. By identifying and arguing for the interaction between the Poet and Painter as dramatic personification, I recognize that the verbal and visual elements of this trope subvert long-held *paragone* arguments for a separation of media.

My final chapter, "Generic Word Vomit: Jonson's Multimodal Representation of Professionalization and the *Paragone*," returns us to the scholarly discussion of the 'War of the Theaters' but under the condition of exploring the visual aspect of the debate as well. Considering Jonson's satirical play *Poetaster* in particular, I argue that Jonson explores the *paragone* at a much more specific level—navigating the relative differences within the textual arts themselves by exerting pressure upon the comparative differences between poetry and drama. My analysis on the distinctions between textual forms is broadened by a discussion that includes courtly masques as well. Distinct from drama in obvious ways, including their settings in aristocratic homes and massive budgets, masques were often designed for the court and depended upon audience participation. What we gain from analyzing the ways in which Jonson represents his profession through the masques—that differ from that of commercial drama—is

that we recognize that genre correlates to the professional struggle Jonson himself experienced as not only a multimedia artist, but also as a dramatist *and* masquer. Appealing to the courtly audience by altering his narrative to include more explicit reference to the role of a masque-writer, he distances himself from particular characters and the artists they represent.

Chapter 1: *Campaspe*'s Antithetical Prose: "Honoured, not Obtained; Painted, not Possessed"

First-time readers of John Lyly's writing are bound to be struck by his infamous prose. He is perhaps best known for his 1578 romance *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit*, in which this distinctive, "euphuistic" prose style flourished, inspiring other writers (such as Shakespeare) to adopt his elegant—yet often criticized as artificial—command of words. Even today, some 400 years later, scholars associate Lyly with his liberal use of rhetorical devices housed within symmetrical lines of prose.

Euphuistic passages similarly dominate Lyly's likely first theatrical undertaking: the 1584 comedic drama *Campaspe*. Among the continual conversations and debates that construct the play, one is particularly struck by the number of such passages that refer to the role and value of the liberal arts. Some examples include:

> "give me pleasure that goes in my mouth, not the ear; I had rather fill my guts than my brains" (1.2.54-6)
>
> "be thou a painter to amend thine ill face, and thou, Psyllus, a philosopher to correct thine evil manners" (2.1.33-5)
>
> "Your Majesty must know it is no less hard to paint savours than virtues; colours can neither speak nor think" (3.4.78-80)

Each of these quotations complicates the potential limitations of the arts by challenging their productive value to society as they pit the senses against each other, in order to suggest that physical/interior satisfaction is preferable to outwardly expressions. That is, Lyly's euphuistic passages begin to reveal a tension between Renaissance ideals concerning surface and depth, a theme that is evident in both the presentation style and the complicated content of the play.

These lines also undoubtedly reveal the uncertainty of the artists' positions; the emerging status of both the playwright and the painter meant that their professions were targets for criticism. Lyly takes up this notion in *Campaspe*, and while his passages seem to contrast what some may perceive as unnecessary media (typically referred to as the liberal arts) to basic human or societal needs (including food and safety), superficially his lines suggest a similar contrast between his own attention to form and content. As a result, his plays have often been read with the assumption that his own euphuistic form flourishes in style, but lacks in depth. As is well known, Harry Clemons and Morris William Croll have described Lyly's euphuistic passages as simply examples of ornamental language "characterized by the use of the so called 'figures of sound' rather than by 'figures of thought.'"[29] Shimon Sandbank similarly assess that the "radically balanced structure of Lyly's sentences is the product of a compulsion to write rhythmically, rather than of an analytic habit of thinking" (1).

In light of these readings, my interest lies in identifying and analyzing the meanings behind Lyly's antithetical statements, which often center on debates regarding the value of the liberal arts and the contentious relationship created *between* the arts and artisans of different media. The emergent multimedia style of drama that, coupled verbal to visual forms, relied upon both superficial levels of style and more meaningful depth of content. Drama therefore created a new type of English Renaissance artesian, one who was defined by his efforts in both visual presentation and textual meaning. In this way, the playwright was defined by his involvement in both manual (acting/presenting) and intellectual (writing) labor, and his professional identity evolved as the English Renaissance interest in theater developed. The clearly polarizing debate between verbal and visual was often discussed by differentiating manual from intellectual

[29] Cited in Barish, Jonas A. "The Prose Style of John Lyly". ELH, Vol. 23, No. 1. The Johns Hopkins UP, March 1956, 14.

laborers. For example, William Harrison's 1576 *Description of England* categorizes those "whoso abideth in the university (giving his mind to his book), or professeth physic and the liberal sciences" as citizens worthy of gentlemanly status if their position means that they "can live without manual labour" (8). And while some dramatists eventually realized enough success to purchase their status and "have a coat of arms bestowed upon him," their general ties to the dramatic presentation—staging, traveling, and worst of all, acting—meant that dramatists were not all together excluded from performing a certain level of manual labor, in addition to attending to their own intellectual labor of writing. Because the profession of Renaissance dramatist demanded such split attention, I argue that plays like *Campaspe* are venues for exploring the unique position that playwrights craved for themselves during the emergence of their medium. All at once, dramatists were responsible for writing engaging and potentially profitable plays, presenting verbal *and* visual productions, attending to poetic form and using stylized language, appealing to the masses and the aristocracy alike, collaborating with actors, playhouse owners, and other business associates, adapting to new venues and acting troupes, and so on. With these multiple roles in mind, it is easy to see how the Renaissance playwright crossed professional boundaries and, almost out of necessity, needed to establish for himself just what his profession was and what it meant to the larger scope of English society. In this way, what seem like clearly defined lines drawn between the verbal and visual artist began to fade and the emergence of a new artist—and new social position—materialized.

However, the supposed clear line between the verbal and visual arts and their artists has carried through to the ways in which we approach Lyly's words today, thereby interfering with constructing a fuller picture of his artist universe. Rather than privilege one form or level of reading over the other, I suggest that understanding Lyly's work, and his response to the

paragone, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century discourse that argued for the superiority of one artistic medium over all others, lies in a careful interpretation of his play as a marriage between style and content. Lyly's antithetical statements, I argue, expose remarkable relations between the verbal and visual arts, and, further, work to disassemble the supposed dichotomy established between media through *paragone* discourse. Working against traditional binaries established between media, these statements help to reveal a new anti-*paragone* English artistic society and subsequently expose new ways of understanding the Renaissance relationship between the arts and artisans.

Scholars have generally approached Lyly's texts from a courtly context, viewing them as "examples of royal flattery and appeals for royal patronage" (Tassi 71).[30] Indeed, this method of reading has often meant that scholars argue for meta-dramatic functions of the play. For example, Michael Pincombe regards Apelles as Lyly's "author-figure" (41), and Hunter's seminal study of Lyly's life as humanist and courtier remains an important one for scholars of his work; his text continues to inform our understanding of Lyly's dramatic and literary authorship.[31] Scholars have also responded to the aforementioned Child and Croll, in order to express their own understanding of Lyly's distinctive prose style. Jonas Barish, for example, criticizes their approach as driving a "wedge between style and content" and further argues that such a response "interferes still more with any effort to get at the heart of a writer's artistic universe, where style and meaning interpenetrate" (15-16). To this point, I argue that Lyly's stylistic antithetical statements are ripe with meaning, especially regarding the role of the arts and artists within what

[30] Kent Cartwright also attempts to breakdown the courtly vs. commercial drama binary in his article, "The Confusions of 'Gallathea': John Lyly as Popular Dramatists". Cartwright, Kent. *Comparative Drama* 32.2 (1998): 207-39.

[31] Tassi, too suggests that "Lyly must have seen himself, to some extent, in the figure of Apelles—a skilled artist seeking to please a patron with grace and tact." (70)

scholars have largely accepted as a *paragone* artistic society. Specifically, my reading situates *Campaspe* within historical debates regarding the *paragone* and demonstrates how perpetuating this division between forms results in an unproductive characterization of English Renaissance arts and artists. Lyly's antithetical statements demonstrate a marriage between style and content, visual and verbal, and this partnership established a new status for the emerging role of the playwright. Furthermore, recognizing dramatists as multimedia artists affords contemporary scholars a fuller understanding of texts like *Campaspe*, which so richly reaffirm the paradoxes and realities of a counter-*paragone* English society.

By comparing their work to that of visual artists, Renaissance writers who participated in *paragone* debates deviate from their Italian predecessors in the visual arts. Generally more congenial than the earlier Italian *paragone* participants, English writers mobilized *paragone* assumptions in order to draw more specific comparisons between the arts. It is as if, when comparing textual media to visual forms, writers could not help but reveal the visual nature of their own medium. For example, in his 1586 text *A discourse of English poetrie*, William Webbe compares his humble attempt to defend poetry to King Alexander's failed efforts to learn painting from Apelles. Using what Lyly dramatized in *Campaspe* just two years prior, Webbe makes use of Apelles's assessment of Alexander's bungled drawing as "it is done like a king." He does this to suggest that readers will perhaps judge his own writing as being "done like a Scholler, meaning, as I could, but indeede more like to a learner, then one through grounded in Poeticall workmanship." In recognizing his lack of poetic skills, Webbe compares himself to the example of the king: interestingly, this comparison acknowledges the skill and labor that go into creating both forms, which thereby recognizes their similarities and subtly legitimizes the artistry of both media. Further, it is important to note that, here, Webbe (like Lyly) distinguishes the

painter from the king and in doing so suggests that the artist holds a self-imposed position that is different from the aristocracy, and yet is also clearly demarcated from those defined through their status as manual laborers alone.[32] Webbe continues to draw comparisons between learning to write (or defend) poetry and learning to paint by citing Alexander's failed attempt to paint once more and suggesting, "I in drawing this Poeticall discourse, make it some where to straight (leauing out the cheefe collours and ornaments of Poetry) in an other place to wyde (stuffing in peeces little to true Poetry) as one neuer acquainted wyth the learned Muses" (1). Drawing juxtapositions between ornamental language and paint colors, Webbe introduces his pro-poetry proclamation, interestingly, by comparing the form to visual art.

Antithetical Prose within *Campaspe*

Campaspe engages with *paragone* discourse by teasing out, in its successive conversations (between philosophers, between a painter and his subject, or between a painter and the king, and so on), the arguments espoused in *paragone* prose. Specifically, Lyly challenges arguments that pit media against each other due to their apparently divergent purposes in serving either the superficiality of the senses, or rather the depth of the intellect. While the play dramatizes polemic arguments, it also dismantles these attitudes not only through its use of comparative antithetical statements, but also through the act of staging itself, which combines verbal and visual media. The play is set in Athens, where King Alexander falls in love with his beautiful captive, Campaspe.[33] After granting her freedom, he commissions the painter Apelles

[32] Webbe also separates scholar from poet, and in doing so creates a particular space in society for the poet, as unique from the intellectual.

[33] The character of Campaspe, as Alexander's mistress enjoyed a long and powerful literary history. The love triangle between them and Apelles was portrayed in Pliny's *Natural History*, mentioned in *The Book of the Courtier*, and introduced into Lyly's corpus within his most memorable work, *Euphues*.

to paint her portrait. The painter and his subject spend a significant amount of time with each other, and consequently Campaspe and Apelles fall in love. Once Alexander tricks Apelles into revealing his love for Campaspe, the king graciously allows Apelles to maintain his relationship with her as Alexander slips away from his role as courter and back into the position of king. As scholars have noted, the plot is rather thin; instead of an emphasis on action, Lyly makes way for stimulating conversations and debates concerning the arts, presented through an elegant command of language (Best 75-86). However, it is interesting to note that while the style of these debates may seem artificial, their content is significantly meaningful when it comes to understanding the nature of Renaissance media. In this way, Lyly constructs aesthetically pleasing references concerning the status of the arts, while also suggesting deeper substantive meanings behind such statements; doing so allows Lyly's antithetical statements to represent, but also subvert *paragone* binaries by linking style and content.

Campaspe exists alongside a number of English plays written at or before 1600 that include either a painter as a character or portraits that would have appeared as stage properties (or simply made reference to them). *Arden of Faversham*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *The Spanish Tragedy* are some examples of canonical works that incorporated various media and examined explicitly the potential limitations of the visual arts in particular.[34] An interest in the boundaries of visual and verbal forms is evident in pre-17th century drama, and playwrights were able to explore supposed medial restrictions through their own multi-media form. Three of these plays, including *Campaspe*, probe the visual artists' profession specifically, instead of simply including finished works of art as a stage property. However, conventional readings of *Campaspe* tend to approach it through the lens of Lyly's

[34] Technically, the painter scene was added in 1602.

biography, specifically regarding his influence on other Renaissance writers and his courtly aspirations. G.K. Hunter's book, *John Lyly: The Humanist and Courtier* and Andy Kesson's more recent book, *John Lyly and Early Modern Scholarship* both consider these issues, and also discuss Lyly's move from writing fictional prose to drama. While these traditional readings serve to provide us with an important understanding of Renaissance educational and political cultures, and how authorship fits into these realms, my interest in Lyly's writing falls within the context of the *paragone*.

The play demonstrates a rise in Renaissance consciousness concerning the role of the verbal and visual arts and, in effect, the role of drama as a multi-modal art form and the dramatists as a multimedia artist. When one contextualizes the play within this larger scheme of Renaissance artistic society, a culture that both upholds and subverts *paragone* arguments, one realizes the stakes in drama emerging as both a textual and visual form. The play situates itself within these larger cultural concerns by dramatizing the wider implications the role the arts played in Renaissance England. One such issue pertains to the role of the artist, and his perceived contribution to society. While the play's philosophers argue for their own importance, their servants question their necessity when basic needs are yet to be met. And while King Alexander praises philosophers, he questions Apelles's medium until he is unable to replicate his work. Binaries—those between media, and the professions and statuses of individual characters—dominate the play, but so does the inextricable connectedness between these entities. Although *Campaspe* is a reflection of the desire to maintain order through distinctive, albeit artificial, categories, the play is also suggestive of the changing attitudes towards media, including its own dramatic form.

The play begins with a discussion between the servant and the philosopher alongside one between the servant and the painter; the servant describes how unnecessary the arts are because, unlike food, they do not satisfy fundamental needs within men. This discussion initiates the discourse that follows and shapes the play. Manes ignites the debate by expressing his view on music: "give me pleasure that goes in at the mouth, not the ear; I had rather fill my guts than my brains" (1.2.54-6). Commenting on the superfluous nature of music in this way, Manes's antithetical critique of the arts is contingent upon his understanding of their role within his life as a servant; here, he places food in opposition to music, naturally privileging the basic need of sustenance. In similar fashion, Psyllus, Apelles's servant, mocks how the painter argues for the significance of painting, and its ability to fulfill the viewer to a greater extent than perhaps even food:

> This doth he [Apelles] then: bring in many examples that some have lived by savours, and proveth that much easier it is to fat by colours, and tells of birds that have been fatted by painted grapes in the winter, and how many have so fed their eyes with their mistresses' picture that they never desired to take food, being glutted with the delight in their favours. (1.2.65-71)[35]

Given the context of their conversation, it is clear that here Lyly positions Psyllus to make fun of Apelles, but this passage also provides Apelles the opportunity to state his own side of the argument through Psyllus.[36] Therefore, this debate serves as a microcosm for the underlying

[35] See Tassi for a description on the erotic nature of Renaissance poetry, especially regarding Apelles and his depiction of Venus in *Campaspe*.

[36] While Psyllus argues for the importance of physical nourishment over that which the arts might provide, we must not forget that the play's audience is in fact made of those who support the arts, not only spending their time to view the play, but also paying an admittance fee, or otherwise supporting the production through patronage. Therefore, we would be remiss to not recognize the fact that audience members were more than likely biased towards the arguments Apelles makes, especially in this scene, which so distinctly draws either side of the argument so closely together.

criticisms of the arts that *Campaspe* works to unpack. Psyllus condemns Apelles's passionate view that the visual arts can serve to nourish much more than simple physical needs; to Psyllus, this argument is laughable because his view of the arts is from the perspective of a servant who most likely has real concerns about meeting his basic needs. Interestingly, the arguments the servants present function to alienate them from their economic and cultural superiors even further; their speeches reveal that they are not equipped with the same cultural knowledge as their employers. And, implicitly, their statements estrange them from the audience as well. While the servants argue against the value of the arts, a courtly audience filled with artistic patrons looks on; this meta-dramatic moment has the potential to garner a variety of responses.[37] Audiences might laugh at the servants' ignorance and their lack of social and cultural knowledge. Conversely, audience members may grow defensive of the arts, in which they invest and which they enjoy. Inevitably, to various degrees, these debates invite audience members to reflect upon their own engagement with the arts. At the same time, this scene also implicitly distinguishes the artist from the servants who mock them.[38]

In this way, the servants' discussion preludes Alexander's defense of the arts, setting into motion a narrative that concerns the very debates that occurred within the larger cultural contexts of Renaissance England. Perhaps representative of the view of the courtly audience, King Alexander cites the value of the arts within his kingdom: "I have resolved with myself in my

[37] The play contains both a Blackfriars Theater and a courtly preface, indicating that the play was clearly performed at both venues. The preface also indicates that a troupe of boy actors comprised the characters on stage. The play went through several reprintings, with the existence of four quartos from 1584-1591.

[38] This important distinction is something that I discuss in further detail in my next section on artistic professions in Early Modern England. There, I explore in greater depth how artistic professions are represented within the play. Because acting companies served under a patron, they can be interpreted as servants to their patron. In similar fashion, as a playwright often associated with the court, Lyly could been seen as serving under his patron, the Lord Chamberlain. The acting tropes that would have performed *Campaspe*, served under their own patrons; The Oxford's Boys performed under Edward de Vere's patronage, while the Children of Paul's served their master, Sebastian Westcott. See *Shakespeare and Theatrical Patronage* by Paul Whitfield and Suzanne R. Westfall for more on children's acting companies.

court to have as many philosophers as I had in my camp soldiers. My court shall be a school wherein I will have used as great doctrine in peace as I did in war discipline" (1.3.70-4). In response to his declaration, Aristotle replies, "nothing better becometh kings than literature, which maketh them come as nearer to the gods in wisdom as they do in dignity" (1.3.76-8). By proclaiming that philosophy has a stake in creating a strong political doctrine and a wise king, both Alexander and Aristotle (who of course speaks favorably about his own profession) refute the servants' prior argument concerning the uselessness of humanistic study. And while literature and philosophy were sometimes at odds with each other, they still belong within the aural/written sector, categorized within the liberal arts and separate from the necessity of the military, as Alexander states in this scene. If philosophy has a role in maintaining a peaceful kingdom and a strong king, then the value of the study serves a tangible purpose and can no longer be segmented into a category of useless arts. This royal interest in the arts is of course reflective of the Renaissance patron and appreciator of the arts we have come to acknowledge in royal figures such as Queen Elizabeth and King James. And so we see from the outset that the play provokes the question of artistic relevancy, particularly amongst different classes, and by doing so deliberately dramatizes *paragone* anxieties concerning the place of the arts and artists in Renaissance English society. This is the paradox of the *paragone* debate and its subsequent incarnations; Renaissance plays tend to represent the *paragone*, but not as a means to condone or negate *paragone* arguments. In actuality, plays like *Campaspe* argue for a blending of media.

Artistic Professions in England

But playwrights did not necessarily come from a position of power, and therefore were fighting an uphill battle with their arguments for a unification of verbal and visual forms. While

aristocratic audiences enjoyed viewing their plays, playwrights were under their authority, which meant following rules of censorship and writing to the preferences of their audiences, while also attempting to secure their place in English society. At this point in English literary history, drama was still in a place of transition, not yet regarded as a respected form. Furthermore, as Laurie Ellinghausen reminds us, playwrights themselves were not universally accepted as artists, but indeed as laborers, especially since professional playwrights wrote out of economic necessity, a fact that certainly segmented them from their patrons and upper-class audiences (91). But at the same time, playwrights' proximity to the court, their engagement with their interests, and their clear literacy meant that playwrights were also distinct from their penny-paying audience members. Efforts to dramatize this debate, within both courtly and public playhouse settings, also acknowledge the social and artistic limbo in which playwrights found themselves. Inevitably, dramatizing debates about form lead to issues concerning the status of the visual artist as well. And so we see a recognition of the judgement playwrights faced, but simultaneously glimpse their intentions to elevate their emerging art form and, moreover, their livelihood as one deserving of respect.

In this way, the debates that the servants and Alexander participate in relate to the very serious concerns to the whole of Renaissance English society. Anti-theatrical writers attacked the theater from many angles, often citing religious reasons for their respective stances, but it is important to note that many of their criticisms stem from their concern regarding, specifically, the visual nature of theater. The connection between religion and the visual is clear; operating in a post-reformation society, plays were feasts for not only the ears but also the eyes, which resulted in accusations of plays being nothing more than extensions of the Catholic emphasis on the visual through the use of idols. The Anglican Church of course sought to eradicate the use of

idols by circulating *The Book of Homilies*, where 'Against peril of Idolatry' can be found in the second book, published in 1571. It warns against the practices of decorating churches with an "infinite multitudes of images" and decking them "with gold and silver, painted with colours, set [with] stone and pearl, clothed [in] silks and precious vestures." The homily goes on to argue that such ostentatious use of visuals in various forms was not only superfluous, but also harmful to those who engaged with them:

> Whereas indeed they by the said images, and such glorious decking of the temple, have nothing at all profited such as were wise and of understanding; but have thereby greatly hurt the simple and unwise, occasioning them thereby to commit most horrible idolatry. And the covetous persons by the same occasion, seeming to worship, and peradventure worshipping indeed, not only the images, but also the matter of them, gold and silver, as that vice is of all others in the Scriptures peculiarly called idolatry, or worshipping of images.

The sermon warns that those who look upon such idols are led astray from actually worshipping the deity, as their attention turns to the materials and beauty of such idols. In essence, the visual part of this kind of worship is what the homilies warned against, and so it may not seem surprising that critics of theater saw a connection between religious idolatry and the masses of English men and women who swarmed the theaters to gaze upon—in their view—living, breathing idols. Further, when considering the origins of secular English drama, which of course followed the previous tradition of mystery and morality plays, it is evident why some considered the new form of drama to be dangerous.[39]

[39] For more on the transition from religious to secular drama, see Anne Barton's 1967 book, *Shakespeare and the Idea of the Play*.

While the homilies argued for the potential power of idols to divide worshippers' attention away from God, anti-theatrical writers argued for the potential of the multimedia mode of drama to capture their viewers' attention and emotions. As Michael O'Connell argues, anti-theatrical writers were convinced that the sensual power of the theater overcame its viewers: "One is surrounded by the visual sumptuousness of the playhouse itself, by the motion and gesture of the actor's bodies, and by the aural richness of poetic speech" (18). As a venue with mass appeal, with the ability to critique or reaffirm societal norms, the playhouse, given this sensual appeal, worried those who were eager to maintain particular (often religious) values. Early attacks, such as from John Northbrooke, categorize plays as idle and vain pastimes that threaten to take away from "so manye meanes and holy exercises and occupations, to bestow our selues eyther to the glorie of God, or the profit of our neighbours." His argument rests on religious ideals rather than commenting on aesthetic value; he contends that men should be using the time they waste to attend plays on better things, ideally actions that would best serve God. Stephen Gosson's later treatise against theater takes a decidedly more brutal approach towards drama. He recognizes the visual nature of drama by comparing players on the stage to painters in their studio. He claims that players "pretend as the Painter in his shoppe expresseth one or other by a counterfaite: so the Poet on stages presenteth you a picture of his owne drawing." Part of Gosson's contention then, is due to theater's visual nature and, more importantly, is reflective of the potential power the visual held over viewers. And like Webbe, Gosson's argument against the form is rooted in the doctrine; he maintains that viewers who "gase upon playes" are guilty of standing "in the way of sinners, because plaies are the proceedings & practices of the Gentiles in their Idolotrie." Both of these examples clearly attack drama from the view of religion, but underneath these firm oppositions lies a simultaneous critique of drama's visual nature and a

recognition of the power of the arts that ultimately reaffirms the power of drama and the dramatist.

And so while criticizing drama, anti-theatrical writers acknowledge, and even argue for, the potential of the medium to influence its audience. Renaissance critics emphatically opposed drama based on allegations of idolatry; plays made audience members "louvers of laughter, and pleasure, without any meane." In other words, because anti-theatrical critics saw dramatic productions as nothing more than appeals to superficial desires for pleasure through a visual and aural presentation, they contended that plays proved to be poor influences for their audience members. Mobilizing anxieties concerning the rise of drama and the visual arts, anti-theatrical writers contextualized their opposition to both media through religious means. In this way art had the potential to threaten the establishment of religion in English society; drama endangered its viewers in that it could take them further away from God through artificial means. *Campaspe* taps into these anxieties by consistently calling the role and function of the arts into question. While not specifically religious in nature, the text dramatizes the social, economic, and romantic power of the arts, all of which could easily be read as idolatrous in nature. Overall, *Campaspe* dramatizes both sides of the argument concerning the arts, simultaneously confirming the debate, and yet subverting it through its own visual/verbal multimedia presentation. The clear paradox in presenting the debate and simultaneously subverting it is created due to the emerging status of the form; a medium in flux, drama endured harsh attacks by some and praise by others, but in recognizing these two views, we must also remember that drama simply had not yet earned its status as a high-brow art form. For this reason, we see plays such as *Campaspe* grappling with the *paragone* but also working to establish their importance through successful productions that bind the verbal and visual arts together. In this way, the dramatist himself also attempts to earn

superior status by carving out an identity for himself as the nature of his profession, and his status within Renaissance English society evolved as a result.

One way in which writers such as Lyly distinguished themselves from laborers was to use elevated language in their writing; in effect, this proved their form to be a thoughtful and creative medium, and it also placed playwrights in a position to be recognized as artists. But unlike poets, dramatists also clearly staged their creations by relying not only on aural appeal, but also working to create effective visual productions as well. Specifically, Lyly makes use of antithetical statements within *Campaspe* in order to emphasize the connection between the arts and represent the importance of both depth through content, and surface through style—both of which were needed to establish the form as an emerging art.

To get at the function of Lyly's interest in style and, more specifically, his antithetical statements, I turn to Puttenham's comprehensive 1589 rhetorical guide, *The Art of English Poesy*. There, he recognizes the desire of the writer to elevate language from the "ordinary limits of common utterance" through the use of figurative speech.[40] When Puttenham defines the purpose of ornamental language, he states that the use of some literary figures is meant to simply alter "the ear only and not the mind," while other forms aim to "deceive the ear and also the mind." This separation runs concurrent to the supposed separation of Lyly's antithetical statements. Previously thought of as affecting "the ear" only, it is my view that Lyly's antithetical statements serve Puttenham's latter purpose. Thereby, such phrases "deceive the ear and also the mind, drawing it [language] from plainness and simplicity to a certain doubleness"

[40] Henry Peacham's earlier 1577 rhetorical manual, *The Garden of Eloquence*, states that antithesis serves the dual function of delivering meaning *and* pleasing the ear: "The vse hereof is chiefly to repeate a word of importance, and effectuall signification, as to repeate the cause before his singular effects, or contrariwise the effect before his seuerall causes, or any other word of principall accompt. It serueth also pleasantly to the eare, both in the respects of the repetition, and also of the varietie of the new clause" (38)

(238).[41] By using terminology such as "deceive" and "doubleness," Puttenham recognizes the power of language to move those who encounter it. And, perhaps as the anti-theatrical writers did, he acknowledges the potential for literary trickery--but he differs from those critics when he suggests that only when speech breaks from decorum and delivers "foul indecency or disproportion of sound, situation, or sense" that this potential influence becomes negative. Puttenham's awareness of the potential for textual art to deceive is clearly linked to writers across *paragone* arguments, as their treaties are often bound in similar ideas relating to the potential dangers of the arts' influence. No matter which side of the argument writers took, they stood in agreement that art held great potential to influence those who engage with it.[42] Specifically, they recognized that certain techniques could be employed to emphasize a particular reaction amongst viewers.[43] Likewise, Henry Peacham's 1577 rhetorical manual *The Garden of Eloquence* seems to identify antithesis as serving both an ornamental and contextual purpose:

> This is a most excellent ornament of eloquence, seruing most aptly to amplification, it graceth and bewtifieth the Oration with pleasant varietie, and giueth singular perspicuitie and light by the opposition, it is so generall that it may serue to amplifie and garnish any graue and weightie cause. (161)

[41] For Puttenham, this 'doubleness' refers to the ability of language to "pass the ordinary limits of common utterance". With this term, he acknowledges the power of crafted language to do or act as something more than non-artistic language. Interestingly, his explanation of figurative speech is tinged with an undeniable tone of negativity. While promoting the power of artistic language, he includes variants of the words abusive, trespasses, deceive, guileful, covert, dark, as so on to describe figurative language, thereby acknowledging the perception of language to trick the listener/reader. However, we must recognize that in this specific case, it is likely that Puttenham's use of 'deceive' refers to the ability of language to overcome the audience in a visceral sense.

[42] Detractors of art felt that this influence was inherently negative, the arts deceived its viewers by enticing their senses with untrue stories and ideas.

[43] Paintings, for example, were criticized for their ability to trick the eye. Anamorphic paintings in particular had the ability to fool the eye are referenced in several Renaissance texts in order to signal deception including Webster's *The White Devil* and Shakespeare's Sonnets, *Twelfth Night*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Peacham begins describing antithesis by discussing its appeal to ear through "Oration," but his explanation also seems to conclude that it has the ability to enhance important meaning, indicating that it serves not just an ornamental purpose, but also carries the ability to emphasize an important point that the writer wishes to make. Both of these period definitions recognize the importance of both surface and depth, or sound and meaning. Appealing to the ear through a pleasant sound *and* also affecting the mind through thought-provoking content means that antithetical statements were thought of as dually interested in style and content. We see this at work in *Campaspe*; Lyly makes important claims about the status of the arts in Renaissance society, but he does so with great attention to appealing to the ear.

Interestingly, many of Lyly's antithetical statements come from the artistic subject herself, Campaspe, whose quick wit and beauty enamors Apelles. Her language resembles that of Renaissance artistic/rhetorical manuals that draw comparisons between the arts. In response to Apelles's flirtation, she replies, "Sir, I had thought you had been commanded to paint with your hand, not to gloze with your tongue" (3.1.3-4). Here, she makes an important connection between the painters' and writers' tools and implies that both forms flatter the subject in similar ways. Related analogies continue throughout their conversation. When Apelles continues to praise her, Campaspe responds: "I am too young to understand your speech though old enough to withstand your device. You have been so long used to colours you can do nothing but colour" (3.2.15-7). Campaspe suggests that Apelles is so used to beautifying his subjects through painting that he cannot stop his flattery and it carries through to his words. She has conflated the visual with the textual by suggesting the superficiality of both forms. Both media, within this context, serve the same purpose of wooing Campaspe. Rounding out their conversation, Campaspe advises, "If you begin to dip your tongue with cunning, I pray dip your pencil in

colours and fall to that you must do, do not that you would do" (3.4.53-5). By suggesting that Apelles should remain true to his purpose, she again conflates Apelles's paintbrush with his tongue, both used in this case to flatter her. In these passages, we see that like the servants, Campaspe questions the level of depth to these forms. Interestingly, she questions the validity of flattering speech through her own use of ornamental language. All the while, Lyly draws concrete parallels between the act of painting and the act of using poetic or elevated speech. In terms of the larger stakes for such associations, we must ask where Lyly falls within this comparison. As a dramatist, he attends to both verbal and visual means of representation, and he seems to promote their undeniable connectedness.

Artistic Professions within England and *Campaspe*

One way to explore the significance of *paragone* discourse in Renaissance English society as well as within the play is to recognize how representations of humanistic professions are depicted in both literary and historical texts. While *paragone* literature divided verbal from visual arts, *paragone* writers—both poets and visual artists--were also making claims about the differences in their professions. This emergence of professional exploration is a hallmark of the Renaissance, as Ellinghausen argues: "The concept of labor as a calling, which was assisted by early modern experiments in democracy, print, and Protestant religion, had a lasting effect on the history of authorship as a profession" (1). As such, we begin to see visual artists investigating the boundaries of their profession as it relates to their sense of personal identity. Specifically, artists argued about the superiority of individual forms within their *own* profession: Hilliard argued for the supreme power of limning, while Haydocke's English translation of Lomazzo's Italian text recognized the "controversie [that] hath beene betweene the Painters and Carvers, whether of

their two Artes should be the worthier" (61) By contrasting professional qualities, *paragone* writers privileged their own respective forms, simultaneously discrediting all others. While painters defended themselves from the idea that they "cozened and deluded" their viewers, anti-theatrical writers condemned drama for its visual nature and its similar capability to affect the viewer negatively (Haydocke, introduction). For instance, Northbrooke's texts asks if men and women can "resort to such playes, and beholde them without any hurt to themselues, or to others". In response, Northbrooke notes that "filthie songs hurte thy chaste eares, and also shalt see that which shall be greeuos vnto thine eyes: for our eyes are as windows of the mynde." Northbrooke's concern is that audience members will be seduced by the sensorial multimedia production of the theater, and therefore influenced by anything that playwrights might present to them. Writing within a post-reformation, religiously tumultuous society, and working under the pretext that playwrights are not to be trusted, critics such as Northbrooke distrusted the form due to the immensity of its perceived power.

In sum, *paragone* literature attacked both the form, and then subsequently the artist; we see a similar appeal represented in *Campaspe*. Because criticisms of media extended to the artists themselves, detractors of visual or verbal artists seem to be equally preoccupied with the finished piece that the viewer encounters, as with the intention of the creator behind the work. And yet *paragone* writers seem compelled to draw comparisons between forms as well as between writers and artists. We have already discussed Sidney's mute poem/speaking picture analogy, as well as Webbe's introduction in which he compares his *A discourse of English poetrie* to Alexander's feeble attempt to paint like Apelles. Also, Castiglione contends in his introduction that he writes not "by the hand of Raphael or Michelangelo, but by that of a lowly painter and one who only knows how to draw the main lines, without adorning the truth with pretty colors or

making, by perspective art, that which is not seem to be" (3). These examples exist alongside many other Renaissance introductions that compare the process of creating verbal and visual art to one another. And so I argue, along with Leonard Barkan, that these analogies suggest that "even when we insist that poetry and painting lie separately, it turns out that they lie together" (160).[44] There is enough evidence coming from *paragone* writers alone to suggest that this is the case. By placing verbal and visual professions in constant relation to one another, *paragone* writers inevitably suggest that these professions have more in common than is supposed. What we can gather from this is that the verbal artist worked in tandem with pictorial artists, each exploring their respective forms in a new artistic environment, both up against the critical eye and ears of polemic critics and eager to maintain an unrealistic sense of years gone by, which in their eyes was threatened by the immense power these arts were perceived to hold over audiences. Simply perpetuating these debates does nothing but preserve an argument that wasn't even fully realized in Renaissance English society. Instead, what is more apparent is that these media were interwoven within Renaissance artistic society despite what their arguments may claim, and scholars today would be remiss to not recognize the importance of reading these plays as inter-medial expressions and subversions of Renaissance realities and ideals.

Campaspe embodies the complicated notion of verbal/visual parallelism by staging *paragone* arguments through antithetical statements and, more specifically, by dramatizing the profession of the visual artist through dramatic means. Because the play stages an examination of artistic professions, critics have assumed that Lyly's characters are thinly-veiled representations

[44] Barkan's clever line comes at the end of his close analysis of the Painter and Poet in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*, a play in which I argue in a later chapter, personifies the *paragone* debate through the theatrical presentation.

of himself (Alwes 399-421).[45] While Lyly is typically cast in the role of the artist, philosopher, or courtier, Derek Alwes differs from many critics and suggests that "the most significant and the most purposeful self-portrait [of Lyly] is as servant" (400). Alwes argues that Lyly used his plays "for purposes of self-promotion", and as in my reading, suggests that *Campaspe* in particular serves a meta-dramatic, self-reflexive function. But Alwes aligns Lyly with the servants, claiming that both Lyly and the servants "complain that they are unrewarded by their masters" (406). In this way, he relegates the play to the traditional reading concerning Lyly's relationship with the court, wherein his master is the monarch. By suggesting that an important theme to the play is "the *limitations* of the monarch's power," Alwes's reading contributes to a body of scholarship that focuses on courtly negotiations of Lyly's career and individual texts and neglects to notice the powerful commentary being made on the wider purpose and function of the arts and a new position of the artist in Renaissance English society.

Furthermore, as I have mentioned, we actually see Lyly carving out a new social position for the artist, a certain status that is above the laboring servants who simply seek to fill their stomachs and yet also intentionally separate from the aristocracy that attempts, and fails to imitate Apelles's artistic skills. In this way, my reading differs from Alwes in that I do not read Lyly's play as a representation of his aristocratic desires, but rather as a fulfillment of *paragone* thought; *Campaspe* is a play that explores contemporary artistic issues through stylized language and a multimedia presentation. We must recognize Lyly as both a verbal and visual artist. Therefore, my reading suggests that we pay greater attention to the way in which humanistic

[45] Alwes points out that G.K. Hunter states that Euphues "reads like the pipe dream of a disappointed don" (61). And F.G. Fleay's 1891 analysis of *Campaspe* suggests like since Lyly was a scholar, he is akin to the character of Diogenes. Kesson focuses on Lyly's printed texts and argues that the contention between Apelles and Alexander can be read "in the context of the prose fiction market"; borrowing these characters from his earlier text, Lyly dramatizes these characters as a simple "continuation of one of the most basic euphuistic reference points of his fiction." See *John Lyly and Early Modern Authorship*, 160.

professions are portrayed within the play. Recognizing Lyly's dual position within the English artistic landscape allows us to understand with more clarity, why Lyly, along with so many other Renaissance playwrights, grapples with his role in artistic society by dramatizing *paragone* arguments.

In *Campaspe* we witness the dramatization of *paragone* arguments when in Act III, King Alexander tests Apelles by challenging the boundaries of his work. What seems to be an offhand comment concerning Apelles's ability to paint Campaspe, actually opens a *paragone*-like discussion concerning the representational limitations of the visual form. After seeing Campaspe and being in awe of her beauty, Alexander proclaims, "Would he [Apelles] could colour the life with the feature! And methinketh, Apelles, were you as cunning as report saith you are, you may paint flowers as well with sweet smells as fresh colours […]" (3.4.73-4). Alexander questions Apelles's ability to capture Campaspe's beauty by comparing her to flowers, knowing that when he paints flowers, he cannot capture their key feature: their scent. Likewise, Alexander doubts that Apelles can truly represent Campaspe's chief feature: her physical beauty. He questions the boundaries of Apelles's form—of course painting only affects sight and obviously cannot represent other senses as, in this case, the sense of smell. Thus, Alexander partakes in a discussion that several Renaissance plays have dramatized.

Like *Campaspe*, both Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* and William Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* have staged *paragone* discussions that question the representational limitations of the painted form. Kyd's 1602 play is meta-dramatic in many ways, but the addition of what has been referred to as "the painter scene" is especially relevant for our purposes.[46] Upon meeting the Painter, Hieronimo tests his capabilities, beginning with his desire to be painted

[46] The most obvious example of meta-dramatic form within the text is of course the play within the play.

"five years younger than I am […with] my wife Isabella standing by me, with a speaking look to my son Horatio" (fourth addition, 119-122). Progressively, Hieronimo's requests grow more and more outlandish, even as the Painter continues to confirm that he can in fact paint the scenes that he requests. Eventually, Hieronimo requests a scene with so much detail that it certainly cannot be painted: "Let the clouds scowl, make the moon dark, the stars extinct, the winds blowing, the bells tolling, the owl shrieking, the toads croaking, the minutes jarring, and the clock striking twelve" (fourth addition, 147-151). In requesting movement, sounds, and feelings, Hieronimo knowingly requests that which the painter cannot deliver: a visual representation of his deep grief and desire for revenge. In similar fashion, a Painter and Poet square off in *Timon of Athens*, and the Painter tries to defend his work against the Poet, who claims to have captured Timon more accurately through *his* medium—the poem. In response to the Poet's boastful description of his own work, the Painter replies, "'Tis common. / A thousand moral paintings I can show / That shall demonstrate these quick blows of Fortune's / More pregnantly than words" (1.1.91-3). Like *Campaspe* and *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Timon of Athens* dramatizes the perceived limitations of the visual arts through its own multi-media form. Clearly we can make substantial connections between the way in which the arts are dramatized and the larger *paragone* culture of Renaissance England.

Through Lyly's use of antithetical statements, we not only gain a sense of the *paragone* between the arts, but also between professions. Displaying knowledge of artistic theory, Lyly reaffirms the artists' profession by allowing him to speak to his own training. Conversely, Alexander is staged as an incapable student of Apelles, thereby declaring that not only talent, but skill and knowledge are needed to paint well. In this way, Lyly distinguishes the artist from the king. Alexander goes on to ponder, "Why should not I by labour be as cunning as Apelles?"

Here, Alexander demotes Apelles to the position of a simple laborer, not recognizing the talent and skill—or intellectual labor—that also goes into the art of painting. He also does not seem to recognize the importance of artistic theory, which in fact allows Apelles to excel at his profession. In this way, he relegates Apelles to the position of what Harrison would deem a non-gentlemen, due to his reliance on manual labor (8).[47] The king goes on to cite the ancient practice of painting with a limited color palette and declares, "four colors are sufficient to shadow as countenance" (3.4.95-100). Alexander also seems preoccupied with the role and rules of art in antiquity; stuck in antiquated ideals, he does not recognize the emergence of the new artist as represented in the play, as well as in early modern English society.[48] Instead, he references the presumed limited color palettes painters in antiquity used, thereby rooting his criticism in practices that pre-date the play's current reflection of artistic observances. But in *paragone* fashion, reference to the ancients served as a way to discredit or justify a particular art form, and was a tool commonly used by *paragone* writers.[49]

In response to Alexander's reference to antiquity, Apelles launches into a thoughtful lesson on more modern artistic theory and the purpose of including many colors into his work.[50] His speech, while focused on practice, does include purposeful reference as to *why* he includes such colors in particular ways. Moving from a simple discussion of practicality, Apelles's attention to the internal characteristics of his sitters, and his inclusion of the garden-knot

[47] Harrison argues that "professeth physic and the liberal sciences" may be "reputed for a gentleman" if, among other criteria, they can "live without manual labour."
[48] Earlier, Alexander claims that Aurelius "would in one hour colour four faces", as a way to suggest that Apelles's process of painting Campaspe should take less time. (3.4.88).
[49] Sidney, for example, defends poetry by claiming that poetry is "the most ancient, and of most fatherly antiquity" before arguing that "both Roman and Greek gave such divine names unto [poetry]" (30). Castiglione too, in an effort to argue that courtier's should learn how to paint (for pleasure only—not monetary gain), references that "the ancients, especially throughout Greece, required boys of gentle birth to learn painting in school, as a decorous and necessary thing" (77).
[50] Alberti wrote about the merits of painting with a diversity of colors: "This combining of colours will enhance the attractiveness of the painting by its variety, and it beauty by its comparisons" (85).

metaphor suggests that the painter considers his practice to be an art and not merely a craft that Alexander can "by labour" master. In effect, these lines elevate the artist from the servant, or even from the craftsman. In response to Alexander's claim that he could paint sufficiently with only four colors, Apelles replies:

> Then had men fewer fancies and women not so many favours. For now, if the hair of her eyebrows be black, yet must the hair of her head be yellow; the attire of her must be different from the habit of her body, else would the picture seem like the blazon of ancient armory, not like the sweet delight of new-found amiableness. For as in garden-knots diversity of odours make a more sweet savour, or as in music divers strings cause a more delicate concent, so in painting the more colours the better counterfeit, observing black for a ground and the rest for grace (3.4.101-110).

Apelles's speech demonstrates the thoughtfulness and intellectual effort he extends to mastering his form. Unlike what he perceives to be flat representations of "blazon" in antiquity, Apelles compares the diversity of colors he uses to the aesthetics of garden knots and the variety of notes found in music. By comparing his art to these other forms, he places his medium within a category of arts that makes use of a variety of materials to create a finished form. Focused on the contemporary ideals of good portraiture, Apelles appeals to modern aesthetic preferences, thereby distinguishing his work from that of antiquity and instead representing early modern artistic thought.[51]

These exchanges establish the prevalence of *paragone* thought in Renaissance English society, revealing the debate to be counterintuitive to its purpose of dividing the arts. In

[51] Although the play takes place in ancient Athens it is obviously representative of Lyly's late 1500's England.

representing the paradoxical arguments made through these debates, plays such as *Campaspe* simultaneously reaffirm its reach, but also subvert its actual purpose. *Campaspe*, however, takes representing the rise of English artistic theory a bit further by depicting the actual process of creating art, thereby dramatizing the role of the artist as distinctly unique in its labor practices. When Alexander hopes to succeed in painting naturally, Apelles schools him in the practical and theoretical aspects needed to be a successful visual artist. Meeting little success, Alexander nonetheless tries to draw:

> Alexander: The coal breaks.
>
> Apelles: You lean too hard.
>
> Alexander: Now it blacks not.
>
> Apelles: You lean too soft.
>
> Alexander: This is awry.
>
> Apelles: Your eye goeth not with your hand.
>
> Alexander: Now it is worse.
>
> Apelles: Your hand goeth not with your mind.
>
> Alexander: Nay, if all be too hard or soft, so many rules and regards that one's hand, one's eye, one's mind must all draw together, I had rather be setting of a battle than blotting of a board. But how have I done here?
>
> Apelles: Like a king. (3.4.115-127)

Beginning with practical errors (leaning too soft or hard with the coal), this exchange moves into more complex modes of artistic compliance. Apelles transfers his criticism of Alexander's work to focus on the artistic theory that hand, eye, and mind must coalesce in order to create an accurate (life-like imitation) of the subject. By indicating that the process of creating visual art

takes more than the simple "labour" Alexander had assumed, Lyly allows Apelles to speak for artists—of both visual and verbal means—in order to espouse the careful intention involved in producing creative works.

In sum, we can clearly make important connections between Lyly's dramatization of *paragone* arguments and the actual climate of the arts in the English Renaissance in light of anti-theatrical, rhetorical, and art theoretical texts. While the narrative of his play dramatizes Pliny's representation of the ancient love triangle, Lyly adds his own literary flair to the story through incorporating contemporary aspects to the play. His modern use of euphuistic prose, especially antithetical statements, as well as his representations of modern visual culture, propel the play from antiquity into Early Modern English society. By representing the *paragone* through language that is so clearly highly constructed, and by staging the process of creating visual art, Lyly makes a strong statement in support of the arts and artists in Renaissance society, and subsequently stages a much more refined acknowledgement of his own literary skill.

The play emerges as a heuristic for audiences, both original and modern, to experience at once the arguments made against the arts, as well as the prevailing significant connection between verbal and visual media. Confronting the *paragone* through the dramatic form allows Lyly to argue for his own art and profession, at once reaching the courtly audience in which he is so often connected, and the wider audience of Blackfriar's theater. As Louis Montrose has argued, drama in the Renaissance was an ideal locale to air just this sort of ideology, which is why, for some, it was perceived as a dangerous medium: "The popular theater was a uniquely threatening phenomenon because it was the physical and ideological site of convergence for a panoply of perceived innovations and perversions" (35). Given that the play dramatizes a union between pro-visual and anti-visual ideologies, Lyly's representation emerges as an undeniable

link between the forms. It allows us to gain a better appreciation to the paradox of *paragone* representation in English Renaissance drama; while *Campaspe* dramatizes the reality of the debate, it does not do so to the detriment of either artistic form. By binding style and content through the dramatic presentation, Renaissance playwrights demonstrate the importance of both, and in effect validate their own profession as one that combines the manual labor of acting with the intellectual labor of writing, together in a multimedia presentation that reaches both the aristocracy and the masses. The power of dramatic representation is apparent, and the way in which the play stages anxieties concerning the *paragone* inevitably reveals the inextricable connectedness between verbal and visual arts.

Conclusion

John Lyly's 1584 dramatic comedy stages *paragone* debates and undoes the restrictive binaries the debate itself worked to establish by arguing for not only the status of the arts, but of artists as well. By presenting *paragone* logic through his own multimedia form, he binds verbal with visual and demonstrates the artistic reach of the Renaissance dramatist. Lyly's antithetical statements compare the visual to the textual and, by traditional artistic discourse and standard definitions, this would indicate that painting and literature would oppose or contrast one another. However these comparative statements actually reveal underlying social commonalities shared between Renaissance verbal and visual arts and artists and the unique position the dramatist held as an artist of both media. By placing the painted arts in conversation with the verbal, Lyly's statements suggest the social and artistic struggle they shared, thereby revealing a greater sense of a counter-*paragone* Renaissance artistic culture. As both a verbal and visual production, issues related to verbal and visual flattery and potential deceit certainly relate to Lyly's own

medium, especially within the context of anti-theatrical criticisms, which argued for the power of theater to influence viewers negatively. My reading suggests that Lyly's euphuistic prose serves an ornamental purpose to elevate the dramatic event, but through his comparative antithetical statements, Lyly also presents a defense of verbal and visual forms, reflects upon the changing artistic landscape of Renaissance England, and argues for a larger acceptance of these media—most of all, his own dramatic form.

The play also invites more scholarship concerning the variant statuses of visual artists in Renaissance England. As I shall discuss in the following chapter, in contrast to Apelles, Renaissance playwrights were prepared to portray visual artists in less than favorable lights. While visual artists are often situated within courtly settings, just as is Apelles, eliminating that dignified environment allows dramatists to explore the underbelly of artistic spheres undisclosed in Lyly's production. In the following chapter, I take up *Arden of Faversham*, an anonymous play that complicates the notion of the Renaissance visual artist, in contrast to Apelles's characterization. Moreover, this shift in representation invites more questions pertaining to the meta-dramatic function of the visual arts; it also affects how we might interpret the playwrights' identification with the painter. In this domestic drama, the artist is given unbridled power to affect those who come in contact with his visual form, thereby emphasizing the dangerous potential of the visual arts that were merely suggested in *Campaspe*. In this way, *Arden of Faversham* brings concerns over Renaissance iconophilia and idolatry to the forefront.

Like the servants in *Campaspe*, audiences of the play were pushed to reflect upon their own engagement with the arts in Renaissance England. Through polemic anti-theatrical texts, pro-poetic treatises, a developing body of visual artistic theory, and most importantly, the rise of the multi-media form of drama itself, citizens were confronted with the very issues the play

stages: What is the role of the arts? What purpose do they serve? How am I to engage with these forms? How do they affect my religion, monarch, politics, and me? In dramatizing these questions, Lyly gives the debate endless opportunities for exploration through subsequent productions, but he does so in a way that reinforces his very clear position. As a playwright, he crafts antithetical statements from common utterances, and he allows young boys to transform from children into a king, painter, mistress, and the greatest philosophers from antiquity. This dramatization, in turn, reaffirms the significance of the debate, but also paradoxically shuts it down, as audiences lose themselves in five acts of verbal and visual revelry.

Chapter 2: Visual vs. Verbal: The Nature of Objects of Devotion and Idolatrous Effects in *Arden of Faversham*

In Chapter 1, I examined *Campaspe* as play that demonstrates the Renaissance's shifting perception of the dramatist as an artistic professional defined by his verbal and visual form. Likewise, I explored Lyly's use of language—specifically his practice of incorporating euphuistic phrases into his narrative—and argued that his analogous statements often supported a bridge between forms that correlates to the dual nature of the profession of playwright. I drew mainly from rhetorical manuals, given their insight into the relationship between style and content, in order to demonstrate the parallel strife shared by dramatists and visual artists amid the evolution of the liberal arts during the English Renaissance. Therefore, in Chapter 1, I focused on the verbal and considered our perception of the dramatists' identities as multimedia artists.

In this chapter, I shift my attention to consider more explicitly the considerable influence of the visual in relation to the verbal. I examine the connections between performance and religious doctrine concerning idolatry—a central focus, as England shifted from a Catholic to Protestant state, of Renaissance theology. I remain focused on the *paragone*, but I pursue new lines of inquiry here, including an exploration of objects of devotion and the ways in which those objects are mobilized within drama. Drawing from a textual archive that includes *paragone* and anti-theatrical arguments, religious doctrine concerning idolatry, and two plays that explore the convergence of these theories through their own multimodal form, I consider the influence both visual images and written words wielded over their viewers and readers. Each of these categories of texts contains overlapping, yet also distinct, forms of argumentation that relate to the nuances concerning the perceived power of both forms. What unifies these varied texts is perhaps their

similar efforts to claim the extent to and ways in which visual and verbal forms impacted audiences. That is, *paragone* arguments typically centered on the notion that one form is closer to nature than all others; many theories directly state that their form is closer to God's creation. In this way, *paragone* writers argued that their medium brought their audience closer to nature or to the truth, and therefore, closer to God's creations. This central argument concerning the ability of form to bring one closer or further from God is the connecting theory that bridges *paragone* treatises and plays and how they relate to religious doctrine concerning idolatry.

Therefore, this chapter explores the larger implications of the visual's impact on Renaissance literary and social culture by unpacking the connectedness between visual, verbal, and religious theories as expressed through the multimodal art of the theater. Renaissance concerns about idolatry are actually informed by Renaissance notions of the nature of images and texts, and the ways in which those media may or may not represent the real thing. The ultimate goal of this chapter is to demonstrate the ways in which *Arden of Faversham* dramatizes the dangers of verbal and visual art through the use/misuse of objects of devotion, resulting in a reading that stresses the need for a more thorough understanding of the complicated relationship between Renaissance works of art and those who engaged with them, especially through dramatic means. Employing Renaissance emission theory, I explore the differences between the objects that *Arden* dramatizes—the portrait, crucifix, and prayerbook—in relation to the power dynamics purported between painter, subject, medium, and viewer. Composed under the context of the *paragone*, the play probes which form is more destructive and I recognize that under these conditions, the issue of idolatry is the unifying factor that connects verbal to visual within the play. Conclusively, it is vital to bear in mind that *Arden* presents both forms of art as having the

potential to be destructive and so scholars would be remiss not to recognize the ways in which the influential power of the *paragone* might transform our current understanding of idolatry.

To begin, examining Stephen Gosson's infamous arguments against drama allows us insight into the polemic anti-theatrical texts that circulated during the Renaissance. His 1582 treatise against drama argues that citizens "flocke to Theaters to gase vpon playes" and in doing so "stand in the way of sinners, because plaies are the proceedings & practises of the Gentiles in their Idolatrie."[52] Tangential to his point that theater stands in contrast to piety is his remark concerning gazing upon plays, which indicates an acknowledgement of the visual nature of drama. In a more direct argument against this visual element, he states:

> For the eye beeside the beautie of the houses, and the Stages, hee sendeth in Gearish apparel maskes, vauting, tumbling, daunsing of gigges, galiardes, morisces, hobbihorses; showing of iudgeling castes, nothing forgot, that might serue to set out the matter, with pompe, or rauish the beholders with varietie of pleasure.[53]

While Gosson argues against the lavish visuals presented to audiences, he also cites that because the "sweete numbers of Poetrie flowing in verse, do woderfully tickle the hearers eares, the deuill hath tyed this to most of our playes." Arguing, then, that the multimodal experience of the theater encourages the ability of gentiles and even the devil to reach audiences, Gosson rails against the overall multimodal nature of the theatrical experience and calls for a boycott of such entertainments in his better-known 1579 treatise, *The Schoole of Abuse*. He suggests that audiences "shut vppe our eares to Poets, Pypers, and Players, oull our feete back from the resort

[52] See Stephen Gosson, "Palyes confuted in fiue prouding that they are not to be suffred in a Christin common weale."
[53] Gosson goes on to state that the very nature of costuming in drama violates God, especially when it comes to crossdressing: "The Law of God very straightly forbids men to put on womens garmets."

to Theatres, and turne away our eyes from beholding of vanitie" so that "Players would shut in their shoppes, and carry their trashe to some other Countrie."

Gosson's texts serve as examples of the sorts of criticisms that surrounded drama in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Composed of arguments pertaining to both the dramatic narrative and the mode of representation (through verbal and visual means), I have found that *paragone* texts such as Gosson's share distinct similarities to religious texts concerning idolatry. As one of the major criticisms of drama, fears concerning the power of the theater to lead one into idolatry were expressed throughout anti-theatrical texts. Similarly, I have found that religious texts that warn against the use of objects of devotion cite the power of the visual to entice the worshipper away from true worship of God. Most importantly, issues concerning the process of verbal or visual communication and the effects of those exchanges within the contexts of both religious and theatrical registers converge on stage metadramatically. That is, the extent to which religious icons or visual or verbal art contained the potential to harm its viewers/readers through the misuse of these forms is dramatized in plays such as *Arden of Faversham*. Therefore, this chapter explores the connections between anti-theatrical attitudes and doctrine concerning idolatry and argues for the converging histories of *paragone* and religious texts. Ultimately, we see the nexus of these theories transformed creatively on the Renaissance stage.

The narrative action of the play really begins when we learn that, in an effort to kill her husband, Alice and her lover Mosby plot to murder Arden in a most unusual way. Conspiring first to use a poisoned portrait of Alice and then instead deciding to use a poisoned crucifix instead, the duo consult with a surreptitious painter to organize the murder. Both the portrait and the crucifix are said to kill the viewer through sight alone and, in this way, the play moves from

representing a (perhaps over-zealous) romantic love for one's wife through the object of her portrait to the religiously idolatrous worship of a sacred idol. This shift raises questions concerning the complexities of objects of devotion, what they signify, and their potential to harm in a post-reformation England. Considering what modern scholars assume about Renaissance idolatry, especially concerning the Protestant call to cleanse churches and homes of potentially distracting objects and images of devotion, it becomes all the more important to probe the extent to which Renaissance drama made use of such objects within their narratives or used them as stage props. *Arden* includes references to both a prayerbook and a crucifix and, as Elizabeth Williamson concludes, playwrights who deliberately stage devotional objects in this way take advantage of "audience members' residual interest in the materiality of religion, revealing ongoing contradictions between post-Reformation theory and practice while taking full advantage of the highly visual, object-centered nature of their own medium" (5).

Within this chapter, I turn to emission theories, Renaissance theories of vision that argue that beams of light enter or emit from the viewer, in order to consider both Arden's and Alice's culpability in the narrative's potential "death by portrait." The complex relationship between creator, object/image, and viewer becomes even more complicated when we consider that this triad of representation is transferred to the verbal as well. The play's shift, from probing the potential dangers of visual to verbal idolatry, moves from the possible worship of one's portrait to the worship of words over *the* word of God. As Williamson states, "the aspect of English Protestantism most familiar to modern scholars is its preference for *books over idols*" (5). In this respect, we see that engrained in our view of Renaissance idolatry is the connection between verbal and visual, through the context of religious beliefs and practices. When considering this religious argument further, we recognize that the Protestant view of *the* word of God serving as a

true connection to him differs from what they perceived to be a mediated form of worship, through the use of an idol such as a crucifix. Given this distinction, it is understandable that the issue of the *paragone*—which directly questions the link between verbal and visual and theorizes which form more closely corresponds to the God-created natural world—correlates to what we understand about Renaissance idolatry. In this way, I see the issue of idolatry and the *paragone* as analogous in the Renaissance. This new reading of the nature of idolatry suggests that *paragone* debates interacted reciprocally with religious theories, thereby offering us a new method to understand the religious turmoil that has captured Renaissance scholars' interests for centuries.

It is vital to note that the issue of idolatry was not concrete in the Renaissance. It was a charged topic that invited commentary from believers of various persuasions. Scholars today may disagree even on the definition of idolatry, so it is important to note that I am working under David Hawkes's definition, as he quite lucidly explores the function of idolatrous fears in Renaissance England specifically.[54] In his view, idolatrous fears were centered on the idea that believers might mistake the devotional object as the *thing* to worship, rather than using it as the *vessel* for worship:

> In the Christian tradition, the critique of idolatry has generally been made on Aristotelian grounds. Idolatry transgresses against natural teleology because it misconstrues the telos of the material sign, mistaking it for the spiritual referent. […] Idolatry is a fetishism of the sign, which is a synecdoche and paradigm of a more general tendency to pay attention to mere appearance, to the material world as it is empirically given to us. (53)

[54] The *OED* defines idolatry as "The worship of idols or images 'made with hands'; more generally, the paying or offering of divine honours to any created object."

Hawkes's assertion that the human inclination is to focus on the sensorial, rather than the spiritual, of course aligns with my interest in the links between the *paragone* and religious idolatry. As we recognized in Gosson's text and as I discuss later in this chapter, some feared that the all-encompassing sensorial experience of the theater would bring its audience members further from God in a number of ways relating to both the narrative and its multimodal presentation.

The binding characteristic between verbal and visual, as depicted in the play, is their potential to harm, and the related fear of idolatrous consequence—both on and off the stage—is what drives the nature of the play. While most scholarly concerns about Renaissance idolatry focus on the visual, *Arden* demonstrates that in fact the verbal has as much affective power to entrance potential victims into idolatrous devotion. We see this potential visually, through Alice's poisoned portrait, and textually, through Alice's devotion to Mosby's letters. For scholars, this means that recognizing the (currently under-researched) prolific significance of the *paragone* enables us to understand the several facets of Renaissance culture the debate touched. Specifically, the field's wide range of interests concerning Renaissance idolatry has the potential to be reimagined through the lens of the *paragone* because it informs our understanding of how images and text were defined in relation to each other. Given the connectedness between verbal and visual, especially through drama, a form that is defined by its multimodal production, it seems that *Arden* dramatizes the power that verbal, and not only visual, had in leading audiences of all forms of art away from the faith.[55]

While issues pertaining to emission theory and the resulting troublesome effects of dangerous art seem central to the play, scholarship on *Arden of Faversham* has remained focused

[55] Here I am thinking of viewers of painting, those listening to poetry, and finally, those both watching and listening to the play itself.

on the complexities and contradictions surrounding Renaissance patriarchal ideology, specifically considering the domestic space and how tensions relating to power, gender, sexuality, and economics extended from beyond the home.[56] Even Marguerite Tassi, who dedicates an entire chapter of her book to discussing the painter in *Arden* specifically, focuses on class and the economic structures set into place that made iconophobia and, in her view, fear of painters specifically, a prevalent phenomenon in Renaissance England. Examining the painter directly, she concludes, "In Clarke, Elizabethan audiences would have found their worst prejudices against painters confirmed, for he is an immoral artist, a poisoner, and a lover, whose abuse of images is an outright scandal" (151). As a departure from Tassi's reading of the play, I focus more on the viewer's relationship to the artistic object as opposed to the artist himself.[57] And instead of exploring the contentious link between the domestic and public spheres of changing power structures, I reveal that by reading *paragone* literature alongside plays such as *Arden*, we gain insight into the relationship between verbal and visual, object and content,[58] which we see as significant in so many Renaissance texts. And while Renaissance scholars from a variety of areas of interest have incorporated references to idolatry in their work, we would be remiss to not explore how related theories within the *paragone* might change our understanding

[56] Lena Cowen Orlin in particular examines the domestic social order of the post-reformation household and explores the tensions newly private landownership caused within a changing socioeconomic structure. Frances E. Dolan's essay is similarly focused on the domestic structure, though she is specifically interested in the relationship between master and servant and the "contradictions and fragilities of social status as seen in weak, flawed, or absentee masters and in rebellious subordinates." In addition, Peter Berek examines the play's connection between gender and social change in England's evolving structures of power when he recognizes the displacement of tension from economic pressures to Alice's love affair.

[57] My previous chapter on *Campaspe* includes discussion on the cultural position of the visual artist and how his struggle for professional and artistic acceptance often correlated to economic status.

[58] References to object and content refer to the mode of communication (textual or visual, book or painting) and the actual content of that thing (a portrait of one's wife, a letter from one's lover). Because I discuss the differences and similarities of both forms at length, it becomes vital to be aware of when the mode of communication affects meaning and what significance the content of that medium holds.

of idolatry itself, and how the complicated relationship between visual *and* verbal art affected art and life in the Renaissance.

Verbal Idolatry

We recognize that idolatry does not only fall under the umbrella of the visual; interestingly, the play dramatizes the potential for *verbal* idolatry, an issue that scholars have yet to examine fully. In the play, the first example of this occurs when Alice claims to turn to her lover's words rather than the word of God. By tearing out the pages of her prayerbook, she privileges Mosby's love letters, and she claims she will now turn to those pages instead of God's:

> See, Mosby, I will tear away the leaves,
> And all the leaves, and in this golden cover
> Shall thy sweet phrases and thy letters dwell,
> And thereon will I chiefly meditate
> And hold no other sect but such devotion (8.115-122)

Tassi acknowledges that this scene contains clear and certain "sacrilegious actions" in her discussion of Alice's "chameleonlike manner." Likewise, she then goes on to contend that Alice's "mutilation of the prayerbook, devotion to the 'word' of Mosby, rather than God's Word, and idolization of [her] lover" contribute to her "propensity to express irreligious attitudes" throughout the play (144). While Tassi focuses on the ways in which these actions shape our perception of Alice's character, Williamson attends to the significance of the book's "golden cover." Perhaps as an aside, I cannot help but to suggest the potential complication Alice's reference to the golden cover interjects into theories concerning idolatry. Related to my interest in the supposed divide between verbal and visual, we observe that Alice's treatment of the

prayerbook has the potential to violate *both* verbal and visual codes of anti-idolatrous decorum. Williamson reminds us of the commonplace practice of decorating prayerbook bindings, which carried over from Catholic times, and recognizes that although covers served the necessary function of holding God's words together, ornate bindings could also be perceived as taking focus away from the actual content. However, it seems that this sort of potential for idolatrous action has been overlooked:

> The elaborately embroidered bindings that once protected Catholic primers were often reattached to Protestant texts without any particular fanfare…The common features shared by Catholic and Protestant prayer manuals, both of which were frequently transformed into sumptuous accessories, provides a particularly striking example of the physicality of reformed devotion. (150)

Therefore, because God's words were made material through a sometimes decorative presentation—as is confirmed by Alice—we see that even God's words could be manipulated in such a way as to be considered potentially idolatrous. This is true of course only if scripture were housed in such a way that the object itself were the focus, thereby trumping the meaning of the language inside.[59] Alice seems to capitalize on this grey area when she teases out the significance and value of language within the golden binding. Claiming that she will "meditate" on his love letters and "hold no other sect" shows her willingness to desecrate the Christian religion both

[59] In Henry Peacham's 1606 *The art of dravving vvith the pen*, he argues for the acceptance of painting on religious grounds. Painting, he contends, was allowed according to scripture "and highly commended by the mouth of God himselfe." Citing the artisans Bezaleel and Aholiab, Peacham seems to use their place in the Bible as God's acceptance of visual forms. Further, he states that both sculpture and painting are special gifts of "Gods spirit." With these arguments in mind, it seems that Peacham complicates the divide between book and painting, textual and visual by claiming that the even the sacred text accepted the visual form.

physically and verbally;[60] these actions suggest her comfort with privileging her lover's words over the gospel. Similarly, by asserting that marriage vows do not matter in comparison to her true love for Mosby, Alice leverages her assumed faith to demonstrate her devotion to her lover. She affirms her bond to Mosby by telling him that her spiritual marriage to Arden means nothing:

> And given my hand unto him in the church!
> Tush, Mosby, oaths are words, and words is wind,
> And wind is mutable. Then, I conclude,
> 'Tis childishness to stand upon an oath. (1.435-8)

Alice's insistence that words are superficial discredits the establishment of marital vows and suggests a destabilization of the authority of the church. Her position towards the perceived power of the verbal (or lack thereof) creates a tension concerning the extent to which words have real effects, a tension that extends beyond the play and into the very real realms of the *paragone* and Renaissance idolatry. To what extent are words empty or, conversely, should one devote oneself to them?[61] The play questions how words are ascribed value and the extent to which we subscribe to the authority of words or texts created or performed under various conditions. Alice's focus on the words—the oaths she spoke before Mosby, Arden, and God—demonstrates

[60] "Meditate" as it is used here connotes a religious context. According to the *OED*, the term's primary meaning is "To exercise the mind in thought or reflection; (freq.) to engage the mind in religious or spiritual reflection, contemplation, or other discipline." The *OED* indicates that other uses of the term also include one's relationship with their prayerbook. Given the context of this quote—she tears away the word of God and replaces that with love letters—we should also consider the alterative definitions of the term: "To muse over or reflect upon; to consider, study, ponder", and "To fix one's attention upon; to observe intently or with interest. Now *rare*." Therefore, I conclude that the act of replacing the word of God with Mosby's letters, and her vow to "meditate" on Mosby's words means that she will read Mosby's letters over and over again, thinking about them, and studying them repeatedly—all *over* the word of God. Because of her choice to privilege Mosby's words over God, I see this as a version of verbal idolatry. Instead of "mediating" on God's words, as is intended, she turns to Mosby's words now housed within her praybook's binding.

[61] In a religious sense, or otherwise.

that she does not simply refute the symbolic union between man and woman that is performed through a ceremony (she of course refutes their actual marriage as well); here, it is the actual language itself that Alice attacks.

Objects and Theories of Vision

Understanding theories of vision is imperative, since the play relies on these concepts to make the notion of a poisoned painting possible. Further, the idea of Renaissance religious idolatry relates to emission theories because they help to explain the power of a devotional object and its ability to redirect the worshipper away from truly following the word of God. Therefore, it will be helpful to just briefly describe the history of optics in order to better understand the context from which Renaissance dramatists employed these often opposing theories. *Arden* rests upon concepts of vision that relate to the idea of dangerous art through various theories concerning (lack of) viewer agency. Renaissance theories of vision can best be categorized into two simple and distinct categories: intromission theories, which suggested that visual rays or beams *from* the object entered into the viewers' eyes, and extramission theories, which proposed that light *emitted* from the eye of the viewer interacts with the objects being viewed. Both of these theories suggest different levels of active involvement from the viewer. Intromission theories assume that the object instigates the visual process while extramission theories describe the process as beginning from within the viewer. When considering artistic culture, these theories implicitly suggest a more complicated triad of power—a certain and complex give-and-take—between the painter, object, *and* the viewer, and these power dynamics are confronted in plays such as *Arden.* Most often, these exchanges are troublesome and connote the dangers of the visual arts. For example, Arden is presented as a passive viewer of the images created to kill

him; the narrative challenges us to consider who is to blame in his potential homicide, the painter who created the portrait, the subject of the poisoned painting (in this case, the image of his wife, whom he idolizes) or Arden himself.[62]

Hypotheses on the nature of human vision understandably evolved over the course of time; for my purposes, theories from antiquity are perhaps the most relevant place to start because of the period's influence on the English Renaissance.[63] Two conflicting classical theories emerged over time. Plato's *Timaeus* outlines extramission theory; in particular, Plato argues for the existence of a light inside us that, when met with light in the air, combines to create beams of sight. According to John Shannon Hendrix and Charles H. Carman, Plato developed his version of extramission theory by suggesting that images are captured when the viewer expels a stream of "fire" from his eye, which combines with sunlight to form a "homogenous body" that then comes in contact with the object being seen. Interestingly, this theory binds the viewer to the object in a physical way and indicates that the viewer carries an active role, since the viewer initiates this connection through his own eyes. It is also important to consider the role of the viewer in emission theory when it comes to idolatry; this dynamic will be discussed in greater detail in the following section. For now, we should recognize that this theory is particularly interesting as it is mobilized within Renaissance drama because it provokes the audience to consider their own connection to the drama they are viewing. According to extramission theory, audience members are bound to the dynamic images they encounter in the

[62] Building upon previous arguments concerning Arden's lackadaisical attitude toward serving as the head of the household (see Dolan's article in particular), I argue that Arden fills the role of a passive viewer of images, not unlike the naïve citizens who anti-theatricalists evoke when making arguments for the potential of images to harm unsuspecting viewers.

[63] While maintaining a focus on antiquity and Renaissance theories of vision, I would be remiss to not mention the contributions of Medieval Arab physicist Ibn al-Haytham, who published his *Book of Optics* in 1015 and is generally regarded as making vital contributions to the way in which the European continent understood optical theories throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. He is credited with discounting extramission theory in favor for an adapted intromission theory.

theater; this connection explains an audience's engagement with the enticing visual display set before them. However, it also suggests that audience members are willing participants in this seduction and therefore implies that a certain level of culpability rests in the hands of the viewers as willing participants in this potentially idolatrous interaction.

In contrast to Plato, Aristotle supported intromission theory. In a direct response to Plato, he argues that "if vision were the result of light issuing from the eye as from a lantern, why should the eye not have had the power of seeing even in the dark? It is totally idle to say, as the *Timaeus* does, that the visual ray coming forth in the darkness is quenched." Arguing for a more refined theory of vision, Aristotle hypothesized that other sources of light interacted with the object and the eye. His emphasis on the role of light in the process of vision meant that he recognized that external light sources reacted with air or water, or with any other substance through which the human eye can see, resulting in an external reaction between object and medium that man could then visualize and interpret (Hendrix and Carmen 76).

Optical theory remained a divisive topic into the Italian Renaissance, which also had a direct influence on the English Renaissance. In his seminal text *On Painting,* Leon Battista Alberti discusses several types of visual rays, although he purposefully removes himself from the charged debates concerning theories of vision and instead focuses on the construction of visual perspective. He concludes that the issue is irrelevant: "among the ancients there was considerable dispute as to whether these rays emerge from the surface of the eye. This truly difficult question, which is quite without value for our purposes, may be set aside." Leonardo da Vinci's *Paragone* confronts emission theory directly, as a way to argue for the superiority of painting as an artistic form. Clearly biased toward his own visual form, Leonardo contends that the ways in which poetry and paintings are interpreted is different: "paintings renders things really outside the eye

so that the eye receives the similitudes [images] as if they were natural; and poetry renders what is natural without that similitude, and [things] do not pass to the *impressive* [internal, mirror-like receptor] by way of visual virtue [senses, or specifically, sight]" (179-81). By presenting this distinction, Leonardo suggests that poetry is somehow more removed from, and therefore less connected to, the viewer, due to its non-visual mode of representation. In this way, Leonardo's argument resembles theories of idolatry that focus on mediation. He claims that receiving a painting visually is a process that occurs naturally and is unmediated. In contrast, Leonardo's opinion is that receiving poetry requires thought, effort, and time from the listener. Furthermore, it sometimes requires even greater mediation, as when the author must explain what he means in his writing. And so Leonardo's position is that viewing painting requires less work and is done fluidly through the senses, while listening to poetry requires the mind to work and therefore is less natural and forthcoming.

Drawing from both antiquity and the Italian Renaissance, English Renaissance authors who discussed the nature of representation referenced their predecessors directly while modifying optical theories to suit their purposes. Richard Haydocke's English translation of Lomazzo's treatise mentions previous emission theories, but he also goes on to expound his own view. His views resemble Plato's on extramission; he argues: "the Eie being the instrument of sight, hath many coates of skinnes, in the middest whereof lies the Sight, which riseth from a certaine straight passage called in Italian *otero,* proceeding from the braine, to the extremitye of the pupil, whence the virtue of seeing ariseth."[64] And so in theories of extramission, the initial

[64] Haydocke writes, "Plato thinketh it is caused from that brightnes, which proceeddeth from the eie, whose light passing through the aire meeteth with that which is reflected from the bodies. Now that light wherewith the ayre is inlightned from the sunne, diffuseth and disperseth it selfe unto the verture of the light." He goes on to cite Aristotle's opposing view: "Aristotle is of the opinion that the incorporell similitudes and qualities of things, come to the sight through the alteration of the ayre, which environeth the visible thinges." (190-192)

creation of sight begins from the viewer directly, as opposed to the object or some other external reaction. Among English *paragone* writers, artist Henry Peacham wrote the most comprehensive study of emission theory in his 1612 book, *Graphice or The most auncient and excellent art of draing and limming disposed into three books*. While he also cites Plato in his text, he systematically refutes extramission theory through a series of seven points. *Paragone* arguments as a whole—from both Renaissance periods—are certainly humorous to us today, given their clearly biased approaches, and Peacham's text is no exception. His theories debase extramission arguments by citing anecdotal arguments pertaining to the nature of near and far-sightedness and the abilities of animals to hunt in the dark. In an effort to dissuade the negative connotations of sight, he even states that the best authors don't use the standard trope of a basilisk killing with their sense of sight, but rather through their breath.[65]

From these examples we see that, over time, the formation of opposing and yet converging theories pertaining to the nature of seeing directly influences later generations of theorists.[66] And while optical theories evolved to accept primarily intromission, varying hypotheses survived, and in any case, were mobilized by dramatists regardless of their potential inaccuracies.[67] It is important to recall that alongside debates concerning theories of vision, we

[65] It is perhaps worth noting that Peacham agreed with Aristotle in his intromission theory, and furthered it by discussing the role of air or light within the process of vision.

[66] In *The most auncient and excellent art of drawing and limming*, Henry Peachman cites Aristotle's visual theory as correct and proceeds to use this reference to argue for the superiority of the eye (64).

[67] Renaissance poet John Donne also spoke of his indifference towards emission theories. In one sermon, he makes it clear that he has not resolved the issue of how people see: "No man knows so as strong arguments may not be brought on the other side how he sees, whether by reception of species from without or by emission of beams from within" (173). He remained unsure regarding the truth of emission theory, even as late as his 1630 "Sermon Preached Upon Whitsunday." In it, he even amalgamates emission theory and religion directly:
[N]o man knows how his soul came into him whether by infu-sion from god or by generation from parents no man knows so but that strong arguments will be produced on the other side and yet no man doubts but he hath a soul no man knows so as that strong arguments may not be brought on the other side how he sees whether by reception of species from without or by emission of beames from within and yet no man doubts whether he see or no the holy ghost shall tell you when he teis you the most that ever he shall tell you in that behalf that the son is in the father but he will not tell you how our second portion in this legacy of knowledge is that we are in christ and this is the mystery of the incarnation.

see similarly structured arguments concerning the nature of idolatry during the religiously tumultuous English Renaissance. Like those who participated in the *paragone* debates, Renaissance clergymen who wrote about idolatry were not in agreement about the nature and limits of idolatry or what was even considered idolatry in terms of religious practices. Renaissance commentaries written for or against the perceived sinfulness of using a cross for devotional worship, for example, are common in the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries and resemble, in several ways, *paragone* debates that argued for the superiority of one medium over another due to its purported lack of an idolatrous-like engagement with its audience.[68] Texts written on the *paragone* and idolatry often cite opposing viewpoints (perhaps as a way to fully expand upon various perspectives) and sometimes structure their work as a series of heated debates. For instance, Martin Fotherby's 1608 *Foure sermons, lately preached, by Martin Fotherby Doctor in Diuinity, and chaplain vnto the Kings Maiestie* is written as a dialogue with objections and responses centered on the use of crosses as it relates to idolatry. Fotherby shuts down arguments against the use of the cross by attacking the method of argumentation. Taking their argument against crosses and applying it to scripture—he contends—would make the memorization of scripture idolatrous. Of course the memorization of scripture was *not* considered idolatrous, and so he effectively demonstrates that their method of argumentation is invalid:

[68] *Paragone* arguments typically center on the notion that one form is closer to nature than all others. Many theories directly state that their form is closer to God's creation. In this way, *paragone* writers argued that their medium brought their audience closer to nature, or the truth, and in this way, closer to God's creations.

> Now for the assumptio[n] of your former syllogisme; that the signe of the crosse (as our church of England vseth it) is dan|gerous to lead vs vnto idolatry, that I simply deny […]
>
> *Ob.* But you proue, that the crosse is dangerous to lead vs to idolatry, by this reason following. *Whatsoeuer is apt to breed a remembrance of that horrible idol|atry co[m]mitted by it in the Synagogue of Rome that is dangerous to lead vs vnto idolatry. But the signe of the crosse is such. Ergo.*
>
> *Resp.* […] Doth euery thing that breedeth a remembrance of any thing abused vnto idolatry, indanger vs to fall into the same idolatrie? then were it dan|gerous to read in the scriptures the seuerall idolatries of the Iewes, least by remembring them, we might be indangered, imitate and follow them.
>
> *Ob.* But you will say, *that these be not pictures, but scriptures, which, our Sauiour Christ himselfe commandeth vs to read*.
>
> *Resp.* For, in that our Sauiour co[m]man|deth vs to read them, his meaning is, that wee should reme[m]|ber them, which remembrance he would neuer haue co[m]men|ded vnto vs, if he had iudged it to be so dangerous for imita|tion as you affirme it is.

Fotherby takes a practical approach to the argument by acknowledging the opposing viewpoint but swiftly refuting it by using that very logic against the word of God. The result of applying this argument to the word is that memorizing the word of God is idolatrous. Recognizing that the notion that recalling God's words is idolatrous would be deemed ludicrous by Christians, he

refutes their argument and deems it invalid. In this way, he positions both the cross and the word as acceptable means of worship. Arguments such as this, which question the role of text and object relate to *paragone*, which in similar fashion reflect upon the function of verbal and visual and subsequently argue about the perceived dangers of both forms. In *Arden*, we see these arguments collide as both *paragone* and religious arguments are represented.

Visual Connection and the Untrained Viewer

With emission theories in mind, the concept of a poisoned painting as we see in *Arden* is complicated, especially as we consider the purported physical bond that is created between one's eyes and the object that one takes in visually. Unlike poetry, which is placed in opposition to the visual arts within *paragone* discourse, theories of vision attributed a direct, tangible, and physical connection between the viewer and the object that he sees. This physical interaction seems to, in one way, attribute ultimate power to the painter and his creation, and again it signals the potential dangers of visual idolatry as poisonous to the spiritual selves of post-Reformation English citizens. Renaissance Christians were taught to refute false idols (which we think of as objects or visual images) through Biblical passages such as Exodus 20:4-5 and Romans 1:23, among others (Tassi 39). Considering this, what must they have thought about the nature of vision (set within a religious context), which suggested that potentially harmful images can enter through the eyes without provocation? This visual phenomenon suggests a lack of agency for the viewer, whose casual, perhaps even passive glance upon a painting could overcome him. So when Mosby explains that the viewer of the poisoned painting "Shall, with the beams that issue from his sight, / Suck venom to his breast and slay himself" he refers to the very physical element of the emission theories discussed by Plato, among others.

While extramission theories suggest that the viewer maintains a greater amount of agency than intromission theories since the beams of vision originate from him instead of from the image, Arden—in my view—is portrayed as an *untrained* viewer within the play, evidently in an attempt to dramatize him as victim to the dangerous world of visuals around him. This characterization, we imagine, is not unlike potential victims affected similarly by misplaced faith and the resulting effects of idolatrous worship. In fact, in defense of anti-visual attacks espoused by those in favor of the textual arts, painters involved in the *paragone* debates often defended their art by claiming that the visuals themselves were not dangerous, but that the *untrained eye* of the viewer was to blame. Lomazzo's text contains an entire section on the nature of vision, including his own interpretation of emission theory. He places the painter in special regard as someone whose "eies are continually exercised in beholding faire and beautifull things," privileging the artist by making him impenetrable to the potential negative (possibly idolatrous) effects of visual images. He goes on to argue that book knowledge cannot "profite a man without the eie, that is, without the practise of the eie" (198). Similarly, Castiglione's 1561 *Book of the Courtier* argues that seeing is a skill that can be improved: "first we are able to see, hear, and touch, then we do see, hear, and touch, although many of these activities are improved by discipline" (297). Castiglione distinguishes between first being able to engage the senses, and then actively doing so, but finally argues that from that point, we may be able to train our senses beyond what is naturally given. These two accounts suggest that they recognized that certain men, who practiced and developed their "ways of seeing,"[69] were superior in the act while the

[69] Of course I am indebted to John Berger for this phrase; his 1972 book probes the historical, political, and artistic significance of the visual and its reflection and impact on society over time. In particular, his theories on the connectivity between the visual and ones' own place within society is of interest to me. "We never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves. Our vision is continually active, continually moving, continually holding things in a circle around itself, constituting what is present to us as we are."

everyday layman simply had not trained his senses appropriately.[70] In this way, this line of argumentation seems to reflect the desire of the painter to position his training and profession as something to aspire to.

Additionally, what we encounter in the scene when Mosby explains the nature of the poisoned painting is a representation of the dangers of visual art, dramatized so that the effects of the painting induce physical, instead of spiritual or ideological harm upon the viewer. The lesson here seems to be that visual images can be dangerous, and all the more so to the untrained viewer, who is not attentive to the visual threats that surround him. While discourse from the time seems to suggest that people do have the power to resist the influence of idol images and objects, the general sentiment was that men like Arden were initially prone to idolatry. As Thomas Adam's 1626 sermon warned, "Wee are all by nature prone to *Idolatrie:* when we were little children, we loued ba|bies: and being growne men, we are apt to loue Images" (21, 28). Therefore, when we consider the conflicting emission theories and varied religious discourses concerning the power of idolatry, we can imagine that Arden personified concerns regarding visual idolatry in secular settings such as the playhouse, thereby bridging religious to theatrical.

In many ways, John Webster's 1612 play *The White Devil* capitalizes on similar anxieties relating to idolatrous relationships between a viewer and object. Again, the physical connection between the viewer and painting is dramatized in this Jacobean play and results in similar, albeit more obvious, connections between literal and figurative deaths due to idolatrous devotion. The play also dramatizes the dangers of idolizing one's spouse, and a dumb show is performed, in

[70] Still, even considering these arguments (which of course we question by today's scientific standards: what does it actually mean to *train* the senses?), it seems that being trained in his senses and/or the arts would have offered little protection to Arden.

which Julio and Christophero view Isabella's nightly ritualistic treatment of her husband's portrait. In the dumb show, they creep in to poison Isabella's painting of Brachiano:

> Enter suspiciously, Julio and Christophero, they draw a cutaine wher Brachiano's picture is, they put on spectacles of glasse, which cover their eyes and noses, and then burne perfumnes afore the picture, and wash the lips of the picture, that done, quenching the fire, and putting off their spectacles they depart laughing.

Similar to the way in which Alice voices concerns over the potential physical dangers of viewing her portrait,[71] the men in *The White Devil* take precautions similar to Clarke to protect themselves from the poison they lay upon the painting (1.235-7). Clarke, we recall, claimed to guard himself from the poisoned crucifix by creating physical barriers between himself and the poison in which he worked:

> I fasten on my spectacles so close
> As nothing can any way offend my sight;
> Then, as I put a leaf within my nose,
> So put I rhubarb to avoid the smell. (1.628-31)

Isabella, unprotected from the poison that has been placed upon her painting, epitomizes the unfortunate outcome of idolizing a portrait. Here, the figurative notion of spiritual death by idolatry, as suggested in *Arden*, is transformed into a more tangible example of the physical connection that extramission theory creates between object and viewer. When Isabella kisses the poisoned image, she makes direct physical contact with it: "Shee kneeles downe as to prayers, then drawes the curtaine of the picture, doe's three reverences to it, and kisses it thrice, shee

[71] She protests that such a portrait is 'dangerous' and voices her fear that any (including herself) "Coming into the chamber where it hangs, may die."

faints and will not suffer them to come nere it, dies […]" (2.2). As opposed to Arden, whom we never actually see engage with the portrait or crucifix (although his zealous devotion to his wife is suggested), Isabella is portrayed as a willing participant in iconophilia *and* idolatry as her dedication to her husband evolves into a ritualized spiritual devotion that seems to surpass traditional bounds of spousal love.[72]

Furthermore, the performative aspect of her idolatrous love for her husband is what solidifies her death. The very tangible, physical, visual portrayal of her idolatrous actions differs from Arden's—he never acted out this type of behavior before the audience; the poisoned painting and crucifix were merely discussed in his absence. Conversely, Isabella connects to her devotional object physically, first visually (as we recall emission theories) and then through clear physical contact. The very kinesthetic act of Isabella kneeling and kissing the portrait must have been controversial to stage but perhaps the Italian setting of the play explains the choice to include this more provocative scene.[73] As we see in William Attersoll's 1614 treatise, *The neuu couenant, or, A treatise of the sacraments*, the very *appearance* of idolatrous worship made

[72] This example of iconophilia evolving into idolatry is reminiscent of Leonardo da Vinci's parable in the *Paragone*. He claims that he once made a painting that "represented something divine that was bought by someone who loved it, who wanted to remove the representation of the deity so he would be able to kiss the painting without misgivings" (231).

[73] There are many English accounts that explore the nature of Catholic Italian worship. Sir Edwin Sandys described the kissing of ground in front of the altar in his 1605, *A relation of the state of religion and with what hopes and pollicies it hath beene framed*, and is maintained in the severall states of these westerne parts of the world: for eve|rie Masse said there at the Altar of the Crucifixe, the deli|verie of a soule out of Purgatorie, to the Carmine at *Pa*|*dua* more liberally, for to everie one that shall say seven *Aves*, and seven *Pater nosters*, before one of their Altars on the Wednesday in Easter weeke, or kisse the ground before the Altar of the blessed Sacrament with the vsuall prayers for the exaltation of the Church." George Hakewill's 1616 *An ansvvere to a treatise vvritten by Dr. Carier* also serves to describe Italian Catholic worship practices. After speaking to men of the Church of Rome about the charge of idolatry, Hakewill writes that they argue that "they doe abhorre all idolatry and super|stition, and doe diligently admonish the people to take heed there|of, and they vse images for none other purpose, but onely for a deuout memorie and representation of the Church triumphant." However, unpersuaded by their objections to the accusation of idolatry, Hakewill goes on to make clear, "the image of God himselfe is not onely ex|presly forbidden to be worshipped, but euen to be made. The reason is giuen, that no eye euer saw God: and how can wee paint his face, when *Moses*, the man that euer was most fa|miliar with God, neuer saw but his backe parts? Surely since hee cannot bee drawen to the view, it is a thankelesse labour to marre it with a false representation; which no Prince, nor scarce any other man would be contented with, in their owne pictures."

many uncomfortable. He explains that not only idolatrous objects, but also kneeling in worship could raise eyebrows:

> but if kneeling at the Communion be not Idola|try, yet at least it hath appearance of Idolatry in our con|formity with the Church of *Rome,* which hath brought in transubstantiation: and therefore if we shal kneele as they do, there is feare of adoratio[n]. Thus haue I heard many rea|son. I answere, kneeling reuerently obserued, is no shew or appearance of euill, but of good. And there is no feare of a|doration when we kneele, more then there is while we sit. For doth not he that sitteth & prayeth aright, adore God? and may not a man worshippe an Image sitting, as well as kneeling? and set vp an Idoll in his heart while he prayeth to it, trusteth in it, dependeth vpon it, and confesseth vn|to it, when he sitteth vp as well as when he lyeth downe?

While Attersoll argues that a believer could commit idolatry no matter what position his body takes during worship, he acknowledges how kneeling in worship could give the perception of residual ties to the Italian Church and their method of worship.[74] Returning to the play, then, we see clearly how Isabella's act of kissing her husband's portrait mimics the perceived dangerous practice of kissing idols during worship and the provocation this act must have caused.[75] And

[74] Williamson states that "Because Elizabeth refused to outlaw gestures such as kneeling outright, the proper manner of praying continued to be hotly debated throughout her reign, and well into James's" (150).
[75] Williamson references the coronation pageant Thomas Dekker describes in his play, *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*. In it, he writes that Elizabeth kisses her bible in front of her subjects, "We thanks you all: but first this booke I kisse, / Thou art the way to hono; thou to blisse, / And English Bible […]" (166). Williamson notes that in kissing the Bible, Elizabeth "functions as a model of the devout Protestant" as she displays her devotion to the *word* of God. However, within the bounds of my reading, I must consider the tangibility of the Bible as a stage prop and would be remiss to not consider the similarities between this Bible and the portrait and crucifix discussed here, which seem to indicate an uneven account of the comfortability kissing religious objects. For more on the actual account, see Sandra Logan's chapter, "Inscribing Performance: Art and Artlessness at Kenilworth, 1575" in *Text/Events in Early Modern England: Poetics of History*.

just as Renaissance treatises and sermons discuss the practice of kneeling in worship, many also take on the act of kissing a devotional object in worship directly. For example, in 1554, Richard Smith wrote *A bouclier of the catholike fayth of Christes church* in defense of his Catholic practices: "We doo (I graunte) kisse [th]^{e} woode of the crosse & doo bow downe our knees before it, but not to the woode, as woode, but we doo geue [tha]^{t} wourship to the woode of the crosse, as a sygne repre+se[n]ting to vs Christe."[76] In an attempt to defend his practices, Smith explains that he understands that the cross itself isn't what he worships, but instead what the cross represents. Isabella is never granted the chance to explain her actions, perhaps because she does not engage with a religious object. Her ritualistic kissing of her husband's image demonstrates misappropriated worship that would have been troubling even to Catholics. In effect, she pays the ultimate price, as her death dramatizes the outcome of misplaced devotion.

Pictorial Content and Idolatry in Three Parts

The interconnectedness of idolatry and the *paragone* in *Arden* can best be categorized into three related and observable themes: marital, theatrical, and verbal ones. When considering the nexus of religious and artistic theories, I find that the marital and otherwise romantic relationships in the play seem to offer us exploration into the affective quality of visual art, which of course is related to the ways in which devotional objects similarly affect the

[76] Likewise, in 1556, Agostino Mainardi described the steps of Italian mass in his *An anatomi, that is to say a parting in peeces of the mass*. Specifically, he recalls the practice of the priest calling upon and kissing a crucifix and the image of Christ: And he addeth that in cer|ten bokes, that is to say massebokes the maiestie of the father, a~d also the Image of the crucifix is payn+ted, to the intent that the priest might see (as it were presently) him that he calleth on, and with whom he speaketh, saing Te igitur &c. And that the passion which here is represented, may pearce in to the eyes of the hart. And he addeth, But the priest kisseth the feete of the Image of the same maiestie. and is cros|sed in the forhead, geuing vs to vnderstand, that he goeth reuerently to the mistery of the redempcion. Not withstonding (saith he) some kisse first the feete of the Image of the fathers maiestie, and affter of the crucifix according to the order of the canon."

worshipper. The metadramatic function of this issue is underscored by the very nature of plays that present the dangers of the arts. Of course *Arden* is a prime case study for such scholarship, as the misuse of both textual and visual is represented through multimodal means. Because it is both a verbal and visual form, antitheatricalists were intent to criticize drama on the basis of idolatry, an issue I discuss below. Lastly, verbal bonds in particular are critiqued as the power of the spoken word is challenged.

Marital

Understanding the strong and perhaps even more important quality to the similar instances of literary Renaissance portraits in both *Arden* and *The White Devil* lies in recognizing the content, rather than the object of the portrait itself. While emission theory focuses on the clinical process of the visual, focusing our attention on the actual content of these objects of devotion will allow for more engagement with the significance of their meaning. And so in these examples I would be remiss to not explore the significance of the subject of both these portraits: their spouses. In one sense, it is perhaps simple to see the parallels between loving one's spouse and loving God. Each relationship evokes terms such a loyalty, devotion, faithfulness, and so on. In this respect, iconophilia, the love of an image, transitions into the even more dangerous territory of idolatry as both Clarke in *Arden* and Julio and Christophero in *The White Devil* intend to capitalize on the idolatrous practices of their intended victims by sabotaging the devotion that Arden and Isabella express. In *The White Devil,* Isabella displays characteristically idolatrous actions as it is known that she carries out the nightly ritual of praying to and kissing the painting of her husband at a type of altar that she has created for him. Alternatively, Arden does not outwardly display the same sort of idolatrous action, until Alice eschews the idea of a

poisoned portrait of herself in favor of a poisoned crucifix. The crucifix implies Arden's religious loyalty to the Catholic faith, at least residually, as he apparently had not relinquished the practice of using a crucifix while praying.[77]

Within the context of dangerous images, Alice exhibits the sort of skeptical fear regarding this portrait as might be imaginable for original audiences, especially considering that the portrait intended to kill her husband is of herself. In response, Mosby attempts to assuage her fears by telling her that the painting will remain hanging in the painter's house. If we probe Alice's fears of the portrait a bit more, it becomes plausible that perhaps Alice's dislike of the portrait comes from the fact that the portrait is of her. Throughout the rest of the play, Alice negotiates with hitmen to commit the crime, and, in contrast to the poisoned portrait, Alice is able to maintain a certain level of distance from the actual act. This is not the case with the portrait; while the painter could be considered the murderer since he is the one who created the portrait, it seems that Alice is uncomfortable with *her* image killing Arden. This once again suggests interesting power dynamics that exist between the painter, viewer, and image, especially when the painting is of a person and, in this case, a woman who intends to kill her husband. In my view, Alice's apprehension suggests that the divide between content and object is at work in this scenario; she expresses apprehension only when she discovers that the painting is a portrait of herself, while we see that she is more than willing to participate in murder plots that don't include her image. What we gain from this example, then, is the realization that Alice draws a correlation between her *image* killing Arden and her actual *self* killing Arden. The play

[77] In one sense, the play suggests that a mere glance upon an object is enough to kill, this is evident in Alice's fearfulness of the poisoned painting and the explanation on how the painter remains safe from its effects. However, it seems curious that Mosby would choose to poison a crucifix—rather than any other object—if Arden had not previously expressed some sort of regard or ties to the object. As is suggested in his love for his wife—which is why a poisoned portrait of Alice is chosen—I theorize that Arden's love toward the Catholic faith is what inspires Mosby to poison a crucifix in particular.

then dramatizes *paragone* thought concerning the significance and power of the pictorial by showing that the gap between image (object) and person (self) is relinquished.[78] In this way, the play aligns portrait with person and suggests, subsequently, that within the context of the *paragone*, the visual harbors the potential to be an incredibly destructive form because, as we see in *Arden*, it can kill. Alice's insistence that the poisoned portrait *is* herself, rather than a representation of herself, indicates the ultimate power of the visual form, something that the poetic form fails to perform.

Theatrical

The literal narrative of an image's ability to kill a person cannot be separated from the English Renaissance unease towards visual images, especially regarding idolatry and the theater as a verbal and visual form. The metadramatic function of a visual image poisoning the viewer is striking in a medium that consists of visual images made of actors, stage props, and scenery. The exciting power the theater held as a partly visual medium cannot be denied, and antitheatricalists were keenly aware of the very human tendency to be drawn to physical visuals rather than the immaterial nature of the spiritual world. In this way, they were uncomfortable with the theatrical environment, which exploited this tendency when it presented audiences with an all-encompassing sensory experience. As Michael O'Connell explains, antitheatricalists saw the theater as a prime location for idolatrous extravagance:

[78] The notion of a character identifying so closely to a portrait that they are seen as one and the same is prevalent throughout Renaissance drama. One notable example come from Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. When Bassanio prepares to choose a casket, Portia refers to her portrait inside and encourages him by claiming, "Away then. I am locked in one of them. / If you do love me, you will find me out" (3.1.40-1). Her urgency can be heard through her voice as she claims that she is "locked" in the casket herself, with only Bassanio's love able to free her. *Two Gentlemen of Verona* provides another example of character/portrait assimilation. The desperate Proteus claims that since he cannot have Silvia that her portrait will serve as an appropriate alternative to her actual personhood: "The picture that is hanging in your chamber. / To that I'll speak, to that I'll sigh and weep; / For since the substance of your perfect self / Is else devoted, I am but a shadow, / And to your shadow will I make true love." (4.2.114-8)

> Theater, they are convinced, overpowers by the fullness of its sensual appeal. One is surrounded by the visual sumptuousness of the playhouse itself, by the motion and gesture of the actors' bodies, and by the aural richness of poetic speech. In emphasizing the role of the eye in the theater, these writers were glimpsing, in negative terms, something of the phenomenology of theater, that it engrosses its participants by its very physicality. (15)[79]

The idea that the theater "overpowers" the audience is one that we see throughout texts concerning idolatry that focus on the dangers of the visual specifically. I turn to Williamson's quote from Elizabethan homilist William Charke to demonstrate just how dangerous idols were deemed to be. Charke warns that crucifixes harness the power "to snare the heart of a carnall man, bewitching it with so great glistering of the painted harlot."[80] Likewise, Calvinist James Calfhill's 1565 treatise laments that images are hard for men to resist:

> Images are likely to se|duce a multitude, all men of nature, being prone to Ido|latry: The preacher is able to persuade but a fewe, fewe men inclined to credit sounde doctrine […] For impossi|ble it is (as in the preface is declared) an Image to come in place of Gods seruice, & not allure to a wicked worship. Ex|perie[n]ce hath taught vs, & examples doe proue, [th]^{e} princes for their pleasure erecting Images, haue bred the vile affection of Idolatry.[81]

[79] My focus on O'Connell's mention of the visual is due to the notion that the aural or textual element of the theater is a given to modern scholars. My interest in the overarching similarities between the dramatist and the visual artist throughout this project means that I often consider his relationship to visual arts because he is already defined by his engagement with the textual arts. O'Connell's main argument centers on his theory that Renaissance authors responded to antitheatricalists' attacks on the superficiality of their medium directly and throughout their work.
[80] Charke, William, *An answere to a seditious pamphlet*, as quoted in Williamson 117.
[81] See Calfhill, James. *An aunsvvere to the Treatise of the crosse*. London, 1565.

In recognizing the slippery slope of idolatry, Calfhill warns that "all men of nature" are prone to idolatry and therefore must be careful of this. Interestingly, as evidence of the instability of what constituted idolatry in Renaissance England, John Martiall's 1566 treatise is written in direct response to Calfhill:

> Did not Christ say, *Pater maior me est?* […] And if Christ be inferiour to his fa|ther as he was man, is it not lawfull for vs to thincke so of him? And if it be lawfull to thincke so of him, is it not laufull to paynte him so, and set hym foorth in a picture as man and yet committe no idolatrie?

Martiall's rebuttal rests upon Biblical semantics concerning Jesus's position as the son of God. But more important to note here is his commitment to refuting the accusation of idolatry while also defending the practice of representing Christ visually. His treatise goes on to argue, "So say we to these protestantes that thincke we committe idolatrie, forsake Christe, and corrupte his religion with images. And in deede they shewe them selues very wretches, that haue so vyle ima|ginations of any Christen man."[82] Apparent in these lines is the contention that we understand was prevalent between sects and, in this example, Martiall's defense against being accused of idolatry includes the insults he must have encountered as a Catholic.

Drawing, then, the connections between Biblical warnings against false idols—through visual or verbal means—and the theater's seductive multimedia presentations, it is perhaps clear to see how drama fell under attack by those concerned about the influence the theater exerted upon its audiences. Moving from attacks against the visual specifically, and its relation to idolatry, John Northbrooke's 1577 *A Treatise Against Dicing, Dancing, Play, and Interludes, with Other Idle Pastimes* addresses the *content* of plays directly by pleading to the "Christian and

[82] See Martiall, John. *A replie to M. Calfhills blasphemous answer made against the Treatise of the crosse*.

faithful Reader." Northbrooke reminds him to "refrain, and temper themselues from wickedness and mischiefe" for he is persuaded that "Satan hath not a more speedie way and fitter schoole to work and teach his desire" than at the playhouse (60). Northbrooke address the actual narrative or content of plays directly, and quite aptly seems to have plays like *Arden* in mind when he argues that plays will teach audiences to "bee false, and deceyue your husbandes, or husbandes their wyues […] howe to murther, howe to poison, howe to disobey […]." In an attack against the actors themselves, he concludes, "Players should be forbidden and dissolued and put downe by authoritie, as the Brothell houses and Stewes are." In all, he attacks audience members, the narratives of the plays (which he argues convey sinful messages to their audiences) and the profession of acting itself. His criticisms are rooted in those who support, in any fashion, the delivery of ungodly messages through the guise of entertainment.

When examining the parallel fear of devotional objects and the theater leading those who engage with them further away from God, it seems pertinent to recall the obvious differences between the two. The fear of devotional objects leading one astray is rooted in the theory that devotion would be misguided—that is, focused toward the object and not to God himself. Theater, as a visually-persuasive medium, also held the potential to influence the morals of audiences, thereby holding the potential to encourage poor behavior through the content of the dramatization. What these examples from religious and antitheatrical texts demonstrate is that there is a connection between religious objects and the theater; some believed in their common power to harm the worshipper/audience member by leading him astray.

Considering, then, the interconnected relationship between Renaissance religious idolatry and the theater's ability to garner its viewers' attention through a multi-modal presentation, when examining how it places pressure upon the assumed power and authority of religion, the

inclusion of a poisoned crucifix in *Arden* seems to be the apex of the play. The poisoned crucifix enters the narrative after the murderous duo scrap the plan to use a poisoned portrait of Alice to kill Arden. Interestingly, a poisoned cross is seen as a suitable alternative to the portrait when Mosby approaches Clarke about creating it:

> You told me how you could compound by art
>
> A crucifix impoisoned,
>
> That whoso look up it should wax blind
>
> And with the scent be stifled, that ere long
>
> He should die poisoned that did view it well. (1.610-14)

The religious commentary of this passage is blatant and as the play moves from Alice's portrait to a poisoned crucifix, the play shifts the focus from Arden's potential iconophilia (as he would have paid the ultimate price for gazing upon the image of his wife) directly to religious idolatry when he turns to a crucifix.[83] In this way, the play dramatizes the reliance and potential harmful effects of religious icons central to Catholicism. Making visible the potential for spiritual harm that comes with using an object of devotion, the crucifix is poisoned so that this spiritual danger is made physical, tangible, dramatic, and of this world.[84] As Williamson states, in the realm of Christian stage properties, which may have held several possible significant meanings, "crosses

[83] Interestingly, the cross is described but not actually used for the murder. While the crucifix may have been staged, audiences don't see it functioning, only language describes that.

[84] This scene is the playwright's addition; no crucifix is present in the source text, *Holinshed's Chronicles*. The addition of a poisoned crucifix certainly contributes to the narrative that explores the nature of effect of idolatry. Interestingly, the crucifix is also absent from the c. 1610-1630 ballad, "The complaint and lamentation of Mistresse Arden" that seems to be inspired by the play. Also in the *Chronicles* is a description of the ancient religious practices of the United Kingdom and an explanation of how idolatry infiltrated their land, "Thus wée sée how Idolatry and honoring of the starres was bredde and hatched at the first, which in processe of tyme came also into Britaine, as dyd the names of *Saturne,* & *Iupiter* &c. as shall appeare hereafter" (8).
If we turn to Thomas Adams' treatise once more, we see that he warns against falling prey to adoring the physical and visual over the spiritual: "Idolatry quite takes away Faith, a fundamentall part of Christian religion: for an Idol is a thing visible, but *Faith is of things inuisible*. The I|dol is a false euidence of things seene, Faith is a true euidence of things not seen (28). Speaking against the desire to privilege the tangible, Adams encourages his audience to recognize the falseness of things clearly seen.

were unmistakably Christian, and no object was more directly associated with Catholicism than the crucifix, which included the *corpus* of the suffering Christ and thus, according to the reformers, necessarily prompted inappropriate acts of worship" (109). Therefore, the cross serves a dual purpose: narratively, is has the potential to kill Arden, but as commentary on the larger issue of visuals—specifically objects of devotion—the cross evokes a sense of danger that was pertinent to the lives of original audience members, given their religious diversity.[85]

The decision to stage a crucifix, a symbol so charged with meaning, seems brave and deeply intentional, and is all the more complex when we consider that the crucifix is poisoned and intended to kill. The realm of meaning this object signified for original audiences is clearly extensive. Consider Robert Parker's 1607 charged treatise, *A scholasticall discourse against symbolizing with Antichrist in ceremonies: especially in the signe of the crosse*, which argues that "the Crosse turneth his [God's] glorious essence into a vile and shamefull lye":

> First, the Crosse is a Iewell of the harlot; while we keepe it we repent not of former adul|terie as we ought. Secondly, it is a *Trophee* of Antichristes conquest; while it stan|deth Christ is dishonored and put to shame. Thirdly, it is a signe of commodera|tion with Gods enemies; while we beare it we forbeare to confesse against them as we are commaunded *Thou shalt destroye all signes and monumentes of their religi|on, because thou art an holy people to the Lord.* Fourtly, It is a stumbling blocke to the popishly minded, while it continueth, some regard seemeth to be had of their service and of their ceremonies. Fiftly, It is a snare like to one of Canaans mo|numents. while it surviueth, occasion is giuen to

[85] By this I suggest the multitude of attitudes original audience members might have exerted toward crosses: disdain, fear, skepticism, love, and so on.

> abuse, yea to worship it. Sixtly, It is a vanitie, euen as euery Idoll is, which can no way be profitable.[86]

Treatises such as Parker's indicate the emotional stakes citizens held in reference to the cross as a devotional object. When read alongside Renaissance theories of vision and antitheatrical arguments, it is clear to see how Renaissance religious and artistic cultures intersected in complicated and dangerous ways. In many ways, these theories seem to converge and inform each other. And they converge, of course, metadramatically on stage, as playwrights stage visually the potential dangers of visual objects. Dramatizing fears concerning idolatry brings these issues to life, literally as actors personify these debates.

Verbal

On a related note, and all the more crucial to examine due to drama's multimodal nature, in addition to examining the content of visuals as objects of devotion, *Arden* also considers the idolatrous nature of words as oaths and orders are presented as performatives that challenge the boundaries of idolatrous devotion. Again referencing my larger interest in *paragone* discourse, it is important to always remember that the defining similarities between verbal and visual within *paragone* discourse is their shared potential to inflict harm, largely through their dangerous ability to provoke idolatrous behavior in those who engage with these forms. Inherent in *paragone* discourse are rebuttals to claims that certain media are harmful in their efforts to trick or mislead their audiences in some way. Relative to this, probing the bounds of religion is operative in the play; as MacDonald P. Jackson states, *Arden* examines "the perversion of religious symbols and sacraments and the corruption of language, as oaths and bonds are broken

[86] See Parker, Robert. *A scholasticall discourse against symbolizing with Antichrist*.

and words become weapons" (252). Building upon Jackson's reading, I argue it is clear that throughout the play Alice maintains that words—specifically marriage oaths—do not matter; the disavowal of her marriage oaths specifically—not the symbolic bond of their marriage, but the words themselves—disrespects God's vision of marriage according to sermons from the time.[87]

Paradoxical to Alice's position concerning marriage oaths, the play dramatizes verbal negotiations and bonds for committing Arden's murder, which clearly represent just how dangerous and binding words can be. At the beginning of the play, Alice refutes the performativity of the marriage vows they exchanged before God, deciding, "I am tied to him [Arden] by marriage. / Love is a god, and marriage is but words; / And therefore Mosby's title is best." (1.100-3). Through these lines, Alice insults marriage and, by association, the shared religious bond between husband and wife. Alice's blasé attitude toward the seriousness of marriage vows distances her from not only her husband, but also from the church, suggesting perhaps a commentary on the shifting religious landscape of England.[88]

Words, like images, we discover, also have the potential of being idolatrous in that they bring the worshipper further away from God by disrupting the telos of worship. The clearest example of worship of words comes when Alice, in an attempt to apologize for another argument she started with Mosby, pledges to replace the pages of her prayerbook with his love letters and to "meditate" upon his words instead of on the word of God. Interestingly, while Alice refutes her marriage vows, she swears to devote herself to Mosby's letters, and the verbal performatives

[87] Thomas Gataker's 1624 *A mariage praier* in which he describes marriage in similar ways to many sermons from the time, argues that "Marriage is God's orrdiance." Certainly Alice's casual, and even bombastic disrespect of her union to Arden worked to cast her in the role of the villain.

[88] The play was written during the height of Elizabeth's long protestant rule but concerns a real crime that occurred just four years after King Henry VIII's death in 1547. It is my view that this is why this version of Arden's murder reflects shifting religious (and also political and economic) issues; they were pertinent between these periods. Religious overtones of *Arden* are not present in its source document, *Holinshed's Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*.

she espouses sets into motion the attacks on Arden's life. And so while Alice refutes religious language such as marriage oaths and biblical passages within her prayerbook, she still considers *her* words to be of importance. By expressing refusal of God's word in favor of her own or that of Mosby's, Alice is committing verbal idolatry, if we consider the same guidelines under which we examine visual idolatry to be in place. Substituting the word of God with the words of Mosby, Alice suggests that she privileges her lover over her God. Her reliance on secular language is clear: during another one of Alice's many disagreements with Mosby, she questions, "Is this the end of all thy solemn oaths?" Ironically, she chastises him for potentially backing out of their agreement, "Remember, when I locked thee in my closet, / What were thy words and mine? Did we not both / Decree to murder Arden in the night?" (1.185, 191-3). Remarkably, the vow Alice made with Mosby in her bedroom seems to hold more power than the one made in the church with Arden. Disrupting, then, the religious oaths that Alice took, the lovers privilege their own words. Moreover, she refers to their oath as a "decree," evidence of a civil or lawful agreement rather than the spiritual bond that joins man and woman together in the church. For these reasons, it seems that Alice, not only through her actions, but also through her own words and ideology, refutes the authority of the church.[89] Furthermore, it is clear that Alice is a master of words and uses them in order to manipulate those around her into getting what she desires. The play is full of lines in which Alice bargains and negotiates with men to do her bidding, at times promising money and land, and even her servant Susan, in exchange for her husband's death.

[89] This is true until she is caught and the mayor is sentencing her to her punishment. In scene 16, at the mayor's suggestion, Alice cries out to her dead husband, "Forgive me, Arden; I repent me now / […] And frown not on me when we meet in heaven: / In heaven I love thee though on earth I did not." (16.7-11) Interestingly, Alice admits that she did not love her husband but yet in heaven she will. Perhaps more interesting is her belief that repenting *now* will allow her access to heaven upon her punishment of death. This seems to be a total reversal of the beliefs she has held previously and it could be argued that she only believes that words matter now because of her impending fate.

Certainly by the end of the play, audiences would have held little sympathy for Alice, and by the time they have murdered Arden, and Alice has been caught, her sudden reliance on words—through asking for Christian forgiveness—may seem disingenuous to audiences:

> Forgive me, Arden; I repent me now,
>
> And, would my death save thine, though shouldst not die.
>
> Rise up, sweet Arden, and enjoy thy love,
>
> And frown not on me when we meet in heaven:
>
> In heaven I love thee though on earth I did not. (16.7-11)

Alice's sudden desire for forgiveness stands in stark contrast to her earlier rejection of religious oaths. Contributing to our skepticism of this speech existing as an authentic act of repentance is the recognition that Alice evokes Christian theories concerning forgiveness only when she is in distress and out of options. Previously, while in a row with Mosby, she dramatically offered to "do penance" for offending him (8.115).[90] By offering penance, Alice mobilizes the very religious traditions she refutes.[91] Her portrayal as the villain remains intact, despite her pleas for mercy. Her words are not enough to undo her horrible act.[92]

[90] The *OED* defines penance as "The performance of some act of self-mortification or the undergoing of some penalty as an expression of sorrow for sin or wrongdoing; religious discipline, either imposed by ecclesiastical authority or voluntarily undertaken, as a token of repentance and as a means of satisfaction for sin"

[91] Her act of penance is the aforementioned destruction of her prayerbook in favor of Mosby's words. While penance should include some act of "self-mortification" and/or exist as a "penalty", Alice clearly refutes religion in a number of ways until it comes time for her own forgiveness. Paradoxically, as she pleads for forgiveness using a religious term, she vows to desecrate the word of God. She does this because she aims to prove to Mosby just how important he is to her; this act would demonstrate that he is more important than God to her. However, Alice is not portrayed as a pious woman, making this stretch of a sacrifice a blatant and strategic move to gain forgiveness not from God, but from her lover, Mosby, whom she privileges.

[92] It is worth noting the gendered significance of Alice and her refusal accept the prayerbook as her guiding text. Williamson states that "many Protestant polemicists were deeply anxious about the possibility that women's moral and physical frailty would lead to the abuse of religious objects such as prayer books" (154).

Conclusion: Integrating Verbal and Visual

I propose that we must be cognizant of the intersecting histories these forms shared, especially as they are expressed through the medium of drama, where verbal and visual theories collided in order to compose the culturally rich form. Alike in their potential to cause harm, we must always consider how the forms contrast in terms of their ability to evoke differing lines of experience; however, considering their respective nuances does not mean, as past scholarship has done, that we should perpetuate the *paragone* divide. Rather than continue a false binary between the forms, I suggest that we consider the nexus of verbal and visual within the context of idolatry as we consider how *paragone* documents were often written in response to each other and subsequently, were represented and subverted creatively on stage. Considering the cohesive bond the theater demanded of verbal and visual forms allows us to refute the silence of the visual and the blindness of the verbal and instead consider the significance of the resulting merger of drama.

While this chapter has examined *Arden* primarily, and *The White Devil* more tangentially, it is appropriate to consider how salient a reading of the verbal/visual nexus may be when considering a range of Renaissance literature within the context of idolatry. Reading, for example, *paragone* texts alongside literature that stages the dangers of art in very physical ways—through both visual and verbal means—offers us valuable insight into the connecting histories both media shared, thereby offering new ways of exploring each form more deeply. The shared histories of idolatry and *paragone* literatures need to be recognized for their converging theories related to the nature of verbal and visual media and their resulting effects on viewers. It is important to acknowledge that while *Arden of Faversham* engages with the dangers of visual art in particularly interesting ways, by staging emission theory, the hazards of the untrained

viewer, and relationship between content and idolatry, I would be remiss to not also discuss the proliferation of similar references being made throughout Renaissance drama and poetry. *Arden* is far from unique in its portrayal of the destructive power of the visual; in different, less concrete ways, we find similar references throughout Renaissance literature. The number of such references indicates the prevalence of the issue of potentially dangerous visuals to Renaissance writers.

Thinking of vision specifically, I believe that it is no coincidence that we find so many references to the act of seeing in Renaissance literature; far from simply conveying the biological process of vision, the popular trope was used to evoke a sense of loss of control either through the form of love or death. *Seeing* was never *just* about the physical process of vision, but instead connoted a dynamic, intentional act that symbolized more for original audiences. For example, Sir Philip Sidney's sonnet sequence, *Astrophil and Stella*, which predates *Arden of Faversham*, evokes emission theory to portray the extremes of Astrophil's love for his muse, Stella.[93] In Sonnet 48, Astrophil claims, "That through my heart their beamy darts be gone, / Whose cureless wounds even now most freshly bleed" (155). These lines suggest that Stella's beams penetrate Astrophil and affect his emotions internally and directly; such lines are a direct reference to the arguments held by *paragone* painters who argued that visual art reached the viewer and affected him instantly. His tone throughout the sequence seems to suggest that he is a victim to Stella's gaze. When she looks at him, he suggests, he is powerless and simply serves as a receptacle of her "beamy darts." Sonnet 76 describes a physical reaction like the corporeal bond of the eye to

[93] Superficially, the sequence suggests that through Stella's active eye, she is endowed with power over Astrophil. However, upon a deeper reading we recognize that because it is Astrophil who represents Stella, crafting even her physiological sense of sight as a pleasing attribute meant to gratify himself, it is Astrophil who retains control. And throughout the larger structure of the poem itself, it is Astrophil who actually exists in a state of constant observation of Stella, resulting in the notion that Astrophil serves as the actual viewer, while Stella remains the artistic object that is represented poetically.

an object. In this passage, Astrophil claims that her rays have penetrated his heart, and the subsequent representation of an intense physical reaction clearly illustrates the emotional passion her gaze stirs within him: "But lo, while I do speak, it growth noon with me, /Her flamey glistering lights increase with time and place. / My heart cries, 'Ah it burns!' Mine eyes now dazzled be" (174). One way in which it may be appropriate to think about emission theory in this sense is in reference to gender, as we see in Sidney's sonnet sequence. The poems modify positions of power as the gaze moves from the artist to his muse and then back again. This example then, alerts us to consider the function and effect of the shifting power dynamics between artist and subject, and of course male and female more broadly.[94] In other ways, it secularizes the issue of idolatry as a powerful force, able to penetrate whoever idolizes something before God.

Representative of the potential dangers of the sense of sight is the common symbol of the basilisk, which the *Oxford English Dictionary* describes as a "fabulous reptile," stating that ancient authors described the creature as deadly; its "breath, and even its look was fatal." As a literary symbol the basilisk was adopted by subsequent epochs and Renaissance authors tended to focus on its *visual* danger specifically; the creature is often employed when something unsightly happens before a character, or when a character wishes to present herself or himself as more deadly than the well-known evil and powerful basilisk. In this context, the term appears on seven separate occasions within Shakespeare's works; each reference indicates the dangers of the basilisk.[95] Like emission theory, references to the basilisk appear when an element of danger is

[94] Conversely, Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece* uses emission theory to indicate the loss of life, interestingly, as portrayed through the painting Lucrece gazes upon for comfort: "dying eyes gleam'd forth their ashly lights." The loss of oneself is symbolizes through the loss of the fire inside. Lucrece looks upon the portrait and meditates on the painted representation of Helen. Certainly this multi-layered interpretation cannot be ignored: we imagine Lucrece, a fictional literary character gazing upon a visual of Helen, who lest we forget, is also represented to us verbally.
[95] References to the basilisk can be found in *Cymbeline*; *Henry 4, Part 2*; and *A Winter's Tale*, among others.

present and similar to the representation of theories of vision, the basilisk also suggests a certain loss of control and a simultaneous desire for more autonomy.

In more specific ways, *Arden* combines the subject/viewer/object power dynamics suggested through emission theories with the perceived dangerous influence the visual commanded and results in a play that explores the visual experience of the spectator who is conditioned by an idolatry-fearing society. Connecting these related and yet distinct parts of what amounts to the Renaissance "ways of seeing" means that we are able to account for these converging notions in *Arden* and beyond. While this chapter has been concerned with words such as "object," "subject," and "art," along with related concepts such as "devotion," "idolatry," and "vision," it is of course vital to recognize that these terms were just as complicated in the Renaissance as they are today. Lest we forget the complexities that surrounded the playwright when considering these ideas: they had to contend with censorship regarding religion and/or monarchial power, the desire for economic gain through patronage or mass appeal in the theaters, and the hope for some writers, as we know, to gain respect and credibility in an emerging art form. Each of these pressures undoubtedly affected the playwright as he created works that both reflected and influenced the world around him regarding methods of visual and verbal artistic experience. The anonymous author of *Arden,* for example, very clearly felt that he had something important to say about the nature of the visual experience and its related effects.

Chapter 3: Verbal and Visual Performed: Dramatic Personification of the *Paragone* in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*

At the beginning of Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon of Athens*, before Timon has even appeared onstage, a Painter and Poet enter and compete for Timon's patronage while analyzing each other's work. After the Poet describes his poem, the Painter retorts, "Tis common: / A thousand morall Paintings I can shew, / That shall demonstrate these quicke blowes of Fortunes, / More pregnantly then words" (81). This opening scene has been referenced by scholars for decades, perhaps beginning with Anthony Blunt's seminal 1939 article, in which he recognized that this scene is "an allusion to the 'Paragone,' or the quarrel and rivalry which had set the painters and poets of Italy against each other for two centuries" (260-62). Extending Blunt's observation concerning the presence of the *paragone* in Shakespeare's play, I examine the characters of the Painter and Poet more intently, beyond Blunt's initial cursory work that considered these men as mere "allusions" to the *paragone*. Instead, I argue that this interaction is a staged personification of the historic artistic debate, dramatized through the quarrel between the Painter and Poet, who each give voice to the larger totality of the arguments made by those within their respective fields. By attributing "human form, nature, or characteristics"—the *Oxford English Dictionary*'s definition of "personification'—to the *paragone,*[96] *Timon* encourages thoughtful consideration of the argument by presenting the debate through living, breathing, speaking characters on stage. Examining this instance of personification closely will

[96] The more commonly used term in the Renaissance was *prosopopeia*; the term has a longer history that today's more common use of personification, and holds a related, but slightly different meaning. The *OED* describes prosopopeia as, "A rhetorical device by which an imaginary, absent, or dead person is represented as speaking or acting; the introduction of a pretended speaker; an instance of this. Now *rare*." With a secondary meaning of "A figure of speech by which an inanimate or abstract thing is represented as a person, or as having personal characteristics, esp. the power to think or speak."

enable scholars to better understand the larger purpose and significance of this prevalent (but often understudied) trope in Renaissance drama. Further, the identities established through this trope—verbal/poetic and visual/painted—engages the field's more recent interest in visual culture and develops the case for a more multimodal approach to the study of Renaissance performance.

Specifically, I propose that the Painter and Poet scene uses a self-referential device, personification, to mobilize the debate. Staged personification, a trope that is used to bind verbal with visual, dramatizes a concept that deliberately pits these two forms against each other. I suggest that we consider the role of the verbal/visual nexus as it is presented through the inherently mixed medium of drama and, more specifically, through the dynamic trope of personification. By reading this opening scene as a personification of the *paragone*, we recognize that the trope's verbal/visual relationship actually works to subvert the *paragone* by collapsing the artificial boundaries that divide the two forms. Furthermore, by identifying the creative roots of drama—which I argue belong to a verbal and visual register—and through recognizing the subversive functions of the dramatization of the *paragone*, new readings become available to scholars, specifically readings that consider more intently and thoroughly the visual functions of drama. In all, we must recognize the power that English Renaissance theater held to transform a centuries-old debate carried over from the continent. By successfully merging verbal and visual in progressively artistic ways, to the aristocracy and the masses, and on courtly and commercial stages, the dualistic artisan—the playwright—became an equalizer of the *paragone* by drawing from and maintaining both verbal and visual elements in his profession.

James J. Paxson describes quite lucidly the nature of personification and how we might think of the trope in modern scholarship:

> The "personifier" conforms to a standardized narrative actant: s/he is a mobile and active human being, endowed with speech, and representative of a specific psychological, physiological, and ideological constitution. The "personified" can be found among a range of abstract essences, inanimate objects, animals, etc. It is figurally *translated* into the personifier. The personification figure is thus a compound entity. (40)

Critically, Paxson proposes that the personified is "figurally *translated* into the personifier," indicating that the personified is converted and interpreted as the personifier. If we consider dramatic personification, we recognize that the personified is granted a body and therefore is able to engage in physical movement on stage, after the larger translation—that is, from one language to another, from verbal to visual—takes place. As our verbal understanding of a thing personified materializes on stage, it moves from a verbal register into that of the visual and subsequently exhibits a different form of information transfer. The personifier imparts alternative and additional meaning as it takes the stage: costume, gesture, movement, proximity, and expression impart meaning that the previous language of verbal alone did not. But Paxson's language here also suggests that instead of a radical transformation, the personified retains its meaning, connotations, and references. And, because personification is a "compound entity," he acknowledges that the personified keeps its original significance, but also takes on the subtleties of the newly translated form. While this language maintains close ties to a verbal register, recognizing how this definition can be applied to the visual aspects of dramatic personification is vital.

For example, if we consider Shakespeare's personification of time in his late romance, *The Winter's Tale*, we see that the trope is built upon visual conventions of how time might

appear as a human figure. Time makes verbal note of the hourglass he carries and his wings, which were used in visual depictions of a personified Time in order to indicate how quickly he moves. As he references his "swift passage," he goes on to describe his omnipotent powers, which transcend all other authority; after all, nothing can stop time. Imparting wisdom to the audience through the scene's only monologue, Time indicates his universal ability to impart knowledge and we realize that in terms of the narrative, it is Time (and quite literally, sixteen years) that separates the previously cruel Leontes into the grieving man who regrets his past treatment of his wife. Personification, then, becomes a more complicated trope to consider, because unlike asking the audience to imagine a scene, person, or thing, the dramatists takes an immaterial entity and visualizes it for them—by personifying it on stage and therefore relegating a body, costumes, and, moreover, a set of beliefs, desires, and opinions to that previously invisible quality. In this way, the tension between visual and verbal and audience engagement becomes compounded as we consider which form of representation mirrors reality. This is the effect of dramatic personification: the translation from verbal to visual does not simply result in a transference of information delivery, but instead it raises new concerns regarding the nature of representation. Ultimately, dramatic personification serves as an essential example of the prolific capability of Renaissance drama to combine verbal with visual, and both demonstrate a new method for multimodal artistic expression, audience engagement, and a subversion of the *paragone*.

Paxson's definition of personification suggests that personification of the *paragone* within *Timon*—which pits poetry against painting, both in the abstract, through the particular guise of the Poet and the Painter—relates to the arguments *paragone* writers espoused in their texts. Because *paragone* writers were preoccupied with replicating God's natural world through

their work, accusations of falseness and any delineation from that perceived reality were harsh criticisms of each form, and this type of language is what we see with interactions between the Painter and Poet. Moreover, since the art forms in the abstract are personified by their practitioners, the scene opens up additional questions regarding the professionalization of the dramatist: does portraying these elements of their craft emphasize that dramatists were at odds with this component of their profession? Or perhaps these personifications were created as a critique of the debate that sought to divide their form. Is this opening scene to be perceived as playful or sarcastic? And finally, when we consider that *paragone* was a debate amongst learnèd men, how are we to consider the implications of this largely inside joke?[97]

In sum, this chapter aims to demonstrate the need for a reading of English Renaissance dramatists as verbal *and* visual artists. Doing so allows space for new readings of Renaissance plays, specifically of moments that demonstrate an awareness of their artistic multimedia, as I demonstrate through my exploration of *Timon of Athens*. By identifying and arguing for the interaction between the Poet and Painter as a personification in the first place, I recognize that the verbal and visual elements of dramatic personification subvert the long-held *paragone* claims that argued for a separation of media. Renaissance plays contain strictly visual moments, strictly verbal moments, and more often than not, moments that blend the two forms together. Oscillating between differing combinations of these forms not only indicates the agility of the Renaissance playwright (given the context of the relatively new emergence of the form), but also solidifies his *identity* as a verbal and visual artist. Identity, I argue, is the major operative of the inclusion of the personified *paragone* to begin with. The self-referring trope expresses the self-

[97] The idea of an "inside joke" is an important one as it specifically relates to class in Renaissance England. This issue is complicated further when we consider the rising status of the artist (both playwrights and painters) as their media existed in a time of change as each form was revaluated from mere craft to art form.

identification of the playwright as a verbal and visual artist. Although this chapter is focused exclusively on *Timon of Athens*, it sheds light more broadly on artistic self-awareness, and the phenomenon of identifying oneself with one's artistic labor. Similar moments of self-identification occur throughout the Renaissance dramatic corpus, but in this play we see a strong example of the sort of professional self-awareness that helped define not only the artistic climate of the time, but also the period as a whole.

First, it should be established that the trope of personification was highly regarded in the Renaissance. While my research questions center on the personification of the *paragone* within *Timon* specifically, of course the play was far from unique in its employment of the trope.[98] While Shakespeare and Middleton made use of personification, so did countless other Renaissance artists in various media, ranging across the verbal and visual arts. The topic of this chapter, however, remains focused on *dramatic* personification, which offers a unique mobilization of the trope by making use of both verbal and visual cues that overcome the perceived limitations of the figure of personification if bound to strictly verbal or visual media.[99] Personification, in my view, is ripe with meaning on the stage, which we will see as we reflect upon both the verbal and visual considerations that went into writing and staging personifications. As a multimodal form, drama was prime to exploit the figure on stage and make

[98] We need not look far to source familiar examples of the ways in which personification was employed in Renaissance drama. Perhaps the most common and apt example is the personification of revenge we see in the c.1592 play, *The Spanish Tragedy*. In this seminal revenge tragedy, Revenge is embodied as events of the play unfold. Revenge is reprised as a personified character in c.1594 *Titus Andronicus*, joined by Murder and Rape. "These three figures, dressed in armor and equipped with weaponry of sharp steel, would visually convey the implacability and menace of the forces they embody" (Paxson 62). In Shakespeare's romance, c.1611 *The Winter's Tale* the personification of time tells us that sixteen years have passed. Lastly, of course we can recall the more common examples of personification that occur throughout Renaissance literature: Fortune as Fortuna, or the seasons personified.

[99] The use of personification in English literature enjoys a long history, beginning of course with inspiration from antiquity and taking on a vital role in medieval morality plays (see Anne Barton's 1967 book, *Shakespeare and the Idea of the Play*); the presence of this device was carried over to Renaissance drama. The trope was then revived in interesting (sometimes bizarre) ways in the later courtly masque, which I will explore in my next chapter on Ben Jonson.

use of both visual and verbal representations that audience members might have seen before in books or oil paintings (Kiefer 23-4).[100] Capitalizing on the audiences' familiarity with conventional representations that viewers knew symbolized something beyond the surface meaning, dramatists were able to incorporate personification through *both* forms. In this way, the personification of the artists in *Timon* is itself a form of visual art (and should not simply be thought of as a verbal trope) that relies on knowledge of visual culture like oil paintings or emblems.[101]

Renaissance rhetoricians (who were of course influenced greatly by antiquity) considered use of personification as a mark of literary excellence and use of the trope was far from a cliché. Renaissance rhetorical manuals took time to define the trope and to guide readers on its appropriate usage, making clear that it was a well-regarded device. In 1577, Henry Peacham the Elder published his rhetorical manual, *The Garden of Eloquence*, in which he states that prosopopoeia is "the faining of a person, that is, when to a thing sencelesse and dumbe we faine a fit person, or attribute a person to a commonwealth or multitude." [102] He goes on to state that "the Orator by this figure maketh [th]e commonwealth to speake, to commend, to dispraise, to aske, to complaine…" We see this exact purpose exercised within *Timon,* as the representative artists speak for their community of artists. By Peacham's definition, personification is identified through its ability to feel and speak. Specifically, Peacham ends his definition by stating that

[100] See Kiefer, Frederick. *Shakespeare's Visual Theatre: Staging the Personified Characters*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003.
[101] Emblems in particular were capable of inspiring verbal *and* visual interpretations of a range of complex human emotions or ideas. This cyclical creative process, in which verbal and visual arts intentionally interacted through drama has been underappreciated by scholars and as I demonstrate, it is important to recognize the duality of verbal and visual as it was performed.
[102] While there are minute distinctions between the terms personification and prosopopeia, I use the terms interchangeably for my purposes here. The distinction between these terms is often realized in speaking vs. non-speaking parts and the transition from using 'prospopeia' to 'personifcation' is dependent and variable across country and time.

these figures are sometimes created to "contend and plead one against another" which is precisely the purpose of the personified *paragone* within Timon.[103] Peacham states that personification is "an apt forme of speech to complaine, to accuse, to reprehend…" but warns that the trope should be employed sparingly, when the orator is "constrained to call for helpe and aide" from the thing personified, in order to help him plead his case. With this contemporary warning in mind, it will become vital to examine just why the playwrights chose to bring forth the *paragone* in this way and what the dialogue can teach scholars about not only Renaissance personification, but the *paragone* itself. Was Shakespeare (consciously or otherwise) depicting the *paragone* through personification in response to the artistic arguments that surrounded him? While intentions are difficult to prove, we must at least recognize the decision the dramatist made to bring forth this issue through his art, and in response, probe the significance of these ideas and how it affected art in the period.

When considering dramatic personification specifically, literary scholars may need to reframe their perception of personification from a textual to a visual (at least in part) trope. By referring to George Puttenhams's commonly-cited definition of personification (or prosopopeia) in his 1589 rhetorical manual, *The Art of English Poesy*, we recognize that this trope relies on the element of the visual, most obviously when it is used to materialize a personified figure on stage. And because Puttenham's personified figure is defined in part in its ability to speak (as in theater) personification operates under both visual and verbal registers. Like Peacham, Puttenham defines prosopopeia as the act of attributing "human quality, as reason or speech, to dumb creatures or other insensible things . . . to give them a human person" (324). Thus, personification assigns human qualities, such as reasoning or verbal communication, to

[103] Prosopoeia, he defines, is when poets and orators "do attribute to things which are without life, not only life, but also reason and affection, and sometime speech" (9).

nonverbal creatures, things, or concepts, which of course lack logic. Applying this definition to the *paragone* scene in *Timon,* we see that the verbal/visual nexus of personification is emphasized as the debate is afforded both with physical bodies and with speech that materializes on stage. In this way, the Painter not only serves as a representative painter, but also represents the art of painting itself. While the Painter personifies the sum of the arguments made in favor of the visual arts, we witness that the Poet certainly personifies arguments made for the superiority of the written form.[104] The actors take on the responsibility of personifying these media by representing them both visually and verbally, through their costumed bodies moving about on stage, and through their contentious jabs directed toward one another. This verbal/visual representation is unique to dramatic personification. As John Jowett reminds us:

> Performance is a sensory activity, appealing to a broader range of sensation than the verbal text as spoken, with the senses always variable, both from play to play and from moment to moment…Theater concentrates on sight and hearing as the two senses through which it mainly communicates. Meaning is constituted within a complex dialogue between these two senses. (74).

Because drama capitalizes on both forms, as does the trope of personification, the opening scene to *Timon* becomes a clear metadramatic portrayal of the status of the arts at the time. Pitted against one another through the *paragone* and attacked once more through anti-theatrical texts that varied in their theses, but were generally critical of secular texts and the seductive capabilities of visuals, the two forms converged through drama, and in *Timon* quite literally they face one another in an argument concerning which form is superior.

[104] Frederick Kiefer describes the visual personification of the five senses within Timon's Maskers of Amazons performance. Timon's masque clearly parallels the Jacobean masque tradition, which as we know, relied heavily on personification. Jonson's *The Masque of Beauty* and *Chloridia* for example, give life to emblematic representations through personification.

Furthermore, if we reflect upon the period's rhetorical manuals, we see that those writers were also somewhat at odds with where they stood regarding *paragone* arguments. For example, Puttenham's rhetorical manual is a primary example of the very debate *Timon* personifies. While Puttenham does not take a definitive stance regarding the *paragone* directly, his penchant for moving from aural to visual does suggest that he understood the benefit of blending media in order to explore and explain various elements of literature. For example, in Book II he uses visuals to depict how poetic rhyme operates and discusses pattern poems at length after including drawn images of shapes and before moving into a description of emblems, suggesting that for Puttenham, poetry led naturally into the visual arts (174-190). His work seems to advocate for a blending of media that subverts the *paragone* texts that argue for the superiority of one form over all others. He acknowledges implicitly that sight can aid in understanding poetry; in fact, Puttenham oscillates between the senses by using visual models throughout Book II to describe the aural qualities of poetry. For example, when discussing rhyme, he writes:

> And I set you down an ocular example, because ye may the better conceive it. Likewise, it so falleth out most times, your ocular proportion doth declare the nature of the audible, for if it please the ear well, the same represented by the delineation to the view pleaseth the eye well, and e converso. And this is by a natural sympathy between the ear and eye […]. (175)[105]

In this way, Puttenham specifically advocates for a "natural sympathy" between the aural and the visual, suggesting that the visual may aid the ear in understanding the nature of rhyme.

In other ways, Puttenham manipulates the purported verbal/visual binary by seeming to purposefully subvert the established meaning of the rhetorical term *enargeia*. Editors Frank

[105] For essays on the interplay between senses in the Renaissance, see *A Cultural History of the Senses in the Renaissance*, Ed. Herman Roodenburg, 2016.

Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn note that, for the ancients, the rhetorical device "involved the use of ornamental figures to make the listener see something vividly in the mind's eye." They go on to explain that Puttenham's "deliberate transformation" of the term—to affect the ear rather than the eye—is most likely Puttenham's way of situating the term within his prescriptive categories of figures of speech. In this case, he categorizes *enargeia* within the figures of speech that affect the ear.[106] Puttenham's destabilization of traditional verbal/visual categories becomes all the more relevant when placed within the context of multimodal Renaissance drama. His text demonstrates the precarious nature of the desire to separate media in modern scholarship, working under the false perception that *paragone* writers isolated their form from others. It also emphasizes for scholars the importance of uncovering the unique nature of personification, as a trope that blends verbal and visual media, especially on stage, and even more so within *Timon*. As a play, *Timon* stages verbal and visual art and uses the verbal/visual trope of personification to present a debate *about* the argument between verbal and visual. Clearly, we should explore the underlying layers of representation that inspired this dramatic exchange as well as the intended commentary on the nature of these forms.

In a similar vein, if we turn to the earlier treatment of personification on the continent, (which certainly carried over to the later English Renaissance), we see that the emblem—a fairly stable visual representation of human concepts or emotions—often bound media by creating visual personifications that artists across genres used in their work. As Hans-Joachim Zimmerman explains, Cesare Ripa's didactic purpose in creating his seminal emblem book, *Iconologia* was to compile both a "description and explanation of universal pictures which were accessible to any educated man," made available and useful to "poets, painters, and sculptors

[106] The other categories Puttenham establishes for figures of speech are those that affect the mind, and those that affect both the mind *and* the ear.

who wanted to depict virtues, vices, human feelings and passions."[107] The key element to his book of emblems was that they included both an image and a textual description of the symbolism within the image. Binding these two media means that emblems were inherently multimodal and relied on the verbal to explain the visual. Working then from a similar register of visual symbolism, which could be adapted to any form, either verbal or visual, the dramatists and the painter were able to reference common depictions of a variety of human emotions and experiences. For example, Idolotria, a figure of particular importance to my interests, is depicted and described as a "A blind Woman, upon her Knees, offering Incense to the Statue of a brazen Bull…Blind, because she does not rightly perceive whom she ought principally to *adore*, and *worship*" (78). With emphasis placed upon her blindness, the image could elicit a range of responses toward the idolater from pity to disdain, depending on the ways in which an artist mobilizes this figure. Ripa's image of Poetry is described as wearing a laurel and carrying a harp in order to symbolize her musical nature. Celestial stars and wings are used to "signifie that none can excel in this Art, if he be not endowed with extraordinary Talents from *Heaven*" (122). While there is not an emblem of painting in particular, *designing* is shown as a handsome figure with a mirror in order to suggest that designing is usually creating attractive things (48).

Considering these emblems, it is plausible, of course, that as *Timon*'s Painter and Poet entered the stage, the Poet wore a laurel and the Painter carried a mirror, or some other iconographic item to indicate his profession to the audience before lines are even spoken. What each of these emblematic examples shows is the use of commonplace representational symbols,

[107] *English Translations and Adaptations of Cesare Ripa's Iconologia from 17th to 19th Century*.
It is worth noting that Henry Green, editor to Geffrey Whitney's 1585 English emblem book, *A Choice of Emblems*, defines emblems as "any moulding, or picture, the implied meaning of which is something additional to what the actual delineation represents, is an emblem…Emblems in fact were, and are, a species of hieroglyphics, in which the figures or pictures, besides denoting the natural objects to which they bear resemblances, were employed to express properties of the mind, virtues and abstract ideas, and all the operations of the soul" (x).

employed to indicate particular symbolic meaning within the emblem itself, that work to symbolize a larger conglomerate of meaning. These emblems serve as personifications of their intended term, but as I shall describe later, remain static in their portrayal due to their reliance on universal knowledge of the symbols which construct them.[108] Drama, I argue, sets these emblems into motion through personification as they are living, breathing actors playing characters on stage, embodied with emotions, opinions, desires, and the ability to express them.

The use of dramatic personification serves to complicate the verbal/visual relationship and ultimately results in a refutation of representational boundaries. It is striking, for example, that while *paragone* texts function to separate the arts, such a play as *Timon* should open with such arguments, and through the act of dramatic personification, create a hybrid relationship between forms. And when we consider the narrative of *Timon*, we recognize that within the dramatic representation itself, deliberate pressure is exerted upon the assumed representational restrictions situated upon each form, thereby complicating the *paragone* argument that separates media. John Dixon Hunt probes such limitations through analyzing the Painter and Poet scene by suggesting that the Painter represents *pictura* while the Poet appears as *scriptura*—though not as personifications, but rather as emblems of their respective arts. However, Hunt finds this emblematic representation limiting and concludes that neither "the verbal nor the visual by itself can represent Timon" (155-71). Hunt's reading suggests that the play deliberately questions the reliability of Renaissance emblematic code and consequently allows the dramatist to subtly elevate his own medium by using the dynamic form of drama to both visually and verbally represent Timon. In this way, he problematizes the role of Poet and Painter as "emblematic" by

[108] An example of the prevalence of emblems in the Renaissance can be seen in Henry Peacham's 1622 guide, *The compleat gentleman*: "Emblemes and Impresa's if ingeniously conceipted, are of daintie deuice and much esteeme." While I refer to emblems as "universal" in their meaning, of course I am referring to the thoughts of the emblem-creators of the time. "Universal" in this case refers to their target audience of educated, white, European, men.

concluding that "emblems are too static for dramatic use" and "the dynamics of theatrical experience are more complicated . . . than in the emblem" (155). While I agree with Hunt's assertion that the stasis we associate with the Renaissance emblem renders the form too stable to carry the Painter and Poet scene on its own, I do not see these characters as emblematic. Emblems must remain faithful to their specific composition and more commonly used emblems can be recognized—at some level—upon a single glance. But to *understand* their full significance, commentaries are often needed to *describe* their full significance. Differing from the emblem, the Painter and Poet are not static representations of their forms; they have personal motivations, skills, and most of all, a vibrant verbal and visual stage presence. For these reasons I suggest that the act of personifying, rather than emblemizing these characters, results in a dynamic exchange that *enlivens* the debate and removes the representational boundaries the *paragone* proposed, thus making it appropriate for the stage.

While I do draw a distinction between the relative stasis of the emblem in contrast to the progressive capabilities of a personified figure on stage, we might consider how the emblem does offer some basis from which we may understand visual representation in contexts other than naturalistic portrayals, such as traditional oil paintings. Unlike the genre of the portrait, which *paragone* authors often cite in order to argue for the superiority of their form, emblems and dramatic personifications often visually represent ideas rather than objects or subjects. In this way, as *paragone* discourse states, perhaps accompanying verbal commentary is not needed, but this cannot be the case for other forms. Emblems can often inspire a basic understanding of the things which they aim to represent—for example, a laurel crown might signify poetry—but often their more obscure references are lost upon the viewer unless verbal explanations accompany the visual. For example, Ripa's emblem for "Ambition" stands next to the following explanation:

> A Virgin all in green, with Ivy Branches, looking as if she would leap over a craggy Rock, at the Top of which are Scepters and Crowns, attended by a Lion lifting up his Head. The Ivy, denotes *Ambition* always climbing higher and higher, spoiling the Walls: the Ambitious sparing neither Country, Religion, nor Counsellours, so he may become greater than others. The Lion, Pride. (6)

Clearly, upon initial viewing and with no context, no one would identify the visual emblem described here as ambition. However, once one refers to the text that explains the symbolism behind the visual, it becomes clear why the artist depicted ambition in this way, even though it might not have been evident upon first glance. In this way, the emblem seems to defy the arguments regarding immediacy made by *paragone* writers in support of the visual. Clearly not comprehendible immediately or through the visual alone, the emblem relies on both verbal and visual cues to fulfill and complete its intended meaning. In similar fashion, dramatic personification operates reciprocally through verbal and visual means, and while the appearance of an actor in costume may hint towards his significance, the actor's own words are needed to truly reveal who or what he represents.

In order to understand Renaissance personification more fully, I turn to Sir Philip Sidney, who so eloquently defended the position of poetry within society by drawing upon both verbal and visual forms to state his position. Quite literally a "speaking picture," personified figures seem to align with Sidney's assertion that the purpose of poetry is to "teach and delight."[109] By positioning poetry ("the arte of imitation") as "speaking picture," Sidney emphasizes the creative ability of the poet to evoke a visual response within the mind's eye of the reader. In this way, he argues that the poet is superior to other professionals within the humanities—here the

[109] See *Sidney's 'The Defence of Poesy' and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism*.

philosopher in particular—because the poet "yieldeth to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the philosopher bestowesth but a wordish description which doth never strike, pierce, nor possess the sight of the soul so much as the other doth." Essentially, Sidney does not argue that *all* writing is superior, as he distinguishes the philosopher's banality from the poet's personified picture—his "speaking pictures." For Sidney, it is the imaginatively visual element of poetry that elevates its position.[110] And so, like Puttenham, Sidney recognizes the power of the visual, but he manipulates this power to argue that the poet simply utilizes the visual to reinforce his own medium. Of particular interest here is the notion that the personification of the *paragone* could be seen as purposeful in its goal to "teach and delight." In what ways does this scene delight audiences? What can it teach us?

These three Renaissance rhetoricians show us that while the core prerogative of *paragone* texts was to separate the arts further, the visual very clearly is not an enemy; indeed, it becomes an ally through such arguments, as authors rely on the visual form to explain and examine their own medium. Ultimately, as these examples illustrate, when Renaissance writers argued for the superiority of the textual over the visual, they could not help but concede to the necessity of the visual. The resulting fusion of form allows us to examine what Richard Meek has called the "visuality of language and the textuality of the visual," and it is precisely this reciprocal relationship that I argue reveals the fallacy of the *paragone* as we have understood it thus far (57).[111]

[110] Gavin Alexander clarifies that '*The Defence of Poesy* is a defence of imaginative literature' and not reserved for literature written in verse. He argues that in part, this is why Sidney's text has endured. Alexander G., *Sidney's 'The Defence of Poesy' and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism* (Penguin Classics 2004).
[111] Meek states this within his discussion of *The Rape of Lucrece*. See Meek, R., *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare*, 55-80.

Personification of the *Paragone* in *Timon of Athens*

Jowett refers to the depressing *Timon of Athens* as "Shakespeare's least loved play" (1). Surrounded by false friends and greedy craftsmen eager to gain his patronage, the seemingly wealthy and exceedingly generous Timon faces ruin when he realizes that he is in severe debt. Worse yet, in his time of need Timon's friends fail to help him, causing him to flee his home and abandon his personal relationships. Timon quickly transforms into an animalistic misanthrope who dies alone in the woods; his epitaph reads, "Here lie I, Timon, who alive all living men did hate" (323). This somber epitaph signals the end of the bleak play, but it exists in stark contrast to the play's jovial opening when a poet, painter, jeweler, merchant, and mercer congregate at Timon's home in order to vie for the generous patronage he has apparently become known to provide.[112] Most notably the Painter and Poet appear, and within a few short lines, they begin to compete with one another as they present their respective work.

Jowett explains that this opening interaction is layered in meaning; their competitive exchange is "conditioned by an awareness of wealth and power" (82). That is, this scene is bound in Renaissance ideology relating to hierarchy—financial, social, and artistic. To extend this notion, I argue that such an exchange serves a metadramatic purpose; as a poet himself, Shakespeare knows precisely and intimately what his characters are discussing. Therefore, provoked by A.D. Nuttall's claim that the Painter and Poet "are not so much talking persons as walking texts, speaking pictures" (16), it is my view that this exchange in particular personifies the *paragone* and creates a unique moment that combines aural and visual. It is here that the play

[112] In *The Culture of Playgoing in Shakespeare's England*, Paul Yachnin describes the tension that exists between 'art for art's sake' and art for economic gain, as seen, for example, in Sonnet 24. *Timon*'s Painter/Poet scene, I argue, demonstrates a similar tension. "The collision between the patronage and marketplace economies of artistic production is so disruptive that it does violence to the creative artist even at the level of the body, transforming the lover's breast into a shamefully open place of business" (70).

complicates the *paragone*'s restrictive boundaries by giving voice to the debate, challenging not only economic and social tensions as they vie for Timon's support, but exposing the perceived artistic limitations of each medium. By providing a space for this debate to speak through personification, Shakespeare highlights the significance of this discourse, and by creating characters who embody the debate itself, the play brings learnèd discourse to the stage for the masses. As reflections of the very debates, concerns, and unequivocal opposition that dramatists encountered, representing this tension through their work perhaps relieved the professional obstacles they faced. Presenting it on stage meant that dramatists were primed to use both verbal and visual means to relay their message to mass audiences that included a range of individuals across an economic and educational spectrum.

Personifying the debate, instead of presenting it through other literary means, perhaps made the complicated discourse approachable to the theater's inherently diverse audience. As Paxson describes, a message can be made comprehensible to mass audiences by providing it with familiar bodies:

> Via personification, especially of the didactic variety, the abstractions of philosophy or ethics become the actants of a narrative continuum: love, honor, the State, and Earth. Abstract intellectual qualities have, naturally, no form, substance, or temporal dimensions. They are ontologically and phenomenologically alien to living persons and substantial objects. Personification, therefore, is not only the formal trope by which one material entity can be "translated" into another, it is the trope whereby a whole domain of ontologically alien, separate, and privileged quantities can be translated into familiar, present, and time-bound ones. (166)

Paxson uses the multifaceted word "translated" in his definition and assessment of the significance of personification. Placing emphasis on this term, he reminds us that by personifying a concept, the main elements of an abstract entity remain as it is transferred into something more tangible. Bearing in mind this definition, we must consider that the self-serving Poet and Painter are aligned with the common salesmen in which they share the stage—a "Jeweller, Merchant, and Mercer"—and are hardly represented as the fine artists as which they strove to be perceived. Therefore, we recognize that dramatizing the complexities of a series of artistic texts, written over the course of centuries is transformed, or translated into common merchants that mass audiences were familiar with and could comprehend. The commodification of the verbal and visual arts in this way makes the arts more accessible to a wider audience.[113]

However, this staging also says something about the way in which these artists were treated within the larger Renaissance society. Gaining acceptance and respect for their professions, as well as for themselves—as their identities were now inextricably bound to their chosen profession—was an enormous motivator for *paragone* writers. Essentially, *paragone* texts served as persuasive propaganda, intended to elevate the writers' respective forms. This representation of artistic professions should not go unexplored. As Laurie Ellinghausen reminds us, "one of the most important and enduring developments of what we call the 'Renaissance' or 'early modern' period is the modern sense of vocation – that is, the sense that one's identity us bound up in one's work" (1). The concept of establishing and performing a professional identity

[113] Shakespeare of course uses personification in his other plays, perhaps most notably in *Titus Andronicus*, when Tamora, Chiron, and Demetrius dress as Revenge, Murder, and Rape. Curiously, although indicate that the three enter disguised, Titus recognizes Tamora until she seems to convince him that she is Revenge. Pretending to believe her due to his grief-induced madness, Titus even acknowledges how much Rape and Murder look like Chiron and Demetrius. He even instructs them to find those who resemble them exactly in order to inflict there punishments. This complex interplay—Tamora plays Revenge but as Revenge appears just like Tamora, and is told to look for Tamora, who looks just like Revenge—signals to the difficulty that comes when relying on only visual or verbal means when confronted with dramatic personification.

becomes the center of the opening discussion of the play. Therefore, the personification of the *paragone* does more than function as a literary device; it also serves a greater purpose than marking a time in which the *paragone* collapses as early modern theater dominates the English artistic scene. Rather, this opening scene signals the wider societal development of personal/professional identity. In this way, the Poet and Painter each come to the defense of their media, their professions, and their identities as they are bound to the work they do. This makes the artistic and social status of the playwright all the more interesting to distinguish. On which side does the playwright belong? Aligned with his profession in the same way as the Poet and Painter, the playwright could not have reasonably connected fully to either side. Precisely as an emerging artist, the dramatist made use of both forms and, by personifying the *paragone*, Shakespeare therefore comments upon his own emerging form and identity.

To see this duality of professionalization in practice, we notice that the Poet is the first to engage with the opposing medium, and through his ekphrastic description, we gather that the painting is a flattering portrayal of Timon:

> Admirable : How this grace
> Speakes his owne standing: what a mentall power
> This eye shootes forth? How bigge imagination
> Moues in this Lip, to th'dumbnesse of the gesture,
> One might interpret (80)

With these lines the Poet employs traditional praises for English Renaissance portraiture that focus on the realistic portrayal of the subject. In particular, his references to speech—'"Speakes," "Moues in this Lip," and "th'dumbnesse"—suggest an acknowledgment of *paragone* arguments that claim that paintings, however realistic they appear, are still inferior due

to their muteness. We are familiar, of course, with the sorts of Renaissance analogies that pertain to the perceived representational limitations placed upon each medium. Leonardo da Vinci's reiteration of the analogy is perhaps the best known. He argues, "If you claim that painting [is] mute poetry, then the painter could say that the poetry [is] blind painting" (209). We might also look back to Sidney's "speaking picture" comparison, which superficially works to further create an artificial distinction between media. In *Timon*, the Poet suggests that the Painter's work is so lifelike that it can *almost* speak, so although he overtly praises the portrait, he maintains the traditional limitations that the *paragone* established (a Renaissance version of a backhanded compliment). But, paradoxically, the tradition of English portraiture also condoned, and even encouraged, painted flattery; the Poet refers to this practice by commenting that Timon's portrait "Speakes his owne standing."[114] That is, the flattering image is appropriate for the seemingly wealthy and enormously generous Timon. But we know that the flattery the portrait offers Timon is false and rooted in the Painter's desire for monetary gain; in actuality, Timon is not the rich landowning Lord who is represented in the obsequious portrait; he is deeply in debt and ignorant of his impending fate. While not wholly accurate, the painting excels at capturing Timon as he *wishes* to be seen. Again, we know that this form of flattery was commonplace in Renaissance portraiture. David Howarth for example, describes Elizabethan portraiture as inherently emblematic: "Anti-naturalism was a powerful element in Elizabethan portraiture. But what these images lose in allusion, they gain in illusion" (110). In this way, the sitter's clothing or objects held in the hands or positioned in the background were able to be interpreted as saying something about the sitter. These universal symbols, not unlike those used within visual emblems, were used to tell a story about the sitter through strictly visual means. Understandably

[114] Nicholas Hilliard's manual, "A Treatise Concerning the Arte of Limning" discusses the role of flattery within portraiture.

then, Timon's flattering portrait mirrors his own false representation of wealth. Thus, each representation of Timon—the portrait, the poem, and the play itself—reveals the palpable tension between forms and yet is also highly suggestive of the innate similarities that allow each medium to unite on stage.

While I would propose that the portrait is much more than an ornamental stage property, I must concede that it is *how* the Poet and Painter engage with it that creates its significance and allows it to foreshadow the larger conflicts yet to come—mainly, Timon's fall from fortune. Timon has yet to appear on stage, and so the verbal description of his painted portrait is the audience's first insight into Shakespeare's portrayal of Timon. This important introduction to Timon's character sets the tone for the remainder of the play, and it complicates our understanding of who he is when we recognize that the verbal description of the portrait does not come from the artist himself, but from the perspective of the Poet, who describes seeing the portrait for the very first time. By describing what he sees, the Poet is in a position to verbally guide the audience to imagine precisely what *he* interprets. In turn, it seems that the Poet complicates the audience's lines of reception—both verbally and visually; we do not hear the Painter describe his own work, and we do not see what the Painter has *actually* painted.[115] What, then, are we left to interpret? Our ability to engage with the visual on our own terms seems to have been denied by the Poet, who verbally narrates specific elements of the portrait. Thus, the way in which we initially perceive Timon is the result of a complicated layering of ekphrastic and personified representations. Both the poem and the painting are housed within another representation of Timon, which is the play itself, and so audience members—especially those

[115] For staging practicality, portrait miniatures may have been used. Miniatures were emblematic of adoration and flattery, which correlates to the context of the play. For more information on portrait miniatures, and Hilliard's particular contribution to the genre (including full length and cabinet miniatures), see Roy Strong, *The English Renaissance Miniature*.

who would have been familiar with the antique Timon of Athens—are asked to engage with several incarnations of the man and, as part of the dramatic experience, are brought through a journey to discover the "real" Timon. In this way, it becomes tempting, as Meek and Barkan have observed, to theorize that what we initially "see" of Timon is removed from Shakespeare's own dramatic representation—that somehow this "well painted" portrait truly exists and is not simply a part of the play itself.

This scene reveals the complex results of considering the form of drama as multimodal. While the form is certainly an artistic blend of visual and textual (aural), drama does not reveal *all* visually. When considering the relative bareness of the Renaissance commercial stage, and the plea that some dramatists made for audiences to use their imaginations, we understand that all that playwrights conceive of *textually* cannot be shown *visually*. In part, this is due to staging practicality, but it also raises the questions prime for *paragone* analysis. In these cases, does the visual fail the verbal? While the visual may succeed in encouraging more audience participation (audience members are prompted to contribute to what they see on stage through their use of imagination), it does so through the intervention of words. As Erika T. Lin states:

> This model of dramatic practice is predicated on the assumption that verisimilitude is the representational ideal. Theatre, it presumes, aims for a facsimile of reality. By supplementing onstage actions with mental pictures, audiences "fill out" the material inadequacies of the playhouse, so as to make the fiction seem more "real." (71).

Of course staging practicality affects how dramatic personification functions. The extent to which productions had access to or made use of stage properties greatly affects playwrights'

reliance on verbal and visual forms and furthermore determines—to some extent—the audiences' experiences.

Therefore, when theorizing how visual and verbal work together, we must be aware of the power of ekphrasis and remain cognizant of our ability to discern representations from each other, especially within such plays as *Timon*, which so deliberately and thoroughly blurs the boundaries between forms. This does not mean that we ought to perpetuate the debate by dividing media hierarchically, but rather that we should recognize the immense value these individual forms add in creating dramatic representations. Here, we should acknowledge that we are confronted with several representations of Timon, and while the indebted Timon might easily be characterized as the "real" Timon, we cannot disregard that each of these versions belongs within the single representation that is Shakespeare's play. We are confronted with verbal, visual, and a blending of both forms throughout a single performance and, in fact, through individual scenes. Barkan has delivered his own warning to readers through his discussion of the literary history of ekphrasis: "It is not a visual figure so much as a figure of speech, and like all tropes it is a lie. The specific figural activity is akin to prosopopeia, that is, the bestowing of a voice upon a mute object" (332). While I acknowledge the literary rather than visual beginnings of ekphrasis, I must suggest that drama, as we have seen with *Timon*, works to problematize concrete distinctions between verbal and visual, especially when devices such as ekphrasis or prosopopeia are introduced. In response to Barkan's work, Meek accepts that on one level, ekphrasis is undeniably a lie, but he goes on to state that of course all representation is a lie. "Perhaps a more interesting question," he proposes, "is why when it comes to ekphrasis, Barkan feels the need to remind us of the fact" (77). It becomes clear that, for us, the verbal/visual unification of the dramatic form represents the *paragone* in distinctively complex and powerful

ways. And for original audiences the immense popularity of the emerging dramatic form meant that the theater was uniquely positioned to express opinions about verbal and visual representations. Ultimately, literature that disrupts *paragone* traditions forces us to reexamine and question what we think we understand about the boundaries of representation. And so, while *Timon* certainly represents the contentiousness of the *paragone*, its more important feature is that it actually works to collapse these verbal and visual distinctions by allowing us to experience the fascinating, albeit disconcerting, effect of verbal visuals and visual verbals as the play unfolds.

Moving back to the play, we are then confronted with the Poet's description of his own work, and the exchange that follows suggests more overtly that the Poet personifies the side of literature within this visual/verbal debate. When he describes his work to the Painter, he places it in direct opposition to Timon's portrait by suggesting its didactic purpose and implying that it more fully depicts Timon through its dynamic narrative, which is superior to static visual representations. He describes the subject of his work carefully, which includes the image of a personified Fortune: "Sir, I haue vpon a high and pleasant hill / Feign'd Fortune to be thron'd." He goes on to describe how Timon looks upon the personified Fortune who, because of this initial interaction, favors him. But quickly, Fortune changes, as the Poet describes:

> When Fortune in her shift and change of mood
> Spurnes downe her late beloued; all his Dependents
> Which labour'd after him to the Mountaines top,
> Euen on their knees and hand, let him sit downe,
> Not one accompanying his declining foot. (81).

As with the portrait, we encounter the poem through a verbal description of its composition, and again it is the Poet who describes the piece. This allows the Poet to retain autonomy over his

own work, rather than relying on the Painter to describe its poetic significance. But even though the poem is described through verbal means, we would be remiss to not recognize its visual quality.[116] The Poet's description suggests that his poem predicts the narrative of Timon's demise later in the play, after Timon's friends abandon him following the exposure of his immense debt. The Poet's aural description becomes imaginable to the audience through the mind's eye, due in part to the highly visual description of the personified Fortune. These lines result in a subtle shift of perception; the audience moves from receiving a seemingly verbal description that, linguistically, is not unlike the rest of the lines spoken onstage, to being guided through an ekphrastic visual experience by the Poet himself. But the image the Poet describes is not unique; personifying fortune was of course commonplace for centuries, in both literary and visual sectors. Depictions of Fortuna enjoyed a prolific history, which emphasized the unpredictability of fate and the cyclical nature of life's highlights and downfalls. Surely both verbal/textual and visual depictions of this kind inspired Shakespeare's description of the Poet's work. The Poet uses conventional artistic methods for depicting man's dependency on Fortune and his description crosses boundaries between what was common in both visual and verbal media. A visual example of the typical way in which fortune was depicted can be found in German artist Hans Sebald Beham's 1541 print of Fortuna, which serves to demonstrate the conventional way in which it was personified. In *Fortuna*, a winged woman stands tall over the smaller and seemingly helpless figure that sits upon her wheel, demonstrating of quickly one can fall from the top of Fortuna's wheel.

In typical *paragone* fashion, the Painter must quickly retort by arguing that the Poet's work does not fully capture Fortune's shifts. He challenges the Poet: "A thousand morall

[116] The Painter himself even remarks that this description of Fortune would be "well expressed" through visual means.

paintings I can shew / That shall demonstrate these quicke blowes of Fortunes / More pregnantly then words." It is in this moment that the argument most obviously draws upon artistic theories from both the Italian and English Renaissance. Leonardo of course refers to the immediacy of the sense of sight, which he deems superior to the longer process of hearing and comprehending poetry. He claims that there are times in which poems are not understood and so several commentaries are needed on them: "These commentators very seldom understand what was in the poet's mind and many times the readers will read only a small part of their works for want of time; whereas the work of a painter is comprehended immediately by his onlookers" (221). Leonardo's argument hinges upon the primary assumption that poetry is complicated and requires more time to grasp, and the secondary assumption that these qualities prove its innate inadequacy.[117] As noted, this sense of immediacy becomes complicated when applied to emblems and personifications, in which both visual and verbal compose the totality of meaning in each form. Likewise, as in drama, verbal and visual aid in conveying meaning to the audience, and dramatists surely relied upon both forms. While visual emblems are accompanied with textual descriptions that explain their meaning, similar personifications that take the stage are explained internally—not by the author but through the audience members themselves. So common are these visual clues, that onlookers could deduce themselves that a laurel-wearing actor clearly represented a poet. However, his personality, motivations, relation to other characters, and his significance to the narrative as a whole would only be understood fully

[117] But even before Leonardo, Alberti made reference to the ability of painting to reach both the learnèd and the unlearnèd, a suggestion that implicitly places the visual arts above all others because, again, it has the inherent ability to reach more people than poetry (63). Following this tradition, Richard Haydocke's later English translation of Lomazzo's Italian text, *A tracte containing the artes of curious paintinge caruinge buildinge* makes reference to the great pleasure a viewer can feel upon the very first momentary *glance* of a painting, thus suggesting that the visual medium in particular has the power to captivate the viewer instantly and without substantial commentary.

through language, that is, language that the dramatist may have crafted to complement the *visual* personification and not always as the other way around.[118]

Within the context of the play, we recall that the Poet describes the Painter's work as well as his own. This raises some questions regarding the role of the Poet: does allowing the Poet to describe his own work subtly imply that the Painter could not interpret the poems' meaning? Conversely, perhaps in Albertian fashion, the Poet was simply and subconsciously so moved by the realistic portrait that he became captivated by its appearance, and that is why he is first to describe it. Even still, Shakespeare might have subtly granted the Poet power that he denied to the Painter. Again, for staging practicality, Timon's portrait may very well have been a portrait miniature—its flattering nature supports that the painting was of this genre—and the Poet's description may very well be a matter of necessity so that the entire audience would know the composition of the portrait. It is interesting that essentially, the undeniable visual element of the play—the portrait—begins and ends in words. The portrait was first conceived of by the playwright through words and is presented to the audience through only spoken words as well, as the Poet describes it. Still, this ekphrastic portrayal relies on the playwright's artistic knowledge of painting and is dependent on the imagination of audience members to translate these spoken words into the painting that emerges through each of their mind's eyes. Conclusively, visual and verbal intermingle in complex, successive, and even concurrent ways and suggest that all along, the playwright intentionally curated these moments for his audiences, as means of full artistic expression, spanning across and overcoming media boundaries. Therefore, we must acknowledge the complicated role verbal and visual embody through this exchange. Personifying

[118] That is, instead of assuming that dramatists created visuals to accompany their language, I suggest that perhaps dramatists, drawing from visual inspiration, first conceived of visual elements to stage and subsequently created language to support what they planned to stage.

the *paragone* in this way draws attention to the pervasiveness of this discourse within Renaissance cultural circles, but it also complicates the binaries the *paragone* aimed to espouse and ultimately demonstrates that *paragone* issues were also presented to larger sections of Renaissance English society through drama.

Naturally, when Timon finally enters the scene, he confirms the play's dedication to dramatizing the *paragone* by perpetuating the perceived limitations placed upon poetry. When Timon enters, he pacifies the Poet and instead approaches the Painter in order to admire his work. And when the Poet presents Timon with the poem, he casually responds, "I thanke you, you shall heare from me anon: / Go not away." His refusal to engage with the poem in any meaningful way recalls the aforementioned *paragone* arguments, which suggest that the visual best captivates the senses initially. His reaction is also indicative of his complete lack of self-awareness and inability to understand the whims of fortune, even when it is presented directly to him. Timon is subsequently enamored by his own representation, as he asks the Painter, "What haue you there, my Friend? When the Painter presents his work to Timon, he responds rather bizarrely by contemplating the natural and artificial elements of the painting: "Painting is welcome. / The painting is almost the naturall man: / . . . I like your worke, / And you shall finde I like it." Jowett suggests that these lines indicate its own nod to the realism of the portrait and further calls upon personification as Timon welcomes the painting as if it were a real—as he says, "almost the natural"—man. Essentially, when Timon faces the Painter and Poet, he confronts the physical embodiment of the *paragone* itself, making this form of staged personification both pictorial and literary while also paradoxically complicating a clear distinction between media. Following *paragone* theory, Timon quickly becomes involved with the painting as he comments upon its liveliness, through lines that seem to blur the division

between *almost* "natural man" and the unnatural man. Layers of verbal and visual representation cloud both Timon's and our recognition of "natural." Who is the natural Timon, we wonder? This destabilization of our ability to discern levels of representation is the result of the verbal/visual nexus that occurs through dramatic personification. Wondering who the "natural" man is is an effect of the play's ability to collapse concrete boundaries between media through dramatization.

In terms of artistic professionalization, we must also consider who the "natural" Painter and Poet are, given their representation within *Timon* and how the arts themselves are represented through these practitioners, who speak on their behalf. Superficially, they are aligned with sycophantic flatterers concerned only with gaining patronage. But if we consider the larger implications of their presence on stage—that they represent the *paragone*, and the larger discourse about their place in artistic society—we realize that the arguments the two artists espouse are rooted in their mutual desire for artistic appreciation and respect, given that their sense of identity that is wrapped up in their chosen professions. Not unlike dramatists, who worked against antitheatrical arguments that attacked the very art they created, the Painter and Poet, who are identified solely by their profession in this play, defend their art. However, they argue not against religious critics, but against each other, thereby emphasizing their personification of the *paragone* as the debate occurred between artists of differing media. Most importantly, *Timon* provides an artistic venue for these artists to speak for their own work, thereby interrupting the voices of artistic naysayers by verbalizing their own ideas about their work and its significance. This, in effect, may be what Shakespeare had in mind when devising this scene.

Conclusion

I suggest, along with Barkan, that through *Timon*, we see that "even when we insist that poetry and painting lie separately, it turns out that they lie together" (160). That is, for the sake of artistic representation, both forms are employed under similar conditions. While *Timon* refers to the confines placed upon verbal and visual forms and purposefully uses these arguments to emphasize the falsity of Timon's presented self, the play never believes these arguments as it mobilizes these boundaries in order to blur the artificial divisions that *paragone* discourse worked to establish. By problematizing the way in which audiences engage with the verbal and visual elements of drama, plays such as *Timon* emphasize a more reciprocal role between forms, thereby subverting the very subject they represent. The mixed-media form of drama implicitly encourages a blending of visual and verbal, especially through verbal/visual tropes such as ekphrasis and personification. In this way, the play not only dramatizes the *paragone* by means of personification, but also personifies, or embodies, the *paragone* itself through its own metadramatic performance of the *paragone*. That is, although the play pits the characters representing verbal and visual against each other, the play itself brings these forms together to stage that very discourse in a unified and singular multimedia production. As Paxson notes, "Personification is a prime poetic mark of theoretical self-awareness and maturity, a signal not of the failure of the literary imagination, but of its success and fulfillment" (175). And so while superficially the play works to re-inscribe *paragone* boundaries, *Timon* actually dismantles them through means of verbal and visual performance; this resulting paradoxical dynamic is the operative of the play. And because *Timon* personifies the *paragone* itself, while so overtly challenging its boundaries, it becomes the clearest play to examine when considering the

possibilities of reading Renaissance drama as subverting, rather than upholding, *paragone* arguments.

In effect, we must also respond to what a subversion of the *paragone* means to Renaissance dramatists. The rise of drama, which ran concurrent to the rise of artistic theory (as we see in *paragone* texts), also develops the rise of the dramatist and his assertion that he is a new kind of multimodal and professional artist. Recalling Ellinghausen's claim that "early modern subjects, particularly those of common status, formed ideas of themselves largely in relation to conventional presumptions about occupation" (12), we recognize the elements that composed the identity of the dramatist through his professional duties. Inspired by and indebted to both verbal and visual forms, the dramatists made use of both to create *his* form of expression—a combination of both. *Timon* in particular is evidence of the desire of dramatists to reflect upon their work and to make claims about their art in novel ways.

By reading *Timon* as a play that establishes a more reciprocal role between the arts, I propose that we avoid perpetuating the *paragone* by recognizing the new tensions this partnership creates. This reading is directly applicable to a variety of Renaissance texts that exist concurrent to the rise of English artistic theory, thus affording us with many useful references to unfold the tensions that arise between the arts. Recognizing how Renaissance literature manipulates these theories can result in new readings of texts that so masterfully complicate the verbal/visual nexus through the use of tropes such as personification. As I have argued, the effect of collapsing boundaries between media can illuminate our understanding of Renaissance visual culture and the dramatic experience. In this way, I suggest that we become more willing to reflect upon our *own* understanding of the boundaries between textual and visual.

Chapter 4: Generic Word Vomit: Jonson's Multimodal Representation of Professionalization and the *Paragone*

In his 1601 satirical comedy *Poetaster*, Ben Jonson's self-proclaimed alter-ego—the classical poet Horace—encourages a wannabe writer named Crispinus to rid himself of his poorly written poetry. For nearly sixty lines, the thinly-veiled caricature of Jonson's rival playwright—John Marston—stands before the emperor and his court and physically vomits word after word of his own bad language:

> *Crispinus:* Oh I am sick.
>
> *Horace:* A basin, a basin, quickly, our physic works. Faint not, man.
>
> *Crispinus:* Oh—retrograde—reciprocal—incubus.
>
> *Caesar:* What's that, Horace?
>
> *Horace:* Retrograde, reciprocal, and incubus are come up.
>
> *Gallus:* Thanks be to Jupiter.
>
> *Crispinus:* Oh—glibbery—lubrical—defunct—Oh—
>
> *Horace:* Well said; here's some store!
>
> *Virgil:* What are they?
>
> *Horace:* Glibbery, lubrical, and defunct.
>
> *Gallus:* Oh, they came up easy.
>
> *Crispinus:* Oh—Oh—
>
> *Tibullus:* What's that?
>
> *Horace:* Nothing yet.
>
> *Crispinus:* Magnificate.
>
> *Horace:* Manificate.

Maecenas: Magnificate? That came up somewhat hard. (5.3.425-440)

My interest in this comical scene begins with Jonson's ability to make the invisibility of spoken language visible on stage through the actions and movements of actors. As Crispinus keels over, heaving his body toward the basin to rid himself of the bad language that has come from within, his words are given a material life as they are expelled from his body.[119] Here, the interior is made exterior; what is of the mind is made visible to the ears and eyes. Of course what complicates this fascinating scene is that the words, however they are made to seem visible—through the motion of the actor, the reactions of the bystanders both verbal and physical, and the inclusion of stage properties—are still invisible. The interesting play between sight and sound in this scene results in a space to probe the period's thoughts on the limitations of both, as represented through the arts. Crossing *paragone* boundaries, poetry—the medium regarded to provoke the mind more so than other forms—is presented in visual form, which was said to more readily affect the senses.

Considering multimodal perspectives on Renaissance drama, I argue here that the verbal/visual presentation of this exchange is suggestive of a particular element of *paragone* discourse. Specifically, this scene evokes the reoccurring argument that positioned different artistic media against one another, due to their perceived abilities to affect the senses in a number of different ways. Using the senses as a way to argue for the superiority of their form, artists—both visual and verbal—manipulated theories concerning the mind/body connection to suit their specific needs. *Poetaster* in particular seems to explore the *paragone* at a much more specific level—navigating the relative differences within the textual arts themselves by exerting pressure

[119] Several scholars have explored the body/mind connection in literature, including Patricia Fumerton in *Cultural Aesthetics; Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornamnet*, and specifically her fourth chapter, "Consuming the Void: Jacobean Banquets and Masques," along with Gail Kern Paster's *The Body Embarrassed* and *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage*.

on the comparative differences between poetry and drama. While both poetry and drama are textual forms, drama of course relies on the visual in much more distinct ways, a fact that is undoubtedly reflected in the ways in which a playwright might perceive his role as a multimedia artist.

The vomit scene capitalizes on a blending of verbal and visual forms and the *paragone* theories that concern them both. Clearly the moment serves as a confrontation between playwrights who were truly at odds within one another during the competitive rise of drama in the English Renaissance. But underneath that very clear tension lies a broader range of binaries that correlate to this multimodal scene, including mind/body, verbal/visual, and permanent/transitory. The ways in which this scene mobilizes each of these comparisons emphasizes the distinctive elements that were at odds against one another; and yet, through drama, they converged to suit Jonson's versatile, multi-genre pursuits. And in some ways—as we witness with the vomit scene—it seems as though a consideration of language only becomes stronger as visual elements are introduced. In one sense, using the visual to represent the importance of the verbal becomes a way by which Jonson claimed some power over the form. As Julian Koslow theorizes, "[T]he outrageous literalism of this scene certainly underscores how seriously Jonson took the moral importance of language" (121). Getting revenge against his rival in such a visceral way reminds us that even when producing a multimodal production, Jonson claims his loyalty to language.

Indeed, in Jonson's *Timber, or Discoveries*, he pleads for men to be mindful of their use of language:

> How much better is it to be silent, or at least to speak sparingly! For it is not enough to speak good, but timely things. If a man be asked a question, to answer,

> but to repeat the question before he answer, is well, that he be sure to understand it, to avoid absurdity. For it is less dishonour to hear imperfectly than to speak imperfectly. The ears are excused: the understanding is not. And in things unknown to a man, not to give his opinion…[120]

In arguing against the deplorable act of speaking imperfectly—precisely the same offense for which he punishes the poetaster—Jonson's position concerning the importance of the verbal/textual is clear. He does not have patience for language he deems inadequate. And yet, his role as a multimedia artist complicates the ways in which Jonson depicts his profession through his plays—which he does often. Considering these many occasions, I have entered into this chapter with the goal of gaining a greater understanding of Jonson's position in the *paragone*. Jonson's identity as a writer, given his notoriously ambitious goals, has altered the way in which I peruse this information. For one, because Jonson enjoyed a prolific career as a masque collaborator, it is important to consider his theory on the role of the visual, especially as we recall the masque as a mostly visual form. Moreover, Jonson's aristocratic connections and his desire for literary greatness provide new avenues for exploration when considering his connection to the *paragone*. Because Jonson left us with a variety of textual sources pertaining to these debates—prose writing, dedications, and drama and masques that each question the role of the poet and dramatists--I have turned to each of these genres to probe his position on the arts.

From the outset I've presented my interest in the interior/exterior binary; this is a comparison we see reinforced throughout Jonson's corpus, which curiously becomes apparent through references to food: that is, the making of food, the perceived value and sustenance of

[120] Jonson later argues, "Many writers perplex their readers and hearers with mere nonsense: their writings need sunshine. Pure and neat language I love, yet plain and customary. A barbarous phrase hath often made me out of love with a good sense, and doubtful writing hath racked me beyond my patience" (40).

food, and as I have just presented, the regurgitation of food. Operating in tandem, we see references to food and cooks and art and artists placed next to each other through a variety of Renaissance texts including both prose and poetry. In my first chapter, I revealed the propensity of characters in *Campaspe* to make antithetical statements concerning the importance of food in contrast to the perceived triviality of the arts. It is my view that these culinary comparisons reveal the tensions created between artistic forms at odds with each other—but, more specifically, within Jonson himself. As a poet, dramatist, and masque-creator, various media in addition to topical social, political, and artistic issues converged through his body of work, and in recognizing that Jonson strove to create a significant literary career for himself, it is my view that the tension between the perceived transitory or permanence of forms defined Jonson as an artist. And so the purpose of this chapter is to establish the ways in which this internal and professional conflict gets expressed through his own drama and masques, two genres that are quite different from one another and therefore serve as productive contrasts when discussing the relative value each held in Jonson's career. Drawing from antithetical texts, rhetorical manuals, and Jonson's prose, drama, and masques, I expand my exploration of the *paragone* to consider more specifically the differences between the genres categorized within the realm of the textual. While previous chapters have explored—broadly speaking—rhythmic language, idolatry, and performance, this chapter seeks to assert how the identity of masque-collaborator, given the convergence of issues I've identified here, disrupted the *paragone* by reclassifying the identity of the literary professional.

While *paragone* writers tended to use the term *poetry* to describe any creative textual endeavor that consequently stood in opposition to the visual arts, such works by Jonson as *Poetaster* seem to challenge that blanket depiction metadramatically, by staging the distinction

between poet and playwright.[121] Jonson in particular seems to have a vested interest in defining the stakes for both poetry and drama and making sense of how these forms may relate to—and differ—from one another. As a result, we begin to question the delicate divide between poetry and drama, and, for my purposes, how this distinction operates under the conditions of the *paragone* for Jonson.[122] Metadramatic in nature, the play dramatizes the careers of writers, including Jonson, but it can also be studied as a signpost of Jonson's literary career. While *Poetaster* alerts us to what Jonson thought of himself and his contemporaries, by studying the play we are also able to reflect upon the importance of this early work when considering Jonson's act of self-fashioning through his oeuvre. The vomit scene is the culmination of a play that explores the characteristics of well-written poetry and, more directly, the attributes of successful poets. And because Jonson clearly positions himself as Horace, this scene demonstrates his self-proclaimed victory over both of the play's poetasters and those whom they portray. Written into history, then, is Jonson's perception of a triumph over his peers. If successful, the play had the potential to reach thousands through the stage and the page; and so, the reenactment of Jonson's victory over his rivals served the dual purpose of establishing Jonson's superiority and humiliating his competition. Consequently, the more people that engaged with the play, either by purchasing admission or a quarto, the further Jonson's vision of his success within *Poetaster* was realized.

As one of his lesser-studied plays, *Poetaster* has often been read in relation to the trifecta of successive plays that compose the Renaissance "War of the Theaters." These plays include

[121] Curiously, *paragone* scholarship has remained silent on issues pertaining to the "War of the Theaters."
[122] For the purposes of this chapter, I am interested in exploring the genres that include a visual aspect, including drama and masques. These genres are collaborative in nature, publically displayed, and often include unique commentary on Renaissance life and culture. Each of these aspects complicates the metadramatic element in Jonson's work and therefore is better suited toward my interests.

John Marston's 1599 *Historio-mastix,*[123] which seems to have inspired the war by motivating Jonson's mockery of it, and ending with Thomas Dekker's 1602 *Satiromastix, or The Untrusssing of the Humerous Poet*.[124] Through these plays, the three playwrights discuss the comparative merits of the liberal arts and, more specifically, that of poets and their individual perceptions of what constitutes well-written poetry. However, to varying degrees, these plays also include aggressive personal attacks against rival poets, even stooping to jabs regarding each other's personal appearance.[125] While Victorian scholarship—which initially revealed many of the underlying references now well-known in "War of the Theaters" scholarship—made much of this disagreement between playwrights, some modern scholarship has chosen to step away from discussing these plays solely under the biographical terms that relate them to one another. Understandably so, more recent scholarship has considered the relative merits of each individual play, as each one deserves.

However, given the more recent push for a fuller understanding of multimodal perspectives, I return to discussing the "War of the Theaters," but under the condition of exploring the visual aspect of this debate as well as considering more carefully the element of the textual that works to redefine the debates' boundaries. Building upon what Richard Helgerson aptly termed Jonson's "self-crowned laureate" career aspirations, I consider not only Jonson's drama, but also his masques, which serve a unique role in disrupting what we know about the

[123] Reflecting on the status of the liberal arts and the way in which they complement each other, James P. Bednarz argues that the play's "abstract morality figures and emphasis on didactic abstractions give it the feel of an amateur theatrical presented in an academic setting" (44).
[124] Drafted before Jonson's play, but published shortly after, Dekker makes use of some of the same characters as Jonson and they represent the respective playwrights in the same way. Dekker's play portrays Crispinus (Martson) positively and includes direct jabs at Jonson's expense. Such insults include making fun of his physical appearance and his status as the son of a bricklayer. Mostly, however, Jonson's arrogance is used as a comedic tool.
[125] The dialogue in *Poestester*, for example, suggests that the actor playing Crispinus would have donned a red beard and a feather in his hat as to make perfectly clear that they are satirizing Marston's distinctive appearance. In Act two, Chloe wonders if Crispinus will change his hair to better suit the appearance of a poet (2.2.74-9). At the end of the act, he declares that he will "go and ingle some broker for a poet's gown, and bespeak a garland".

bounds of the *paragone* and the distinctions needed to cement one's name into literary history. Jonson proves to be a tough study in relation to the *paragone* because of his unique career path, which, albeit marked by controversy, is typically thought of in the context of his desire for acceptance and literary success. Jonson's complicated relationship with the forms in which he wrote offers opportunities to consider the conflict one faced working within a society that did not necessarily appreciate the same forms to which artists dedicated their efforts.

Jonson's own determination in fashioning a long, prosperous, and legendary career for himself is well-known. And yet, perhaps paradoxically, his peculiar habit of self-doubt is also apparent throughout his works. Helgerson's understanding of Jonson's ambitions is helpful:

> No other English Renaissance poet so intrudes on his work. No other makes so much of his physical appearance, of his illness and poverty, or his quarrels, friendships, defeats, triumphs, likes, and dislikes, of his very name…We know so much of the performances of his plays precisely because he was so displeased with them; we pay great attention to the spectacle of the masque in part at least because he so violently spurned it; and we delight in the Jacobean world of mimicry and fraud because his satire invested it with such energy. (183-4)

Indeed, *Poetaster* seems to be the convergence of many of these concerns. Largely a defense of his own work, *Poetaster* defends Jonson's artistic abilities, and his prose reveals how he conceived of his profession and the genres that defined the literary profession in the Renaissance.

In considering the aforementioned tension between media, we recognize that the clearest difference between poetry and drama is the theater's inclusion of the visual. Comparatively, courtly masques, sparse in their use of language, differed drastically from that of commercial drama in their visual spectacles, costing somewhere in the range of today's equivalent of two-

million dollars for a single courtly performance.[126] Often making use of visual forms of language—most clearly through the emblem and other symbolic forms used in costume and lavish scenery—the masque was distinct in its multimodal production, relying only subtly on the text Jonson provided. Further, the professional landscape of each genre varied. A range of issues pertaining to collaboration, censorship, publication, patronage, profitability, and presentation depended on the medium. *Poetaster* seems to allow space for some of these issues to converge when Jonson dramatizes a character vomiting words on stage, thereby both literally and figuratively making his poetry visible and, moreover, shaming bad poets.

But, as I discuss in the second section of this chapter, Jonson uses his masques to explore the contentious relationship between verbal and visual in ways that surpass some of the restraints of commercial drama. In both genres, Jonson uses the visual to express elements of his professional writing career. However, I argue that each genre affords unique opportunities for Jonson to explore his artistic reach, and, in particular, the transitory nature of his masques stands in contrast to the perceived permanence of poetry or even printed drama. In short, Jonson's metadramatic oeuvre tells us much about the nature of playwriting in Renaissance England, and I reflect upon the ways in which Jonson depicts professionalism across genre, encouraging greater inquiry into the nature of the verbal and visual connections in both drama and masques. In some ways, the tensions between temporality and permanence seem to be addressed through Jonson's hand in overseeing the publication of his Works. As Jonson labored to establish his credence as an author, he published even the immoderately visual genre of the masque in an attempt to parallel those works with his other literary endeavors. However, the pressures that existed within

[126] Thomas W. Ross's 1969 article, "Expenses for Ben Jonson's 'The Masque of Beauty'" itemizes the costs that went into that particular masque. Using the Bureau of Labor Statistics to consider inflation, the total cost of the masques equates to $2,615.880.11.

the reciprocal processes of performance and print, including the question of ownership, seem to add to the difficulty in pinning down Jonson's identity as an artist. But, to be sure, the internal and professional conflicts Jonson expresses through his texts certainly indicate that there was a fire within him that served as the stimulus for the artistic professionals he staged.

Good Poetry in *Poetaster*

Poetaster is set in Augustan Rome at the height of the classical literary period that Renaissance writers would have studied, admired, and imitated. The play takes its name from an insult towards those who write "poor or trashy verse" or those who are "mere versifier[s]" rather than of the caliber of the esteemed poets whom they imitate.[127] Therefore, set in contrast to the great minds of Ovid, Tibullus, Virgil, and Horace, the poestaster known as Crispinus is presented as a pathetic hanger-on, desperate to associate himself with Horace in particular, whom he follows around in a vain attempt to match his level of esteem. Throughout the play, Crispinus' jealousy of Horace's writing and his need to seduce the jeweler's wife, Chloe, are revealed to be the reasons for his desire to present himself as a successful poet.[128] While scholars have identified Marston as the inspiration for the character of Crispinus, Jonson also portrays Dekker through the second poetaster, Demetrius.[129] In fact, once Demetrius is pressed for his reasons for maligning Horace—which he does out of jealousy—he openly admits, "In troth, no great cause, not I, I must confess, but that he kept better company for the most part than I, and that better men

[127] "poetaster, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, December 2016. Web. 23 January 2017.
[128] The play is concerned with profession as it relates to social status. Chloe laments her husband's profession as a jeweler and merchant of other goods when he tries to suggest to her proper ways of entertaining: "You would seem to be a master? You would have your spoke in my cart? You would advise me to entertain ladies and gentlemen? Because you can marshal your pack-needles, horse-combs, hobby-horses, and wall candlesticks in your warehouse better than I, therefore you can tell how to entertain ladies and gentlefolks better than I?" 2.1.41-6
[129] Demetrius is introduced as a "dresser of plays," suggesting that he holds only a perfunctory role in the writing process. Furthermore, he is a hired man whose primary role is to "abuse Horace" (3.4.272). As a caricature of Dekker, this depiction of him suggests that Jonson saw him as dependent on others to create his plays (he collaborated frequently) and that he was jealous of Jonson—dedicating the entire character here to satirize Jonson's alter-ego of Horace.

loved him than loved me, and that his writings thrived better than mine, and were better liked and graced. Nothing else" (5.3.410-3). Here, he uses the phrase "writings *thrived* better than mine" which for me, indicates a certain afterlife to his verse that perhaps lives on through print. In fact, the *OED* defines the term *thrive* as indicating profit, and it certainly connotes a positive growth over a span of time. In this way, Jonson suggests the profitability of forms and elevates himself by portraying Dekker's wrongs against him as rooted in envy and nothing more, thereby eliminating culpability on his part.

Because the play's narrative hinges on the tension surrounding the definition of good poetry, we must explore how good poets are represented within the text, thereby perhaps revealing Jonson's position as well. I turn to Crispinus's first encounter with Horace, in which he postures himself as a keen intellectual, gaining inspiration from the very street in which they walk. He presents himself as a poet, satirist, and even as a student of architecture and later challenges Horace to find a better poet, singer, or dancer than he.[130] Taking the advice of Baldesar Castiglione in his *The Book of the Courtier*, who states that he would have any great courtier "more than passably learned in letters, at least those studies which we call the humanities" (70) Crispinus is eager to demonstrate that he is well versed in multiple arts. In a vain attempt to exhibit the *sprezzatura* Castiglione discusses, he spews rhymes off the cuff, while Horace's aside criticizes his futile attempt:[131]

> This tyranny
> Is strange, to take mine ears up by commission
> (Whether I will or no) and make them stalls

[130] The "satirist" reference ties the character of Crispinus to Marston is a direct way.
[131] Castiglione defines 'sprezzatura' as a certain nonchalance regarding one's ability. He advises that it is important to "to conceal all art and make whatever is done or said appear to be without effort and almost without any thought about it." (43) Castiglione also describes at length the nature of imitation.

To his lewd solecisms and worded trash. (3.1.92-5)

Horace's description of Crispinus's horrible poetry doesn't give us much to go on in terms of its content, but from this exchange readers gather that there was to be a clearly divided line between true poets and those who simply pretend, all the while lacking the knowledge and talent to use language in poetic ways. One barrier, we see, may come from Crispinus's lack of formal education, for which he attempts to compensate by claiming that he is a master in all of the arts. This sort of Renaissance intellectual snobbery—which relates to familial background, of course—can certainly be identified in other forms throughout the period. For example, in *Satiromastix*, Dekker seems to take a direct shot at Jonson (Horace) when he references his infamous humble background and questions his current desire to write:

> Two vrds Horace about your eares: how chance it passes, that you bid God boygh to an honest trade of building Symneys, and laying downe Brickes, for a worse handicraftnes, to make nothing but railes; your Muse leanes vpon nothing but filthy rotten railes, such as stand on Poules head, how chance? (4.3.156-160)

Referencing Jonson's father's work as a bricklayer,[132] he questions why he should have deviated from that profession to become a writer, slyly suggesting the Jonson should have followed in his father's footsteps instead. In defense of his work, Horace (Jonson) claims that he writes sometimes just in order to defend himself from the envy those around him exhibit: "What could I doe, out of iust reuenge, / But bring them to the Stage? they enuy me / Because I holde more worthy company." In response to Horace's apparent delusions, Demetrius (Dekker) replies,

[132] Laurie Ellinghausen's book, *Labor and Writing in Early Modern England, 1567-1667* recalls Jonson's familiarity with manual labor and astutely observes his many references to the correlation between the processes of writing and that of more physical professions.

"Good Horace, no; my cheekes doe blush for thine" (4.3.208-211).[133] With these lines, Jonson is portrayed as a delusional paranoiac who believes that everyone is jealous of him. Although these sorts of comical personal attacks are plentiful, the significant functions of these lines are that they inform modern scholars about the nature of establishing oneself as a poet/dramatist in Renaissance England and the networks of professionals that existed.

While this particular network is rooted in rivalrous envy, which certainly cannot be taken to represent the totality of professional drama at the time, scenes such as this one draw back the curtain to reveal the expectations of a successful poet from a professional's point of view. Suggestive in these lines are the hierarchical discriminations that circulated amongst dramatists; Jonson references his own humble background and, as Helgerson has explored, his lack of formal education seemed to have haunted his career.[134] We recognize that one starting point for creating a promising literary career was participation in a university education. As Ellinghausen points out, a humanist education had the potential to create young dramatists at a prime moment in the rise of theater in England: "the changing economic conditions and shifting cultural conceptions of learning during the late Tudor period witnessed graduates who became colorful and controversial London literary figures" (37). Conversely, while these men had the credentials to reinforce their professional identities, Ellinghausen warns that "graduates without position are masterless men, and thus hazardous men" (49). It is my view that this is what contributes to the play's presented stereotype of the marginalized and poor poet that I discuss below. For now, I simply wish to establish that there were some expectations that needed to be met in order to be

[133] In this way, the professions of poet and dramatist are still aligned. It's interesting to note, however, that the poor behavior of representing rivals in unflattering ways is represented through drama in particular, as if to imply that the stage is the place in which writers air their anger and frustration.
[134] Of course Shakespeare, too, was famously ridiculed for his humble beginnings and lack of language skills taught to children of more prestigious families.

fully accepted.[135] But even with those qualifications met, social and economic conceit meant that writers who made a living from their art essentially admitted publicly that they needed the money, thereby relegating themselves to the class of laborers.[136] Indeed, nearly every *paragone* text I have come across warns the courtier to be well versed in the arts but to *never* make a profit from any of these endeavors.

Returning to *Poetaster*, we see many of these concerns regarding the economic, social, and artistic stratification of the poet and dramatist staged. As opposed to representing the bitter playwright as we saw in the "War of the Theaters" narrative, Ovid is dramatized as a true lover of poetry. Despite advice to leave his "poetical fancies" and instead study law, he remains true to his craft, declaring that his poetry will allow his legacy to live forever, "Then, when this body falls in funeral fire, / My name shall live, and my best part aspire" (1.1.11, 35-81). Ovid's portrayal is that of an amateur poet; he is dramatized as a young man, still under the influence of his father, but trying to establish his own path by strengthening his knowledge and skill in writing poetry. Ovid's tension with his father demonstrates the wider conflict concerning poetry and drama emerging as respectable art forms. The narrative demonstrates that while Ovid Senior is initially disappointed that his son writes poetry, he is no less than outraged at the thought that his son would be involved with the business of drama.

In what appears to be a hierarchical argument concerning genre, Ovid Senior launches a series of attacks against his son that suggest that the young poet will eventually descend into the licentious profession of the playwright, or worse—as an actor. "What, shall I have my son a stager now? An ingle for players? A gull? A rook? A shot-clog to make suppers and be laughed

[135] Another way in which a playwright might gain experience is by first working performing as a player.
[136] Many scholars, including Helgerson and Ellinghausen, have discussed the divide between the amateur writers who perhaps circulated his writing in manuscript form to the professional writer who aimed to make a profit from his art.

at? Publius, I will set thee on the funeral pile first" (1.2.13-6). Jonson's language in this quotation is important to unpack. Ovid first questions if his son will be an actor himself, before taking the leap to then questioning if he will be an "ingle" or "boy-favourite (in bad sense); a catamite" amongst the community of actors.[137] By referencing Greek love, Ovid Senior at once displays his knowledge of literary history, but also suggests that his son takes on the passive role within pederastic relationships, rendering him as a kind of sexual slave to the immoral actors, who outrank him in experience. Subsequent insults of "gull" and "rook" reinforce his presumption that his young son is easily impressed upon or fooled. [138] And finally, Jonson uses the term "shot-clog" to indicate that amongst the acting crowd, his son is used as an "unwelcome companion tolerated because he pays the shot for the rest."[139] He ends his tirade by announcing that he would rather kill his son than have him abused in this way. His insults seem to be rooted in hierarchy; he is sickened by the thought that his son would be seen as less-than actors, whom he clearly detests in the first place. His assumption that he would be used both sexually and financially by actors enrages him because of his relative assumption of the lower status of the actors themselves. The very idea that a group of actors would behave this way and degrade a young man in this manner is telling. Interestingly, his arguments against actors are directed

[137] "ingle, n.2." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, December 2016. Web. 5 February 2017. Here we might also consider the structure of apprenticeships and the common practice of young men being used by masters and journeymen.

[138] Here, we might also recall the case of Thomas Clifton, who in 1600 was abducted on his way to his London school, taken to Blackfriar's Theater, and then threatened with a beating if he did not become an actor. Although the boy was returned, similar cases, to be sure, happened with worse outcomes. This practice, of course, only adds to the immoral perception of the working parts that compose the theater. See Julie Ackroyd. *Child Actors on the London Stage, Circa 1600*.

[139] "shot-clog, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, December 2016. Web. 5 February 2017. This rare term is only attributed to Jonson in the OED, and seems to have used by him three times in his writing.

toward what they do *off* the stage. Therefore, at this point, his criticism of actors is directed toward their business and the design of their professional networks as a whole.[140]

Lupus agrees with Ovid Senior's criticisms of actors and claims that "players are an idle generation, and do much harm in a state, corrupt young gentry very much. . . . they will rob us, us that are magistrates, of our respect, bring us upon their stages, and make us ridiculous to the plebeians" (1.2.35-9). Lupus's contention, like Ovid Senior's, is directed toward the actors and he does express some concern about being publicly mocked on the stage, thereby alluding to a fear of the playwright to influence large audiences. Of course this reference is interesting, given the nature of the "War of the Theaters" which operates in precisely this way. Evidently, this was a common concern. Stephen Gosson's 1582 attack on drama references the dramatist's ability to publicly humiliate anyone he crosses: "for as any man had displeased them, to reueng theire owne cause they studied to present him vpon the stage, there did ruisse, and taunt; scoffe and […] deface him […] no man should be so hardie as to write any thing, whereby the good name of any bodie might be hurt."[141] And so while the dramatist was sometimes criticized due to his perception of low morals, he was concurrently feared for precisely the same reasons. Because he had access to a public forum, just as we see in *Poetaster*, he maintained a certain level of power due in part to his ability to make those who feared the theater anxious.

Eventually, Ovid rejects claims that he will associate with theater: "I am not known unto the open stage, / Nor do I traffic in their theaters" (1.2.60.1). Even Ovid, it seems, recognizes the reputation of the theater and chooses to stay away from it. But in response, Ovid Senior then

[140] Those associated with the profession of the theater weren't considered to be part of a career; vagrancy laws that players were subject to is an example of this. Therefore, we can understand perhaps why Ovid is dramatized as being concerned about his son's association with the theater, even if his concerns about his son being used financially or sexually aren't substantiated.
[141] See Stephen Gosson, *Playes confuted in fiue actions*…

contends that poets—even successful ones—are poor, citing Homer as his example. Tucca agrees: "Marry, I'll tell thee, old swagg'rer: he was poor, blind, rhyming rascal, that lived obscurely up and down in booths and taphouses, and scarce ever made a good meal in his sleep, the whoreson hungry beggar" (1.2.79-82). And so, while not as disparaging as to the profession of playwriting and certainly acting, the older generation seems to still connect the profession of the poet with poverty and a general lack of socioeconomic autonomy, regardless of the intellectual revere poets seemed to command. In response to their criticisms, Ovid ends the scene with an impassioned speech reminiscent of Sidney, praising the art of poetry and lamenting the state of the arts in their society:

> The time was once when wit drowned wealth; but now,
> Your only barbarism's to have wit, and want.
> No matter now in virtue who excels,
> He that hath coin, hath all perfections else. (1.2.196-9)

Harking back to antiquity, Ovid's speech mourns the loss of a time when knowledge and artistry were appreciated. In contrast, he states that society as a whole believes as his father does—that the superficial desires of money and social status mean more than other inner attributes such as intelligence. By referencing the works of Homer, Ovid cites the same arguments made in *paragone* texts that praised the flourishing status of the arts in antiquity. Conclusively, what we gain from the argument concerning the textual/verbal arts between Ovid and his elders is a clear distinction between poetry and drama, in which the former is deemed the more respectable art.[142] Also, generational perceptions concerning these forms indicates that the arts were in a time of flux; while characters of an older generation condemned drama, Ovid simply refuted his

[142] Sidney, for example, would agree; while he is known today for his defense of poetry, he was quite critical of drama of the day.

participation in their production. As drama surged through the English Renaissance during the last part of the 16th century, it gained a considerable amount of detractors, as evident in antitheatrical texts—no doubt Ovid Senior and his colleagues represent this viewpoint while Ovid is seen as simply cautious of the emerging form.[143]

In a metadramatic exchange between the actor, Histrio and the soldier, Tucca, drama is made distinct from poetry more explicitly and types of drama are distinguished from one another:

> *Tucca:* And what new plays have you now afoot, sirrah? I would fain come with my cockatrice[144] one day and see a play, if I knew when there were a good bawdy one; but they say you ha' nothing but humorous, revels, and satires that gird and fart at the same time, you slave.
>
> *Histrio:* No, I assure you, captain, not we. They are on the other side of Tiber.[145] We have as much ribaldry in our plays as can be, as you would wish, captain. All the sinners I' the suburbs come and applaud our action daily.

Tucca's criticism of Histrio's plays is all the more humorous because of his uncultured request. Essentially, he wants a bawdy play to watch with his whore. Histrio retorts that his plays in particular are indeed licentious and therefore suitable for his desires. Unlike the more refined plays that take place north of the river, and certainly from poetry, Histrio brags that his theater

[143] Scholars have argued for Jonson's perhaps paradoxical dislike of the theater. Perhaps this is alluded to in Ovid's glossing over of the form.

[144] This is an interesting use of the term. Rarely—though in this case—meaning prostitute, the term has a more prolific history as a mythical beast akin to the basilisk. In similar fashion, the beast was used as a symbol throughout literature and could kill just by looking at someone. Interestingly, Tucca uses the term here just before he claims to want to *see* a play, thereby emphasizes the visual quality of theater.

[145] The mention of Tiber in particular relates to the Thames and the geographic distinction between playhouses that operated below or above the river. *Poetaster* in particular was performed by the Children of Queen Elizabeth's Chapel at Blackfriars, hence, making room for Jonson to reinforce the idea that more bawdy plays were performed below the river. Also, the childrens' acting troupe allows Jonson to be critical of professional actors throughout.

attracts even those from the suburbs looking for lewd content. Moreover, Tucca's perception—and even desire—of plays to serve as vulgar and essentially meaningless forms of entertainment discredits the form once more.

Interestingly, distinctions between textual forms extend beyond those of poetry and drama when a masque is brought into the narrative, thereby connecting—in more explicit ways—textual and visual production. The disdain for drama that *Poetaster* presents reaches its apex when Caesar discovers that his daughter has taken a role in a masque about the gods:

> Are you, that first the deities inspired
> With skill of their high natures and their powers,
> The first abusers of their useful light,
> Profaning thus their dignities in their forms,
> And making thee, like you, but counterfeits? (4.6.32.6)

His anger stems from the notion that his daughter would "counterfeit" the gods, thereby presenting herself as one. While it's unclear what role his daughter has in terms of speaking parts, her participation alone, given the content, upsets her father.[146] His reaction seems to be predicated on the fact that the actors take on the identity of the gods through verbal means—lines and songs—as well as through visuals including costumes, dance, and stage movements. In this way, the performance itself is what upsets him. These distinctly theatrical elements are what offend his sensibilities, indicating that drama is the worse form due to the actor's actual embodiment of characters different from themselves. This theory is solidified when he goes on to

[146] It is widely known that a loophole for women participating in masques was their lack of speaking roles. Alternatively, they were able to wear costumes and dance in order to participate in the event and in fact Jonson wrote several masques with the Queen and her ladies' participation in mind. For more information see Orgel's introduction.

praise poetry. Caesar speaks eloquently as he, in *paragone* fashion, declares that art—and here, specifically poetry—can memorialize a person or entity after it is gone:[147]

> Sweet poesy's sacred garlands crown your knighthoods,
> Which is, of all the faculties of earth,
> The most abstract and perfect, if she be
> True born and nursed with all the sciences.
> She can so mould Rome and her monuments
> Within the liquid marble of her lines,
> That they shall stand fresh and miraculous,
> Even when they mix with innovating dust,
> In her sweet streams shall our brave Roman spirits
> Chase and swim after death, with their choice deeds,
> Shining on their white shoulders; (5.1.17-27)

Once again unable to discuss the beauty of a form without evoking that of another, Caesar describes poetry as "liquid marble," thereby using sculpture or architecture to help define it. Evoking forms that use stone, he compares the perceived permanence of those forms to that of poetry, clearly contrasting the medium from the bawdy drama the play describes. Personifying lines of poetry, he uses poetic language to describe his view that it can capture the "Roman spirits," thereby foreshadowing the fall of Rome and resonating with the English Renaissance audience. In another scene, Caesar makes a quite beautiful statement that poetry is "A human soul made visible in life" (5.2.18). Here, Caesar reflects on poetry's ability to materialize internal

[147] Within the *paragone*, both textual and visual cite their ability to memorialize as the feature that makes their work in particular superior to that of all others. This argument is repeated in nearly every *paragone* argument and yet it is interesting to note that drama is never revered in this way.

thoughts. Not unlike the vomit scene in *Poetaster*, Caesar concludes that verse offers a way for people to express their inner experience to others. Within this line, it is suggested that the visual imagery a poem creates within the mind's eye actually defies artistic limitations based on form. However, it is important to note that the limitation placed on the visual nature of poetry—we are limited to using the mind's eye—is what exempts it from being recognized in the same negative fashion as drama. While a poet may *evoke* a god through his lines, he does not *become* a god on stage.

What we gather, then, from Jonson's participation in "The War of the Theaters" is a comprehensive view of the nature of the visual and textual arts in Renaissance England from his point of view. We witness Jonson drawing a more precise distinction between visual and textual than what has previously been observed in *paragone* debates. Not only does he separate drama from poetry, but he also distinguishes types of drama from one another. He does not ignore the stereotypes concerning drama but relegates their negative connotations to only certain playhouses, and, even then, his focus remains on the potential debauchery that could occur among professional circles behind the scenes. Still, he was aware of the verbal/visual divide, citing in his *Discoveries*:

> Poetry and picture are arts of a like nature and both are busy about imitation. It was excellently said of Plutarch, poetry was a speaking picture and picture a mute poesie; for they both invent to the use and service nature. Yet of the two, the pen is more noble than the pencil; for that can speak to the understanding, the other but to the sense. (34)

Writing under terms common to *paragone* debates, Jonson compares the arts to one another but of course ultimately considers poetry superior, due to its more cerebral ability to reach the mind of the reader, in contrast to painting's perceived superficiality to entertain only one's eyes. Considering prior scholarship on Jonson's position in Renaissance theatrical circles, Koslow's summary of Jonson's view on the visual makes sense: "it is well known that Jonson's attitude towards actors, as towards many of the more obtrusive elements of theater, could often be dismissive or hostile" (133). This attitude has perhaps been most frequently cited in discussions concerning Inigo Jones, Jonson's masque collaborator and stage designer, and this complex relationship must be explored.

Good Poets in Jonson's Masques

In exploring how Jonson represents his profession through the exceedingly visual form of courtly masques, I aim to reveal Jonson's position within the *paragone*. Therefore, it becomes vital to understand the specific differences that separate the genre from that of drama. For scholars of Renaissance masques, the differences are substantial and obvious. In fact, Stephen Orgel's opening line to his influential study on Jonson's masques alerts us to the importance of remembering this distinction: "It is an accident of time that to the modern reader the court masque appears a form of drama. For the most part, only the texts of these elaborate entertainments survive; but a masque to the contemporary spectator was not represented by its text" (1).[148] Unlike commercial plays from the Renaissance, which enjoy prolific revivals each time another school, troupe, company, theater, or production company chooses to stage them, a recreation of masques in any way that resembles its original performance is outlandish at best. Unfortunately, what remains is only the very brief and insufficient printed dialogue and some

[148] While Orgel makes reference to the texts being the major remnant of these entertainments, Inigo Jones' drawings for stage costumes exist and can be accessed through Chatsworth House, England.

reference to stage designs of what was once a several-hour long production of multisensorial experience. Because of this, it is perhaps dangerously easy to relegate the genre to a strictly textual form. In reality, we would be remiss to emphasize its literariness and instead should recognize that the setting and budget of the masques differentiated it greatly from the commercial stage. Masques were designed for the court and carried with them courtly budgets. This is certainly due to the convergence of forms the masques demanded—stage designers and artists, choreographers and dancers, composers and musicians, and the writer and actors who all participated to create the multimodal spectacle.

Another distinctive quality of masques was the form's reliance upon audience participation; masques were largely occasional, that is, performed for specific courtly occasions meaningful to the aristocrats who, in effect, influenced the form from even before its inception. This emphasis on audience reception and participation, I argue, alters the ways in which Jonson presents his profession.[149] Moreover, those who inspired these entertainments danced in them, were a part of the narrative, and were eventually invited to destroy the sets after the spectacle had ended.[150] When contrasting the interactive quality of the masque to drama, Orgel states the differences clearly:

> Masquers are members of that audience, and almost always descend and join with it during the central dance, called the revels. The drama is properly a form of entertainment, and involves its audience vicariously. The masque is a form of

[149] Marked by a paradoxical nexus of egotistical pride and observable self-doubt, Jonson's masques present his profession as grossly underappreciated Through masques in particular, Jonson depicts the poet navigating through his dual roles that include collaborating with fellow rising artists (who simultaneously strive to professionalize themselves) and the court itself. The tension between his collaborative labor and his desire for literary independence and reverence gets expressed through commentary on the poet's position.

[150] Masques were written and designed with particular people intended for roles, who also served as the audience. Topics were chosen based on the king's interests. From Jonson's dedications, we know that masques were written in succession and Jonson would change the topic or tone in order to create variety according to the court's tastes. Undoubtedly, the power the court held of Jonson altered his creative process in several ways.

> play, and includes its audience directly… Every masque concluded by merging spectator with masquer, in effect transforming the courtly audience into the idealized world of the poet's vision.[151]

Therefore, the intentional lack of boundaries between courtier and performer instituted a participatory expectation for the form. While commercial audiences were engaged with in a number of ways, the personalized and intimate nature of an entertainment created *for* and performed *with* particular participants at its center cannot be disregarded.

However, the masques' most marked characteristic, and indeed the element that I suggest is most crucial when considering the role of the masque in relation to Jonson and the *paragone*, is its transitory nature. In contrast to commercial drama, which could enjoy numerous performances in packed theater houses and reach new audiences through its multiple reprintings within a matter of years, masques were, in comparison, brief entertainments that—without intervention from Jonson—could be lost forever. Often performed only once and, as Orgel reminds us, regularly destroyed after the spectacle was complete, the fleeting nature of this artistic endeavor seems troublesome especially as we consider Jonson's feverish attempts to establish a professional identity commensurate with a poet laureate.[152]

Moreover, these entertainments differed drastically from poetry, which at the time was certainly regarded as superior to drama and in most *paragone* texts was praised, like painting, for its ability to give eternal life to its subject. Sidney was so certain of poetry's ability to cement one's memory in history that he offers this warning to those who speak out against poetry: "Yet

[151]However, it's important to recall that the world presented through masque was also—in part—crafted by Jonson's stage designer and collaborator, Inigo Jones, with whom Jonson famously feuded with throughout his masque writing career.

[152] Evident in Orgel's assessment of the masques is the acknowledgment that they vary in dramatic quality, some lending themselves more readily to musical or poetic oration. Moreover, the event of the masque developed over the years; Orgel states in general, the masque begin to resemble that of what we would identify as a play (23-27)

thus much cures I must send you in behalf of all poets—that while you live in love, and never get favor for lacking skill of a sonnet; and when you die, your memory die for want of an epitaph" (126). Ending his famed treatise in a cautionary tone, he warns detractors of poetry that when they die, they will need a rhyming epitaph to leave behind. Without poetry, he suggests, they will be forgotten. The concept of poetry's ability to carry on one's name is certainly familiar to scholars, and when we consider this commonplace thought, we cannot help but question how masques were treated in comparison. Although I have stated that they were not considered all that literary, as a part of Jonson's budding authorial career, we should ask what role (or toll) did these passing entertainments have on Jonson's professional self-perception and moreover, how did the identity as masque-writer shape his artistic reception?

Despite the number of masques Jonson produced, contemporary reception of masques does not seem favorable. Francis Bacon famously referred to masques as mere "toys," which the *OED* defines, according to one entry, as a "fantastic or trifling speech or piece of writing; a frivolous or mocking speech; a foolish or idle tale; a funny story or remark, a jest, joke, pun; a light or facetious composition."[153] His jab at the form emphasizes its quick and insubstantial quality. Jonson, too, suggests an awareness of the superficial reputation of this mode of entertainment, recalling that those who degrade the form may call masques "transitory devices." After referencing the brief life of the entertainments, Jonson attempts to defend the form by elaborating: "perhaps a few Italian herbs picked up and made into a salad may find sweeter acceptance than all the most nourishing and sound meats of the world. For these men's palates let me not answer, O muses. It is not my fault if I fill them out nectar and they run to metheglin"

[153] Bacon goes on to claim that although "since Princes will have such things, it is better, they should be graced with elegancy, than daubed with cost" (223). The remainder of his essay suggests the proper way to present such spectacles, if they should exist.

(76). This insightful observation of course comes from the one man who could comment upon the nature of this niche profession as no other writer from the time could. Relying upon an analogy regarding food—as we see throughout commentary on the masques—Jonson opposes sweet and yet insubstantial foods to that of a heartier—though perhaps plain—meal. In mentioning nectar, he refers to the drink of the gods and places it in opposition to metheglin—a decidedly less appealing form of spiced or medicated mead. This reference again situates a delightful form of nourishment in contrast to the more substantial form—and in this case medicinal—version of the drink.

The root of these food and literature comparisons—which we see within the actual narrative in Jonson's masque—reveals the discord between the forms of masques and poetry. As a masque might serve the purpose of offering the consumer a sweet bit of Italian herbs or nectar, the more substantial form of poetry serves as the medicinal mead and the hearty meat of the literary world. Jonson's interpretation seems to be rooted in the tension he perceives between the transient nature of the masque and the imagined permanence of poetry espoused by *paragone* writers. For example, in arguing that poets serve the purpose of teaching *all* people (in contrast to philosophers who only teach educated men) Sidney concludes, "the poet is the food for the tenderest stomachs" (77).[154] Poetry supersedes other liberal arts in nourishing the neediest of learners. The wide divide between forms is evident as Jonson straddles the triadic identity of a rogue playwright, masque-writer, and potential poet laureate, and through his descriptions of these professional identities, he seems to be at odds with what they amount to.

[154] Sidney was notoriously critical of drama. In criticizing elements of genre he states, "But besides these gross absurdities, how all their plays be neither right tragedies, nor right comedies, mingling kings and clowns, not because the matter so carrieth it, but trust in the clown by the head and shoulders to play a part in majestical matters, with neither decency nor discretion, so as neither the admiration and commiseration, nor the right sportfulness, is by their mongrel tragicomedy obtained" (116).

Patricia Fumerton has discussed the transitory nature of masques in relation to food specifically in her discussion of aristocratic triviality. Situating masques within a larger ritual of power display, she summarizes the formal and intimately connected practices of dining and masquing:

> Thus the world of the void. Here, in this fantastic, detached retreat of architecture set apart from their public world and done up in lavish styles suited to their increasingly acute "taste," aristocrats came to consume. And what they consumed were sugar-and-spice constructions—all delicacy, all personalized in style, all removed from the everyday sustenance—mirroring in miniature the fashion of the very rooms they sat in. All was representation. English aristocrats withdrew from publicness to like "houses" to eat a like "food" whose very stuff—no more than a metaphor or conceit—was void. (125)

The sweet nothings audiences consumed before the performance, aptly called "voids," stood parallel to the frivolous entertainments they were about to engage with. In this way, Fumerton makes clear the inextricable connection between the masque and the court. And as a writer for such events, we must consider the paradoxical conditions of prestige and yet, superficiality under which Jonson worked. While he enjoyed a certain esteem by establishing aristocratic connections, he did so through a medium that was transitory (even if sensational) by nature. The visual and musical elements of the masque only contributes to this issue; the entertainments relied on more than just text. In referencing Jonson's reliance upon stage designer Inigo Jones, Helgerson theorizes that Jonson—who at the height of his masque career depended upon masques as his main literary exercise—could not craft the artistic career he necessarily wanted

because of his duty to please his courtly audiences:[155] "Clearly a form dominated by the arts of the scene decorator could not serve to mark a laureate career" (176). On one hand, masques certainly limited Jonson to writing for the court in a form not necessarily defined by its literary prowess, but on the other, it afforded him the prestige of royal connections.

Economically, we know that the profession of masque-writing literally paid off. Joseph Lowenstein reminds us that, for his masques, Jonson was paid directly by his audience rather than from an acting company, as was the process for his commercial drama. Even more, his masques earned him approximately three to four times more than one of his plays (166). But of course we also know that—especially for Jonson—economic gain was not the only motivation for literary excellence. And indeed, the process of being a *paid* writer in fact relegated Jonson to precisely the class of working citizens from which he desired to escape. Contributing to my interest in Jonson's perception of the medium is the recognition that, as a form, the masque encountered similarities to painting by way of its perceived abilities. At their root, paintings and masques were applauded for their sense of immediacy—that is, their ability to reach the senses at once. Conversely, a perceived lack of viable substance meant that the forms could also be criticized for their superficiality. Painting, we recall, was often praised for its ability to reach its viewer instantly; this is an issue I have discussed in various ways throughout my previous chapters, including in my analyses of Timon's preference of his portrait over a poem dedicated to him and Arden's vulnerability concerning the poisoned image, respectively. However, historically concurrent with these theories was the acceptance that perhaps the visual lacked the sort of depth that poetry boasted. This tension between an immediate gratification of the senses

[155] Throughout his masques, Jonson uses emblems to signify meaning without the use of words. His educated audience would have recognized the emblems used on the ladies' fans in *The Masque of Blackness*, and been familiar with the personified Fama Bona, which was of course a figure used throughout literary and pictorial art. Here, Jonson reveals his source as Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, an emblem book used by artists at the time.

and a lack of depth seems important to consider in light of Jonson's goal of achieving literary excellence.

In order to understand the role of the masque in Jonson's career—thereby uncovering related issues pertaining to genre, status, and labor—I have considered each of Jonson's masques, but focus on *Neptune's Triumph for the Return of Albion*, in particular. Continuing the connection we've identified between food and entertainment, the 1624 metadramatic masque challenges the role of the poet by comparing his labor—which is rooted in pleasing the court—to that of the royal chef.[156] The antimasque begins with a poet and cook on stage; reminiscent of *Poetaster*, scholars have identified the cook as representing Inigo Jones while the poet of course is Jonson himself.

D.J. Gordon's seminal 1949 article exposed the tension between visual and verbal in Jonson's masques through an exploration of Jonson's quarrel with his stage designer, Inigo Jones.[157] As the cook and poet quarrel on stage, they represent their respective professions, not unlike the Poet and Painter scene that I analyzed in my chapter on *Timon of Athens*. While the poet contends that his masque will soon be performed, the cook retorts, "Sir, this is my room and region too, the Banqueting House! And in matter of feast and solemnity nothing is to be presented here but with my acquaintance and allowance of it." Apparent in this territorial struggle is the personal slight directed toward Jones: he actually designed the banqueting house. The defensive cook goes on to question just who the poet believes he is, to which the poet responds: "The most unprofitable of his servants, I, sir, the poet. A kind of Christmas ingine, one

[156] Published first in his 1616 Works, Jonson painstakingly describes the visual elements of his masques, recounting in great detail the masquers' costumes, hair, face makeup, movement, the scenery, moving parts, and all of the colors and textures that align with these descriptions. Included in his collected texts, Jonson must have seen a value in publishing these brief works. He describes the scenery, making the masque in one way, accessible not only to courtly or original audiences, but to readers of many generations and means.

[157] See Gordon, D. J. "Poet and Architect: The Intellectual Setting of the Quarrel between Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 12, 1949, pp. 152–178.

that is used at least once a year for a trifling instrument of wit, or so." Perhaps the poet is exhibiting false modesty in his response, but the negative undertones of his observation of being used but once a year to provide some insignificant entertainment cannot be ignored. In this way, it seems that Jonson pokes fun not only at his role, but at the genre of the masque itself. Here, Jonson seems uncomfortable with his identity as masque-writer, which may be due to the simple fact that by this point Jonson had been writing masques for nearly twenty years. This inside joke, shared of course with his masque audience, is yet another way in which he includes spectators and brings them into his form. *Neptune's Triumph* as a whole challenges the position of the poet, which must have been especially topical to Jonson as his career shifted to focus mostly on masque writing.

Reminiscent of *paragone* thought, the quarrel between the cook and poet accelerates as the cook aligns the value of his work with that of the poet: "a good poet differs nothing at all from a master-cook. Either's art is the wisdom of the mind…I am by my place to know how to please the palates of the guests; so, you are to know the palate of the times…" Clear in these lines is the absurdity of the cook claiming to be on the same level professionally as the poet. It is certainly not categorized as one of the liberal arts, so the cook uses this false comparison for comedic effect. Of course, narratively, this must cause great offense to the poet, who represents a body of artistic professionals who by all accounts considered themselves to be of great cultural

importance.[158] The unequal comparison must have caused audiences to laugh as they also recognized the self-deprecating nature of the scene.[159]

The most important detail in this speech, however, is the cook's emphasis on pleasing the palates of the audience members, a goal in which he claims both cook and poet share. As commentary on the pleasing and easily consumable nature of the food and trivial entertainments the men produce, the masque-writer is distinguished from the poet, who by *paragone* accounts worked within a genre that held the ability to transcend time. This objective, to cook or write simply to suit the audience, in some ways negates the creativity or artistry implied in *paragone* texts that defend poetry and considered it a supremely artistic form.[160] In this way, the cook seems to make a keenly perceptive comment regarding the nature of masque-writing during this time. The debate reaches its apex when the cook goes on a tirade concerning his perceived artistic responsibility:

> A master-cook! Why he is the man of men
>
> For a professor! He designs, he draws,
>
> He paints, he carves, he builds, he fortifies,
>
> Makes citadels of curious fowl and fish.

---

[158] His related interest in the separation of media is present in his 1630 masque, *Chloridia* as well. In it, Architecture and Poetry are personified and they discuss their relative merits in comparison to one another:
Fame-but they last to memory
Poesy-we that sustain thee, learned poesy
History-and I, her sister, severe history,
Architecture-with Architecture, who will raise thee high
Sculpture-And Sculpture, that can keep thee from to die
Chorus-All help lift thee to eternity
Each liberal art we find, boasts their ability to memorialize, thereby drawing upon major *paragone* arguments made concerning the merits of each form. His earlier 1623 masque, *Time Vindicated to Himself and to His Honors* takes a similar form by separating the senses; the ears, eyes, and nose are characters in the antimasque.

[159] The absurdity of the comparison of a cook to a poet gets progressively more outlandish when the cook ends his speech declaring that the cook "is architect, an inginer, / A soldier, a physician, a philosopher, / A general mathematician!" (412). It is worth noting that Jones' career as an architect is mentioned within his speech.

[160] Jonson's masque dedications suggest that he took direct feedback from the court in order to create masques that were topical and suited to the desires of king and queen specifically.

Reminiscent of *paragone* arguments that suggest that the poet or painter must be knowledgeable in all areas of the liberal arts, the cook places himself within the same context of these verbal and visual artists. The masque continues with the cook providing the poet with advice on crafting his masque. His overstepping nature seems to nod to Jonson's contentious relationship with Jones. Comically, while the cook knows nothing about the poet's art, he intercedes and gives his opinion on the antimasque—while the audience, knowing that the cook and poet *are* the antimasque, look on in certain laughter. If we accept that this interaction is an allegory of the debate between the Jonson and Jones, this masque is particularly defamatory towards Jones, and it represents not only Jonson's disdain toward the visual, but also his disdain of Jones as a person. However, more than that, the masque depicts Jonson's attempt to distinguish himself from other laborers; the poet—in contrast to the cook or the stage designer—implicitly argues for his own superiority and simultaneously invites his audience to join his argument, thereby positioning himself alongside the court in yet another way.[161]

Like *paragone* texts, anti-theatrical treatises employed the use of professional comparisons to make statements regarding drama. Stephen Gosson's *The School of Abuse* makes an incredible comparison between cooks and poets that seems to coincide with the speeches the men in Jonson's masque make regarding the limits of their professions:

> Cookes did neuer shewe more crafte in their iunckets to vanquish the taste, nor Painters in shadowes to allure the eye, then Poets in Theaters to wounde the conscience. There setchey abroche straunge consortes of melody, to tickle the

[161] Another way in which the audience narrowed the separation between themselves and the masques was to descend upon the scenery after the masque was performed in order to jovially rip it apart. Jonson's commentary to *The Masque of Blackness* states, "as part of greatness, [audiences] are privileged by custom to deface their carcasses" (47).

> eare; costly apparel, to flatter the sight; effeminate gesture, to rauish the sence; and wanton speache, to whet desire too inordinate lust. Therefore of both barrelles, I iudge Cookes and Painters the better hearing, for the one extendeth his arte no farther then to the tongue, palate, and nose, the other to the eye; and both are ended in outward sense, which is common too vs with bruite 15 beasts. But these by the priuie entries of the eare, slip downe into the hart, & with gunshotte of affection gaule the minde, where reason and virtue should rule the roste.

Gosson's statement begins with the declaration that poets do more to affect their audience's conscience than cooks do to taste or painters do to the eye. The registers Gosson notes are of interest: the painter affects the eye, the cook affects taste, and the poet in theater (the dramatist) affects the conscience. Drama, he concludes, reaches the internal receptor of the human, the very essence of what drives our principles and motivations. Thereby establishing the reach drama held, Gosson goes on to suggest that the dramatist appeals to the sense of sight as well.

However, he refers back to the aural often, citing the ability of "wanton speache" to "tickle the eare." Attacking then both the content and method of communication, Gosson argues that through the ear, messages enter audience members' "minde, where reason and virtue should rule the roste." Clearly indicating that the messages that reach audiences would not be positive, his comparison of the cook's superficial reach to the dramatists' ability to reach the inner most parts of men grants the latter form immeasurable power. We can compare Gosson's comparison to Leonardo's assessment of the difference between poetry and painting. In arguing that the sense of sight makes painting the superior form, Leonardo explains how a viewer takes in an image: "the eye receives the species or similitudes of objects and gives them to the *impressiva*,

and the *impressiva* gives it to the *senso commune*, and there it is judged" (199).[162] Leonardo separates the senses from the mind and manipulates this divide in order to argue that sight is the superior sense. In effect, painting (in his view) is the better form because it engages the superior sense. These two accounts, separated geographically and by centuries explain why the struggle for Jonson to define his artistic position was at issue.

The publication of Jonson's *Works* was perhaps his greatest effort toward establishing a respectable literary career. We know that Jonson expressed an early interest in publication. *Every Man in His Humour* went through several printings in quarto form, containing the following lines on the title page, "As it was first composed by the author B.I. Containing more than hath been publickely spoken or acted." Clearly asserting himself as the author and skirting the traditional form of commenting on its performance history, Jonson makes the claim that the printed version of the play contains *more* than what has been presented thereby he seems to privilege the textual form. The masques were included in the 1616 volume; collating the transitory pieces within his folio, Jonson made the intentional choice of situating them alongside his other literary endeavors.[163] In one way, this ultimate reliance upon the text, when much of his career depended upon at least some visual elements in theater and masques, is a testament to Jonson's faith that only his establishment as a literary artist—and a published one at that—would offer the immortality and acknowledgment that he so desired for his career. It seems that in publishing his masques, he made an attempt to offer some lasting effects from his work, despite an acknowledgment that he would be limited in his ability to represent what actually happens in

[162] "Leonardo means that the eye received the image (*similitude*) of an object (*corpo ombroso*) which the sensate power of sight (*virtu visive*) passes to the mirror-like *impressiva*, where the *imaginatione* "sees" it. In the case of poetry, however, there is no such image…" (301)

[163] The number of working parts moving in succession certainly diverted from its plan, especially when we consider audience participation, which no one—not even Jonson could predict with certainty.

a masque. The singing, dancing, and scenery, which Jones designed to be moveable and interchangeable according to the narrative, could not have been captured textually and what remains are short, somewhat bizarre texts.[164] Meager stage directions are scattered throughout the masque, but in no way amount to even a fraction of the visual and aural quality of the intended production.

Still, it seems as though Jonson attempts to present a case for the literariness of the form through the dedications that precede his masques published in quarto. In them, he describes his inspiration and process and flatters the court. He explains why he chose to write on particular topics and who he had in mind for certain parts. He concludes that the courtly audience is different from that of commercial theaters, thereby accounting for some of the creative decisions he makes. It seems as though Jonson includes his audience in his *paragone* position; in his masque dedications, he repeatedly cites that their intelligence and cultural knowledge make them the keener audience than that of the commercial stage. For example, his dedication to Henry, Prince of Great Britain in the quarto version of *The Masque of Queens* explains his lack of narrative within the masque. He concludes that the educated courtly audience would not need announcements that state when an actor takes the stage. The courtly audience was different from the uneducated and uncultured laborers that frequent his commercial plays, and Jonson declares:

> For to have made themselves their own decipherers, and each one to have told upon their entrance what they were and whether they would, had been a most piteous hearing, and utterly unworthy any quality of a poem, wherein a writer should always trust somewhat to the capacity of the spectator, especially at these spectacles, where men, beside inquiring eyes, are understood to bring quick ears,

[164] Moreover, the plan of what would occur through the coordination of the several-hour long masque undoubtedly differed from what actually occurred.

> and not those sluggish ones of porters and mechanics that must be bored through at every act with narrations. (83)

Simultaneously flattering the court and explaining his careful consideration of his different audiences, he suggests that he alters his writing to suit different viewers. Jonson indicates that his writing must match the greatness of his audiences by stating that the "nobility of the invention should be answerable to the dignity of their persons" (122). It seems as though Jonson makes allowances for his work and attempts to qualify it through an expression of his own thought and labor, which went into creating the masques. In referencing his intellectual labor, we see that Jonson attempts to make his masque-writing process visual through these notes, thereby distinguishing himself from lesser occupations and aligning himself more readily with the higher classes for which he wrote. This recognition of an elite audience suggests a belief that they would understand the literariness of the words, even without the "superficial" spectacle. In effect, perhaps this is why Jonson chose to publish them—to reach an even broader audience of literary-minded English people.

What we gain from analyzing the ways in which Jonson represents his profession in the masques—that differ from that of commercial audiences—is that we recognize that genre correlates to the professional struggle Jonson himself experienced as not only a multimedia artist, but also as a dramatist *and* masque-collaborator. Appealing to the courtly audience by altering his narrative to include more explicit reference to the role of a masque-writer, he distances himself from the cook, and thereby even his visual collaborator, Inigo Jones. Amplified by the fact that Jonson invites courtly audiences into his representation of his profession, he positions himself alongside the revelers and with the elimination of the commercial drama elements that

were so crudely criticized in *Poetaster*, the textual emerges as refined, albeit limiting form in Jonson's corpus.

Conclusion

In both drama and masques, Jonson clearly airs his dirty laundry concerning his negative perception of both forms and those who worked alongside him. Common to both genres, Jonson places the blame on his colleagues, arguing that untalented poets or medaling visual artists disrupt his notion of good literature. More specifically than other writers who engage in *paragone* debates, Jonson positions himself as a part of the profession which he condemns, effectively drawing specific distinction between categories of drama and characteristics of playwrights. He also seems to lament his position of masque writer not only due to his reliance on the opponent—Inigo Jones—but also due to his reliance on the court and his lack of autonomy when writing masques that had to be both topical and relevant according to the very specific tastes of the monarch. In an attempt to remedy this, his annotations reflect upon and emphasize the laborious process of masque-writing and seem to exist in order for Jonson to make visible the literary labor that went into creating them.

The ways in which Jonson used visuals to express his textual career mirror his own long, multi-generic, and at times contentious career. His role in the "War of the Theaters" helped to establish his position as a commercial stage dramatist, and his representation of the crude poetaster must have paralleled the pushback that he himself received as a dramatist, at least from antitheatricalists or simply those slow to accept the form. Working, then, to distinguish himself from those stereotypes, his prose signals his attempts to elevate the form by pleading for good writing to take precedence. Eventually identified primarily as a courtly masque-writer, Jonson,

and especially in his on-going quarrel with Jones—as represented by the conversation between the poet and the cook—seems to symbolize the struggle he encountered with making the highly visual form of the masque count towards his desired poet laureate career.

The professional networks Jonson created and work within are what define how he engages with the *paragone*, and therefore clearly get expressed throughout his corpus in different ways. His marked desire to achieve that which no other English writer had before certainly corresponds to the ways in which he approached his process of writing for both the stage and the court and defines his perception of the *paragone* and those involved in the debate. Alongside the professional networks associated with the theater, Jonson expands his artistic web to include that of the courtly audience, especially when persuading them (or even himself) that his role as poet, dramatist, and masque-writer were enough.

Epilogue: Art for All Time

The *paragone* was a far-reaching debate that drew from, and influenced, several facets of English culture including written and visual art, religion, and professional identities. As this project has demonstrated, in the Renaissance, dramatic representations of the relationship between artistic forms sought to both express and reframe concerns related to the *paragone*, in part because they certainly affected the playwright directly. As multimedia artists, playwrights explored, challenged, and often subverted strict *paragone* theories that espoused a divide between forms thereby carving out a new professional identity for themselves. Lyly, the anonymous author of *Arden of Faversham*, Shakespeare, and Jonson each recognized the shifting creative landscapes in which they wrote and new opportunities for artistic and financial success meant that these writers also enjoyed a new space for which to discuss and reflect upon their place in Renaissance society.

Aligning themselves *with* visual artists, playwrights pushed against generic boundaries and in effect transcended artistic limitations in order to both publish and perform products that were eagerly consumed by a wide-ranging audience of readers and viewers. In an attempt to reconcile their emerging status as verbal *and* visual artists, commercial playwrights engaged in complex negotiations concerning the value and potential influence of their work in light of a religious society that was at best skeptical of images, and at worst, fearful of their potential to harm viewers in this lifetime and beyond. Thus, the *paragone*, in spite of its apparent attempt to draw distinctions between forms, became the topic of several plays that subverted its very purpose.

While this project emerged from the simple desire to examine moments in which artistic objects such as paintings appeared on the Renaissance stage, it has clearly evolved beyond

simply theorizing that in Renaissance drama, there existed important moments in which the dramatist met a boundary of language and therefore turned to the visual to fulfill his desire for expression. Instead, I've considered the more intentional moves of playwrights, who even with the desire to create a new artistic spaces for themselves, could not have conceived of the complicated effects of blending forms. In effect, I have investigated Renaissance theories pertaining to the physiological process of vision, personal religious beliefs, and the struggles of self-presentation through a variety of genre beyond drama including rhetorical manuals, anti-theatrical texts, and religious doctrine.

Through these four chapters I have furthered the study of the *paragone* and subsequently, have contributed to the fields of religious studies, performance, and Renaissance rhetorics. Additionally, I hope that I have provoked the desire for further research, especially concerning the genres that I have not covered here. While scholars of poetry have recognized the power of ekphrasis to evoke the visual through the verbal/textual, I think that more work can be done concerning the ties between the aural, oral, and verbal. Considering oration of poetry, one might examine the process of aural reception and the capability of poetry's sound to produce a visual image within the audiences' mind's eye. Also, as I consider the recent growth of film studies departments within the academy, I cannot help but recall *paragone* writers, who in their time reflected upon the ways in which new media worked with or against one another. The issues I have presented here seem prime for media scholars to pursue, given the *paragone*'s insistent desire to probe the boundaries of genre and reflect upon the result of blending media in order to create a new method of multimodal storytelling.

Lastly, upon reflection, I recall my fortunate experience of visiting the Chatsworth House archive during the summer of 2015. There, I flipped through dozens of Inigo Jones' original

drawings of Jonson's masques. His sketches of set designs and costumed players captured my imagination. As I ran my finger along his pencil marks, I studied the lines of the players he drew. Examining a drawing of a particular costumed player, I found myself imagining what the final fabric choice would be. During the performance would his jacket sleeves make a sound as he skipped past audience members? What did his voice sound like and how did he dance? Did his stage makeup support the emotion he conveyed? Even though I had studied Jonson's masques in preparation of my visit, I had never before felt this close to my work. And yet I am cognizant of the fact that without Jonson's printed masques, these drawing would be seemingly meaningless today. Of course scholars in that imagined scenario may have be able to piece together a narrative given the stage and costume designs, but the actual meaning of the masques would be lost forever. And so in that small reading room that summer afternoon, I felt an intimate connection to the artist and the player for which he designed. And I realized that as it turns out, I too need both textual and visual.

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