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Three Imagined Dances:
the somatics of early modern textual mediation

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Abstract

This thesis addresses how historical narratives, ideas, and practices of dance are carried in the transference between books and bodies. To do its work, this thesis investigates the presence of dance in early modern book culture, seeking how such texts are not only representative of but also laden with the problems of body, sensory experience, and practice. Thus, this is a thesis that considers the infiltration and implication of bodies in early modern book culture; in it I reconsider what the body-based art of dance was doing on the early modern page.

Framed as metaphor, as disease, as an ethical conundrum, as uncontainable joy, as lasciviousness, as indicative of cosmic balance, dance appears again and again within early modern texts as a means to discuss concerns with the body. Early modern writings on dance probe the embodied practice and sensual experience of dancing for its deeper connections to the world, the divine, to ethics, to health, and to questions of knowledge and sensorial experience. The constellation of writings herein investigated from the 15th and 16th centuries traverses early modern thought on mortality, faith, love, the erotic, antiquity, alchemy, and disease through their articulations of act of dancing, what it means and how it networks into the greater scheme of embodied praxis. Through these texts, this thesis further probes what the subject of dance did to book culture in the period in turn. My aim is to show how an intermedia history between the written word and the dance also speaks to the conditions of embodiment. Toward that end, this thesis unfolds a series of cases in which the writerly use of dancing and dancerly use of writing expose the mutual implication of writing and dancing as intertwined embodied and discursive practices. Together, writing and dancing have through relationship to one another defined and redefined the very idea of the experience of being in a body.

The methods I employ in the thesis draw from the tradition of the microhistory and the capacity of microhistorical approaches to make use of the subtleties and difficulties in sources. Over the course of three chapters, the thesis considers three cases of writing on the dancing body interwoven as if by happenstance through their various associations with

one particular Parisian family in the 16th century, their book publishing house on the Rue St Jacques, and their network of associated colleagues. Finally, each chapter approaches the relations between embodiment, dance, and book culture by considering how ideas on embodiment expressed through the description of dance in the book interacted with the bodily perspectives that arise from book culture: the readerly body, the protagonist's body, and the authorial body.

…

Diese Doktorarbeit befasst sich mit der Wirkung historischer Erzählungen, Ideen und Tanzpraktiken in der Übertragung zwischen Büchern und Körpern. Dabei untersucht diese Arbeit die Präsenz des Tanzes in der Buchkultur der Frühen Neuzeit und geht dabei der Frage nach, inwiefern solche Texte nicht nur repräsentativ sind, sondern auch mit den Problemen des Körpers, der Sinneserfahrung und der Praxis beladen sind. Diese Arbeit betrachtet die Infiltration und Implikation von Körpern in der Buchkultur der Frühen Neuzeit und stellt dabei die Frage, was die körperbasierte Tanzkunst durch ihre Anwesenheit, ihre Repräsentation auf den Buchseiten der Frühen Neuzeit bewirkte.

Als Metapher, als Krankheit, als ethisches Rätsel, als unerschütterliche Freude, als unzüchtig, als Hinweis auf die kosmische Balance taucht Tanz in frühneuzeitlichen Texten immer wieder auf, um Besorgnisse über den Körper zu artikulieren und zu diskutieren. Frühmoderne Schriften über Tanz erforschen die verkörperte Praxis und sinnliche Erfahrung des Tanzens nach tieferen Verbindungen zur Welt, zum Göttlichen, zur Ethik, zur Gesundheit und zu Fragen des Wissens und der sensorischen Erfahrung. Die Konstellation der Schriften, die hier aus dem 15. und 16. Jahrhundert untersucht wurden, umfasst alchemistische, medizinische und religiöse Schriften. Zusammen bilden sie ein Netzwerk frühneuzeitlichen Denkens über den Akt des Tanzens. Anhand dieser Texte untersucht meine Arbeit, welche Auswirkungen der Tanz selbst wiederum auf die Buchkultur hatte. Mein Ziel ist es zu zeigen, wie eine intermediale Geschichte zwischen dem geschriebenen Wort und dem Tanz auch die Bedingungen der Verkörperung

anspricht. Zu diesem Zweck entfaltet diese Arbeit eine Reihe von Beispielen, in denen der schriftliche Gebrauch des Tanzens und der tänzerische Gebrauch des Schreibens die wechselseitige Bedeutung von Schreiben und Tanzen als ineinandergreifende, verkörperte und verkörpernde sowie diskursive Praktiken sichtbar macht. Durch ihre Beziehung zueinander haben Schreiben und Tanzen die Erfahrung des Seins im Körper neu definiert. Die Methoden, die ich in dieser Dissertation anwende, schöpfen aus der Tradition der Mikrohistorie und den Erkenntnissen mikrohistorischer Ansätze, die Feinheiten und Widersprüche in Quellen nutzbar zu machen. Anhand dreier Kapitel betrachtet die Arbeit drei Exempla, in denen über tanzende Körper geschrieben wurde, als ob sie zufällig durch ihre verschiedenen Assoziationen mit einer bestimmten Pariser Familie im 16. Jahrhundert, ihrem Buchverlag in der Rue St Jacques und ihrem Netzwerk der assoziierten Kollegen, miteinander verwoben gewesen waren. Schließlich nähert sich jedes Kapitel den Beziehungen zwischen Verkörperung, Tanz und Buchkultur, indem es untersucht, wie Ideen zur Verkörperung durch die Beschreibung des Tanzes im Buch mit den körperlichen Perspektiven, die sich aus der Buchkultur ergeben, in Wechselwirkung treten: dem Leser-Körper, dem Körper des Protagonisten und dem Autor-Körper.

Frontispiece

Frontispiece. Printer's device of Yolande Bonhomme (1525)

The insignia reads: Ces presents heures sont imprimees a Paris par la veufve de Thielman Kerver demourant a la grant rue sainct Jacques a lenseigne de la Licorne (This book of hours was printed in Paris by the widow of Thielman Kerver at the great street of St John under the sign of the unicorn). Photo by author, at Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Dedication

This work is for Yolande Bonhomme,

(let me explain):

Apologizing for the lateness of the publication of a Greek Lexicon after the death of its author Jacques Toussaint, the publisher Charlotte Guillard (and colleague of Bonhomme) justified her own involvement in completing the work. She wrote,

> Not on this account should you take the work itself for less, since with faithfulness and diligence we have pursued the transcribing and editing not only of the whole work but also of the individual parts of it, so that we omitted nothing which was necessary to the work, and we removed nothing, we added nothing of our own.

In her words, the very few that actually arise from documents as Guillard's own, she speaks of herself as if she were an absence or a conduit through which books could pass unharmed by her touch. Guillard, like Yolande Bonhomme (with whom she cooperated closely), did much to conceal herself behind the books she created.

This work has been created with Yolande Bonhomme in mind; this is a book that has sought to be touched by the inference of her hand.

In the words of Walt Whitman, then:

To you,

Whoever you are.

- Lindsey, April 2019.

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Introduction.

Toward a History of the Somatic

The analytical approach to historical literature in this thesis is inspired by the dance scores of the Swiss-American dance artist Yvonne Meier. Avant-garde dance artists like Meier began in the 1980s to turn toward language with a new lust for the driving forces of its ambiguity and did so after the field of dance agonized for a few centuries on how precisely to record instruction for dance into the literary formats of directives and notations. Meier's works arose from the play in transformation between the word and the dance, and she charged her dance works with the dancer's search to give embodied expression to the force of language. Meier's work found its poetics in the gap between language and dance and the brief glints of contact between words and moving bodies that emerge therein.

Meier's works approached the idea that any piece of writing could be a score for dance, that any bit of language might serve to inform a dancing body; indeed, her works proposed the simple idea that it has never been otherwise. Through my work on Meier's scores, I began to question historical narratives that assume the history of dance is something clearly demarcated from wider literary discourses that reach toward questions of the body and physical practice by calling dance to the venue of the page. The 'Cartesian split' as it is so called, can only be reinforced by researchers seeking to slice history into disciplinary boundaries convenient to our own pursuits. So, as a practitioner of dance and a budding scholar of 'body studies', I sought for whether a history of dance could be told as a story of mutual influence and inter-dependency between forms of expressivity and realms of media, as Meier's work had done. My research has thus been a process of turning to historical book culture and asking how its expressions of dance are to be read. In my reading of works from the early modern period, I have found something beyond mere literary representation of dance in the summoning of dance to the page. There is a somatic

dimension within the ways the literary mediation of dance is wielded as a means to make contact between sensual experiences through the medium of the book.

It may be that despite their intermediation, books and dances exist in planes isolated by unsurmountable difference. In writing this thesis, I do not deny the possibility. Nonetheless, I have herein paid attention to the attempts written into certain books to cross such a distance. Toward that end, the first chapter of this thesis explores how images of the *Dance Macabre* in 16th century French Books of Hours informed the embodied, practice-based relations of their readers. Within the second chapter, a circular 'dance of time', its *bifrons* performers, and their arrested state upon the base of an equine statue in the late-15th century erotic, allegorical, antiquity-obsessed romance of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is explored for how the protagonist's sensual experience reaches out, through writing, to touch the sensual experience of readers. In the final chapter, the writings of the medical practitioner and alchemist Paracelsus on the St. Vitus Dance of 1518 in Strasbourg are explored not only as indicative of what Paracelsus thought about the dance, but indicative as well of how writing on the conjuring of disease through dance provided a means by which Paracelsus could conjure his own authorial position, embodied in the authority of the physician. This thesis thus moves along its three chapters and the three 'imagined dances' they contain to expose three positionalities of literary embodiment: reader, protagonist, author.

This introduction lays out the theoretical approach implemented across the three chapters of this thesis. Foundational to that approach are, (1) a definition of dance and a way of thinking of its historical conditions, (2) an understanding of temporality in the history of dance and its book-based invocations, and (3) a consideration of historicism based on research into the relations between media and embodiment as facilitated by physical practice—which I herein call a history of the somatic.

1. Dance: its definition and historical conditions

As a work of scholarship crossing between the fields of dance and early modern studies, this thesis defines dance as a particular kind of coordination of body that demands that there be a plurality to coordinate. Dance can be the coordination of various parts within

a single body, of multiple bodies, or between bodies and non-bodies, for example. Dance demands a poetic anatomy of connected pieces moving in systematic relationship. Any particular teleology can be attached to the moving parts that compose dance. Historically, some patterns of meaning and experience that have repeatedly arisen (dance as healthy, dance as social-ordering, dance as gender-training, etc.) have thus, at various points in time, been foregrounded as a possible definition for 'dance's purpose'. Inevitably, such teleological definitions leave something out.

To a great degree, by the time one of the words for dance from one of many existent languages is applied to an act, it performs upon that act a certain undefined excess, a particular unexpressed association—a likeness to an unanswered question. Core to this ambiguity is the underlying quality of dance as transportation—not to a defined place, but to another state. Such a state can be logical, reasonable, mystical, spiritual, aesthetic, contemplative, ecstatic, sad, joyful, aroused, deterred, etc. The transport need not be a wild ride, it need not even be to a definitive elsewhere. Nonetheless, dance transports, and likewise the term 'dance' attempts a transportation of the idea of 'organized body movement' by rendering the body in its movement less self-referentially defined and thus more implicative and powerful. The word for dance thus stands beside dance's own poetic qualities and gains its deepest connection to that which it denotes by carrying the transportative performance of the act within the performance of a word that distances itself from any possible encapsulate definition.

This definition of dance (like any definition) is written in part to account for the stressing and stretching dissonances of perspective – be they cultural or personal – that destabilize the very basis of definition. Further, this definition seeks to respond to the dissonances of time. Like those of cultural or personal perspective, dissonances arising from time and producing historical knowledge tend to distance, to otherize, or to reduce past 'time periods'. This is a consequence of the tendency to relate to and identify more forcefully with the concerns of that which is present and thus 'ours'. This tendency, however, is perhaps more indicative of the habitus of those wielding historical lenses than it is of the tendencies of thought from previous time periods. It remains an unfortunate habit of this (our) period in time to present a past not only as more primitive than our own 'time', but as such, as steeped in obvious metaphors and over-wrought representations.

Grating against such an interpretation, philosophical and spiritual writings on dance from the past give evidence of their understanding of the danced act as more than representationally interwoven into the world and its meaning.

This thesis approaches the history of dance as encapsulated in literary works that address embodiment by first shifting away from the binary terms foundational to Roy Porter's 1991 call to historians to work on the body.[1] In his essay "History of the Body Reconsidered", Porter argued that the Western, Judeo-Christian history of the body had informed the neglect of the body by historians. Referring back to the 1991 version of his essay, Porter wrote in its 2001 edition that,

> I explained the neglect of body history in terms of the ingrained disparagement of the somatic in western culture. Particularly through the Platonic notion of homo duplex, that dualistic model of man as a mind-over-matter hierarchy, Greek philosophy left an enduring cultural legacy which prized princely reason, while reviling the body as disorderly. For its part, the Judeo-Christian heritage then contrasted the carnal lusts of fallen man to the sacred and divine, and, through monasticism in particular, instituted regimes to promote the mortification of the flesh.[2]

Porter's analysis of historical conceptions on the body aligns immense swaths of philosophical and theological ideology from a vast expanse of history into uncanny agreement. In fact, ideas on the body from antiquity and the medieval period cannot be so easily stereotyped. Perhaps the attention given in 20th century philosophical discourses to the problematic relationship of body and mind in our own time has caused scholars to look back into history for the source of the problem, finding it variously in Plato, Descartes, and others. Bemoaning of the 'Cartesian split' has, for example, been popular amongst scholars who study theories of embodiment and performativity.[3] Within this thesis, however, I do

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[1] Porter, Roy in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (edited by Peter Burke, 1991 and 2001 editions). Roger Cooter comments, "The last few decades of the twentieth century witnessed the body moving from no one's particular concern to virtually everyone's preoccupation – including historians. Roy Porter writing on the history of the body in the revised second edition of Peter Burke's *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* declared that 'body history' had become the 'historiographical dish of the day' (Porter, 2001, 236) – having proclaimed in the first edition, a decade before, that the topic was 'in the dark' and 'too often ignored or forgotten' (Porter, 1991, 212, 226)." See Cooter, Roger. "The Turn of the Body: History and the Politics of the Corporeal." *ARBOR Ciencia, Pensamiento y Cultura* CLXXXVI 743 mayo-junio (2010): 393.

[2] Porter. "History of the Body Reconsidered." *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*. Edited by Peter Burke. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), 233

[3] Maurice Merleau-Ponty is one example of a pre-eminent scholar who writes of the Cartesian split: "The Cartesian tradition has taught us to disentangle ourselves from the object: the reflective attitude purifies

not pose historical conceptions of the body with an aim to formulate them collectively into such a grand-narrative. What I aim to show here is how early modern conceptions of the body fracture – or split apart from each other – on the very issue of how the body is itself split. I further suggest that the questions of the fracturing or severance of a body should further not be constrained in historiography to the formal physical body. The means or extent to which one body remains isolated from any other – both materially and socially – is also a wide discourse extending back into antiquity. From the description of the first body's rotundness in *Timaeus*, to Lucretius's Epicuranist *De Rerum Natura* which described the universe as composed of bodies and void, to the long tradition of referral to Saint Paul's biblical writings on the social body—theories of the material severances and ties between bodies and the social and moral implications of such severances and ties are also foundational to late medieval and early modern theorization of the body.[4]

Taking cues from scholarship on medieval manuscript, the media theory of Marshall McLuhan, and my own work with early printed books, I further root this study in early modern ideas of embodiment regarding the ways such ideas were written and the means by which they were distributed. Responding to Marshall McLuhan's 1964 work *Understanding Media*, this study on dance history and its basis in material description within literary works is further rooted in the idea that materiality of media – be it danced or written – is as historically important as the study of its contents. This thesis does not go so far as McLuhan's media theory that posited contents as irrelevant in comparison to their material conditions, but it does take up the idea that the contents of media cannot be understood in an absence of understanding of the physicality of media forms and the means of their conveyance between bodies and through time.

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simultaneously the common notion of body and of soul by defining the body as a sum of parts without an interim and the soul as a being directly and fully present to itself. These corresponding definitions establish a clarity within us and outside of us, namely, the transparency of an object without folds, and the transparency of a subject who is nothing other than what it thinks it is. The object is an object through and through and consciousness is consciousness through and through. There are two, and only two, senses of the word "to exist": one exists as a thing, or one exists as a consciousness. The experience of one's own body, however, reveals to us an ambiguous mode of existence." See: Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*, translated by Donald A. Landes (London: Routledge, 2012), 204.

[4] Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura* was of particular interest in the early modern period, as the full work was rediscovered in 1417 by Poggio Bracciolini. See Greenblatt, Stephen. *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern* (New York City, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 2011).

McLuhan's ideas, by resonating with the medievalist turn toward the materiality of manuscript, have ultimately resurfaced questions of performativity in the material study of manuscript. Amongst medieval scholars who have connected media studies to performance studies, Jessica Brantley's ideas (in her 2007 work *Reading in the Wilderness*) on "late-medieval habits of thought that link reading with performance" have been influential to my own investigation.[5] I perceive Brantley's analysis of manuscript as relevant to early printed books. Like manuscript, early incunabular expressed through their design an ideation as to the physical conditions by which the act of reading might be performatively facilitated by the form of the book. As any history beyond living memory leaves us with the evidence of objects (and not the living people who engaged with them), the form of any particular media remains primary evidence of embodied practices and thus to the meanings of embodiment enacted in the time.

Because of these factors, in this thesis, I have turned toward writing a history of the somatic not simply to attempt a perspectival shift in historicization of the body. This is instead an investigation into written evidence from the early modern period that addresses how certain historical practices, conceptions, occurrences, experiences, (like dance) became denotational of the body through their capacities to directly engage with and change it. Further, through this research I seek to provide a prototype that might initially model how research on historical conceptions of embodiment can expand upon present methods of inquiry. Herein, I seek to reconsider the extent to which bodily practices remain evidenced within historical media as a means to reconsider the nature of the body as understood in the period.

Particularly, I take into account that dancing bodies from the early modern period have long been historicized for how they have been represented in the materials from the period that remain extant. I seek to expand upon such historicization of dance by considering other means for understanding the presence embodiment in textual materials and seeking beyond the formulation that ideas on embodiment expressed through writings on dance are merely representational. This thesis is constructed to look at particular cases when the incorporation of dance into a book rendered that book and its contents

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[5] Brantley, Jessica. *Reading in the Wilderness: Private Devotion and Public Performance in Late Medieval England* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 1.

denotational of the body and the act of engaging with book culture thus relevant as embodied practice.

This thesis thus narrativizes literary, social, and artistic forces that interacted to create a situation wherein the act of dancing was textually articulated and wielded to express particular perspectives on how embodiment – as manifested through embodied practice – relates to truth and meaning. Through analysis of such book-based invocations of dance, this particular history looks at how conceptions of embodiment shifted in correlation to the changing environs of practice and corporeal enactments of learning, expressing, and thinking. By turning to dancing as summoned to the page, this thesis further explores how dance has been roused in early modern book culture as a useful proxy for larger constellations of thought on body and practice in cross-disciplinary discourse of the time. As a shared topic of discussion, dance facilitated articulation of larger questions as to what a body means – not merely in its mortality or materiality – but by being shaped through practice and lived in time.

Of all possible body-based practices, dance is herein investigated because it is composed of and through the poetics of body. The body is the instrument of dance, and dance is an instrumental practice tuned to and conversely by the body. There is thus in dance an exchange in Techne between the givenness of what bodies are and the various practices of body training through which that givenness of body is relativized through various milieus of craft. Deriving from collective knowledge, the practices of dance expose the poiesis of the body as manifest in the upending of its discreteness or phenomenological intactness. Nonetheless, dance imposes upon particular bodies in particular ways. Within the dance, each body thus arises as subject and object in two senses: as both a material object and an expressive subject in the dance, as well as the subject and object of dance's grammar – in other words – both the one who enacts the dance, and the one upon whom the dance is enacted.

The difficulty of defining bodies and embodiment that rises to the surface in historical discussions of dance derives, in part, from the non-mediated nature by which the art of dance takes up the body. The tension between the practices of writing and dance further gives direction not only to what is said of the body through critiques of dance, but as well to the means by which such ideas are expressed. For all the ways writing and

reading have been considered as means for dislocation from the body and clarified as exterior to realms of embodied practice, writing and reading nonetheless remain conditioned by the terms of embodiment and shaped to their cores, now as in the past, by the body's physicality. As the body is necessarily experienced, expressed, and explored through practice, what is known of the body is always in some way mediated through the body's own actions. This history of the somatic therefore doesn't necessarily seek into the past for a more direct encounter with bygone bodies, but methodologically investigates how the historical resource of textuality might yet further evidence body-based practices. The aim of this thesis is to unpack the denotation of body while nonetheless acknowledging that the problematics of historical interpretation, likewise, are a practice mired in the circumstances of body.

Perhaps an example might clarify this idea. This particular document you are now reading, as a written history of the early modern period, investigates printed books that were created within 100 years of when the printing press was developed in the European context. As well, this written history is itself printed, and as such, is physically referential to the period it addresses. The interlacing of ideas about dance with the material changes of literary discourse in the Gutenberg revolution produced a deep though subtle tie between the expressive body and the written word. As printed books were increasingly produced and circulated with the invention of the printing press, their writers addressed a likewise increasingly wide and anonymous readership. Then, as now, books were objects that could carry voices and thoughts across long distances, and between complete strangers. As expressed by McLuhan, books, like all forms of media, thus extended the bodily capacities of human beings.[6] Consequently, the book (then as now) has held the burden to further inform how the body from which it extended (author) is to be considered in relation to the body to which it extends (reader). Thus, in the simplest sense a book is a space that conjures specters of reader for author and author for reader. At many times and in many ways over the long course of history it has been quipped that a book is a body, and if it is, as a body it is defined by how it relates to other bodies through the terms of embodiment. In other

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[6]McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964).

words, one can turn McLuhan around by saying that if media are the extensions of bodies, then likewise bodies are at the root of media.

However, in such an extension, the 'bodies' of author and reader become implied bodies staged in literary acts of converse and discourse at large. The book's extension of body operates a formulation of embodiment distinct in nature from the actual bodies of readers and authors. Though often existing referentially to actual bodies, the embodiment that arises through book culture shifts the means by which actual bodies interact and thereby shifts the fundamental actuality of bodies themselves. This thesis thus further explores the nature of embodiment as engendered in authorship and readership by considering the ways that ideas of dancing in the early modern period were passed between authors and readers. My core argument is that embodiment within book culture is evidenced not in actual bodies, but in the invoking of body through the somatic, which unearths the body not through its physical presence, but through practices, expressions, inferences, and descriptions. The extended body that arises through such practices, I argue, is a medium for the performance of bodily ideation.

2. Temporality: periodization, dance and modernity

To write this particular history about dance, it has been necessary to set aside the typical dance-historical notion as to when the frameworks of conceptualism and modernism took hold in the dance field. I therefore set aside 'dance-conceptualism' to explore how dance has been historically integral to a realm of conceptions; and do not seek to clarify the implications of 'dance modernism,' but instead how dance was historically conceived and confronted within discourses on embodiment at the rise of societal early modernism. In this document, I seek to express how the very 'modern' notion of body was informed in and through discursive practices crossing religious, medical, and literary thought on what the body becomes when dancing.

Dance, I argue, was important as grounds for discourse on embodiment and physical practice around the beginning of societal modernism—in what Immanuel

Wallerstein called the 'long 16th century' in his seminal work *The Modern World System*.[7] The long 16th century and its placement near the beginning of the early modern period was marked by seismic social, political, and economic shifts that shaped what we conceive of as the modern world. Many factors inform the identification of the period as such: colonization, the printing press, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, secularization of the court system, mercantilism, etc. Though the dances of this same period are not often historically articulated as indicative of the modernist societal shift, though dance of the early modern period seems instead to be latent, tied up with pre-modern frameworks, as court dance, traditional folk forms, or as religious ritual dances, and though the shape of dance might not have been drastically modernized in the long 16th century—nonetheless, bodies were undergoing modernization, then as now. What began dance modernization was not so much stylistic as metaphysical; the early modernization of the dancing body does not find its roots in how dance looked, but in what it meant.

This thesis takes influence from many works of dance scholarship and overlaps in its intentionality with dance historicism that seeks to expand how the very framework of dance is historically approached. The approach herein expressed has been described already in the work of Elizabeth Claire in her essay "Dance Studies, Genre Et Enjeux De L'histoire".[8] This thesis is further rooted in wide reading of histories of the body and the wider network of scholarship addressing embodiment and performativity in book culture at the rise of early modernism. There are, however, also numerous differences between how historical questions of embodiment and time are explored in the works that inspired this one, and how such issues are considered and applied herein. Kélina Gotman's recent historical and theoretical exploration of dance history in *Choreomania* (2018), for example, describes many ideas relevant to this work. However, Gotman's work is also built from a notion of modernity that this work of research does not share. Gotman defines modernity as,

> …that which posits the new in contrast to the old […] modernity can be defined as that which turns on itself, and onto the world around it, to articulate, explain, and make intelligible what is perceived to have been

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[7]Wallerstein, Immanuel. *The Modern World System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

[8] Claire, Elizabeth. "Dance Studies, Genre Et Enjeux De L'histoire." *Clio: Femmes, Genre, Histoire* 46, no. 2 (2017): 161-88.

previously unknown or unknowable and obscure. In this respect, modernity can be understood as a process of intelligibilization; it is not just a historical period, an art movement, or a political platform, but a motion towards thought, no matter how misconstrued this thought may appear in retrospect.[9]

Gotman's wide definition of modernism, however, risks confusing modernity with the very simple fact of time, change, and humanity's progression/digression through both. Her argument suggests that perhaps we have always been modern, and thus seems to hinge itself to the flipside of Bruno Latour's *We Have Never Been Modern* (1991). As Latour wrote, "modernity comes in as many versions as there are thinkers or journalists, yet all its definitions point, in one way or another, to the passage of time."[10] He continued, that the notion of the modern "designates a break in the regular passage of time, and it designates a combat in which there are victors and vanquished."[11] Early modernism is certainly the beginning of a severance, and it most certainly slices time and people with combat. Against Latour's self-help approach to realizing our collective un-modernization, I propose that societal modernity cannot be dispelled with the mere realization of its construction. If it has been imagined into existence and constructed into existence, it has also been forced into existence and recapitulated into existence again and again precisely on the violent terms of victory and vanquishing. The narrative most central to the demarcation of the 'early modern period' has been the process of worldwide globalization through trade, and within that, European colonization. Though the *unmodern* undoubtedly inhabits each and every one of our bodies, though 'we', as the collective bodies of modernity remain decidedly pre-modern despite continued societal faith in our collective modernization, the story of modernism is thus present for all of us intellectually and physically. Modernity remains a powerfully divisive demarcation and expresses itself not only through a collective 'we', but through continued occupation, annexation, and annihilation that characterizes the continued project of economic globalization. This, at least, is a central point of discussion within the vast, shared project amongst historians who seek to clarify, rather than expunge, the powerful consequences of modernism by investigating how the onset of such a conception arose through processes of

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[9]Gotman, Kélina. *Choremania*, 2018, 9.

[10]Latour, Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catharine Porter. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 10.

[11]Latour, We Have Never Been Modern, 1993, 10.

globalization. Though no period can be completely demarcated from any other, and though the early modern period has also been used to engulf and thus entwine the more Eurocentric demarcations of Renaissance, Reformation, Counter-Reformation, Enlightenment, and other such modes of 'periodization,' the notion of the early modern has proven a useful means toward understanding history and its present consequences. The rising historical project of early modernism hasn't been focused on clarifying modernity as a shared state of being, as a collective 'we' as in Latour's work, but as a systematic disruption of such notions of collectivity expedited and heightened by speed of media, of transit, of enterprise, that, though shared to certain degrees, nonetheless produced new and massive expressions of disparity. In a sense, modernity is not an epoch to be shared; it is an epoch instead whereby the heightened means for meeting, sharing, and engaging have become the very means for a likewise heightened, proactively enacted, global performance of estrangement.

In this thesis, I focus the idea of early modernism onto relations of bodies and media: the book, the body, and the dance. To move through this particular history of the somatic in book, body, and dance in the early modern period, this thesis further adopts the perspective Christopher Wood and Alexander Nagel developed through their thoughts on the Renaissance in the 2012 work *Anachronic Renaissance*.[12] Therein, Wood and Nagel offered the term *anachronic* as "an alternative to 'anachronistic,' a judgmental term that carries with it the historicist assumption that every event and every object has its proper location within objective and linear time."[13] There is much about human interaction with time that does not adhere to linearity. The work of Wood and Nagel specifically exemplified this by showing how the Renaissance and its aftermath are saturated in variations on recapitulated antiquity, and how scholars are likewise at present both burdened and furnished by the ramifications such Renaissance movements imposed upon scholarship, culture, and art. What Wood and Nagel's work points to – and what I seek to expound upon here – is that a written referral is also an act that, repeated, produces an anachronic event. Drawing from their work, I propose that the history of ideas is not merely a system whereby generations of thinkers recall, repurpose, and reconsider the ideas of their predecessors. I propose instead a much more deeply physical history of ideas—one in which, in referring, one is not merely remembering ideas while leaving their origination safely in the past, but conjuring an idea in the present, and literally re-

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[12]Nagel, Alexander, and Christopher S. Wood. *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2012).
[13]Woods and Nagel, *Anachronic Renaissance*, 2012, 13.

physicalizing it, one might say, as an incantation. Incantation is a decidedly pre-modern conception, but it is a pre-modernism that, colliding with the media of early modernism, became an implicit pre-modernity through which modernity was manifested to us experientially, through our bodies, into a story that shifted and changed until through its very contours early modern writers began to express the deceitfulness of incantation itself.

3. Somatics: tracing the history of its ideations

The anachronic Wood and Nagel describe continues to function in language and scholarship as its own incantation. One can consider the term at the heart of this thesis's theoretic approach – 'somatic'– as a case-in-point of the how contemporary scholarship speaks in ancient tongues to call the tradition of scholarship into present thought. As a 'history of the somatic', this work depends on the scholarly incantation of the word 'sōma,' deriving from the Greek σῶμά, is an ancient word for physical body.[14] Sōma has had a rough etymological ride. The various veins of theories of soma and 'the somatic' in recent scholarship comprise a wide, cross-disciplinary topography that, though connected by their shared use of the term, are otherwise not very systematically linked. Those works that directly address the term – some of substantial intellectual rigor – nonetheless tend to be case studies in overusing to terms 'soma' and 'somatic' as vague monikers.[15]

In scholarship, the term 'somatic' emerges in 18th century anatomical works, in the 19th century within psychology and philosophy, and in the 20th century amongst literary scholars, theologians, and as a moniker for a network of therapeutic body-based practices. More recent somatic ideas arise from two traceable lineages of thought. The first of these emerged in late 18th-century medical texts and used the term somatic to demarcate the skin, skeletal muscle, aspects of the vascular and voluntary nervous systems, and sensory organs that together make the basis for one's contact with the environment surrounding one's body. These uses of the

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[14]For example, in Homeric use. See Renehan, Robert. "The Meaning of ΣΩΜΑ in Homer: A Study in Methodology." University of California Press: *California Studies in Classical Antiquity*, Vol. 12 (1979): 269-282.

[15]A prime example of this is the seminal work written by Douglas Robinson, *Estrangement and the Somatics of Literature* (2008), which has been pivotal in expanding the field of somatic theory toward wider philological concerns and questions about the relations between embodiment and literature. See: Robinson, Douglas. *Estrangement and the somatics of literature: Tolstoy, Shklovsky, Brecht.* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

term 'somatic' served to identify both the relationality and self-incorporation of the body within the tissues of the body itself. By 1818, the use of somatic to demarcate the related anatomical systems of environmental contact was amended by Johann Christian August Heinroth for use in psychology, where Heinroth coined the term *psychosomatic* to describe the causes of insomnia as rooted in the body-mind relationship. The second use of the term somatic emerged within 19th century theological and philosophical discourses that sought to address the meaning of sōma in the Bible and the question of the wholeness of personhood. These discourses, beginning in the study of the gospels of John and Paul in ancient Greek, first approached the notion of body-based personhood as a religious conception from early Christianity in antiquity and later expanded toward wider 'secular' philosophical discourses.

There is a fundamental disjunction between the medical and psychological senses of 'somatic'. In medical treatises, 'somatic' was used for aspects of anatomy relating to how the 'body wall' (the composition of the body's external surface) demarcates embodiment from environment. So, as an anatomical term, somatic isolated and described certain elements of the body for the means by which they could assist a body in separating itself from the world and thus providing itself the means to command its own actions by relating to that which is exterior to it. However, from the earliest emergence of 'somatic' in 19th century psychology, the term was further expanded to indicate both how behavior relates to body – how body manifests emotionality and psyche – and how thoughts likewise find transference into physical expression. In psychology, somatic and psychosomatic were used to delineate a field of behaviors either emergent from the fact of embodiment or re-routed from psychic sensation into embodied expressivity as physical sensations.

On its own, the term somatic gained a strong presence in 19th century writings on psychology by the 1820s. Even by then, the use of the term referred back to earlier work. At the turn of the century, Phillipe Pinel had hypothesized that mental illness could derive from organs outside the brain (namely the uterus).[16] Pinel's early work on the somatic is exemplified by the 1828 German publication *Allgemeines Repertorium der gesammten deutschen medizinisch-chirurgischen Journalistik*, which briefly referred to psychologist Pinel to discuss

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[16] Porter, Roy. "The Body and the Mind, the Doctor and the patient: Negotiating Hysteria," *Hysteria Beyond Freud*, Sander Lawrence Gilman, Sander L. Gilman, Helen King, Roy Porter, G. S. Rousseau, Elaine Showalter, ed.s (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 262.

psychological thought on "die somatischen Ursachen der Geisteskrankheiten."[17] With Freud and Breuer, psychosomatic ideas increasingly moved toward presenting a problem of mind; unaddressed psychic stresses could re-channel into physical expression, could become physical, and thus could re-emphasize their own physical power over the person experiencing them. The mind, then, through the body, could manipulate perception and experience, and the body's own perceptual access to the world would be filtered through how the mind had already shaped the body into a physical recapitulation of its pre-existing beliefs and fears. In the history of psychology, the term somatic has thus treated the body as the mind's playground for psychic conditions, and its effects upon one's experience of the world as a kind of impingement, filtration, or manipulation through which mental illness manifests itself in physical symptoms. In both such senses of the somatic – as 'body wall' or as impingement – 19th and 20th century scholarship recapitulates questions about the experience of embodiment through the enactment of living in/as a body.

Medical and psychological traditions share in their conceptions of antiquity as a basis for their ideas. The relevance of the history of the body to the wider history of ideas finds its simplest exemplification through how medical terminology partakes in and furthers the scholarly practice of speaking in ancient tongues. As with philosophy, medical etymology has long been tangled up with Greek writings, and histories of the body owe much to the pervasiveness of this referral. On one level, uses of Greek terms allowed the medical field to take part in conjuring 'western thought' through the collective efforts of European scholarly traditions to enact their conceptions through referral to Greek and Roman antiquity. On another more pragmatic level, Greek and Latin terms did for medicine what they had done for so much other European scholarship: they allowed for shared understanding across cultural, linguistic, and political divides. These benefits also mutually supported one another: through the slow construction of the notion of 'western thought,' Europeans created a discursive zone amongst themselves, and through the invention of antiquity-based scholarly terminological realms (especially after Latin fell out of general use as a scholarly lingua franca), the notion of

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[17]"Untersuchungen über die somatischen Ursachen der Geisteskrankheiten welche ihren Sitz entweder im Gehirne oder in den übrigen Organen des Körpers und deren Nervengeflechte haben." ("Investigations on the somatic causes of mental illness which are located either in the brains or in the other organs of the body and their neural networks" (author's translation)). See: Kleinert, Carl Ferdinand. *Allgemeines Repertorium der Gesammten Deutschen Medizinisch-Chirurgischen Journalistik: In Verbindung mit mehreren Mitarbeitern*. (Leipzig: 1828 bei Christian Ernst Kollmann), 141

'Europeanness' could be kept safely resident in the very linguistic-terminological practices engendered through scholarly pursuits.

As a centerpiece for debates amongst scholars of classical and biblical studies, the sōma became a vastly more confusing source word. For one, the use of the word in antiquity and early Christian writings didn't gel. As pointed out by Bruno Snell in 1943, in Homeric Greek sōma seems only to refer to the corpse left after the departure of psyche.[18] So, studies of Homer caused Snell in his influential *The Discovery of the Mind* to posit that in ancient Greece "the physical body of man was comprehended, not as a unit but as an aggregate."[19] Such an aggregate was for Snell as much about the body's passage through different states as it was about the various parts and pieces composing the body as a whole. Five years after Snell's argument appeared, the biblical scholar Rudolf Bultmann's work *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* was published in English. Bultmann's conception of sōma in Pauline writings was antithetical to Snell's on Homer. Bultmann wrote, "it is clear that sōma does not mean 'body form' nor just 'body,' either", and he continued, "by 'body' he [Paul] means the whole person— undoubtedly in some specific respect which we have yet to define more exactly."[20] And then, Bultmann extended this claim of what Paul meant by the sōma into the very direction that later thinkers – from psychology, philosophy, philology, and the arts alike – would call particularly 'somatic' in the 21st century sense of the term. Bultmann wrote, "it is clear that the sōma is not a something that outwardly clings to a man's real self (to his soul, for instance), but belongs to its very essence, so that we can say man does not have a sōma; he is a sōma."[21]

The publication of Bultmann's work in English subsequently influenced the English scholar John A.T. Robinson, who then wrote *The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology* in 1952. As described by Gundry in 1976, "the book has had a profound effect – along with Bultmann's *Theology of the New Testament* – on current understanding of Paul's use of the sōma."[22] Robinson and Bultmann's shared definition is exciting, as it argues a very post-Cartesian conception of embodiment into the bible itself. However, Bultmann and Robinson could very well have been wrong. Writing of sōma's uses across a wide variety of Greek works –

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[18]Snell, Bruno. *The Discovery of the Mind: The Greek Origins of European Thought*. Translated by T. G. Rosenmayer. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1943).

[19]Ibid., 6.

[20]Bultmann, Rudolf. *Theology of the New Testament*. (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007), 192.

[21]Ibid., 194.

[22]Gundry, Robert H. *Sōma in Biblical Theology: with emphasis on Pauline anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 5.

Sophocles, Euripides, Aeschines, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes – Robert H. Gundry reflected on the shiftiness and slipperiness of sōma's meaning within antiquity, and concluded that the word maintained inconstancy throughout its use, up into the 20th century. Despite this slipperiness of sōma, however, Gundry's work focused on the specific subset, which arose in biblical scholarship after Bultmann (who was himself influenced by J. Weiss). Gundry argued such definitions of Pauline sōma, which redefined sōma from body to personhood, to be incorrect:

> We may fairly presume that the lexicographers have chosen the best examples known to them from ancient Greek literature to support the proposed meaning 'person' for sōma. Yet on examination in context it appears that sōma is not at all a comprehensive term. The term always points in a contrary direction – toward thingness in one or another capacity (as slaves, prisoners, troops, corpses, entries on a census list, and so on) or toward other specifically physical emphases (bodily presence, sustenance, procreation, and the like). We may excuse the lexicographers for giving 'person' as an equivalent for sōma, simply because in the cited passages 'body' would sound awkward in our language. But since context makes clear that sōma always focuses attention on the physical, we would make a mistake to appeal to these extra-Biblical passages in support of a holistic definition.[23]

Gundry's work against the holistic definition of sōma, as derived from Pauline writings, was a powerful analysis of the problems language and translation pose within historical textual analysis. Nonetheless, the word sōma was increasingly used within the mid-to-late 20th century as a way to link personhood with embodiment. This is certainly true within the rise of somatic thought in the budding field of movement therapy, which was flourishing not only within various alternative cultural scenes, but within and in relation to experimental dance practices.[24]

It is widely accepted amongst practitioners and scholars alike that the philosophy professor Thomas Hanna was a central founder of the use of the term 'somatics' in relation to

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[23] Gundry, Robert H. *Soma in Biblical Theology: With Emphasis on Pauline Anthropology*, 15.

[24] Hanna's preeminence as a founder of Somatics amongst scholars of dance studies and history is well supported by the literature. Jill Green in the *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education* (2007) writes, "With the popularity and embrace of somatic systems beginning to emerge in the dance world and in academe in the 1980s and 1990s, a number of dance education scholars began thinking about and researching somatic theory and practice, connecting the growing field of dance to the theories of Thomas Hanna, Don Johnson, Richard Shusterman … and other somatic thinkers outside the world of dance." Green, Jill. "Student Bodies: Dance Pedagogy and the Soma." See: Green, Jill. *International Handbook of Research in Arts* Education, Liora Bresler, ed. (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), 1121. For another example, see: Karkou, Vassiliki, Sue Oliver, and Sophia Lycouris, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Wellbeing* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017).

movement therapy. One of the field's most distinguished practitioners, Martha Eddy, wrote in her short history of somatics that, "in the 1970s Hanna coined the term."[25] Her claim is corroborated in the *Encyclopedia of Phenomenology*, which likewise claims that "the field of somatics itself was given a name and identity by Thomas Hanna, who was directly influenced by existential phenomenology of the Body."[26] Hanna's collaborator Don Hanlon Johnson, further clarifies both of Hanna's philosophical sources:

> Thomas Hanna, like myself a recovering philosopher, succeeded in gaining broad acceptance for a name and theoretical umbrella to the many particular schools: he called the field "Somatics," inspired both by Husserl's vision of "somatology," a science that would unite a methodical knowledge of the body derived from experiential studies with the biological sciences; and by the classical Greek sōma, the living bodily person, in contrast to necros, the dead mass of flesh.[27]

Johnson substantiated his definition for the 'classical Greek sōma' with a reference to Dale B. Martin's *The Corinthian Body* (1995).[28] As the title of Martin's work suggests, the book's investigation of the classical conception of sōma was conducted through an analysis of Corinthians, and thus through a Pauline sense of sōma within the bible. To build the book's central argument, Martin cites both Bultmann and Robinson's earlier works on the Pauline sense of sōma.[29] As an analysis of the body in Corinthians, Martin's book is further a descendent of Bultmann and Robinson's earlier works. Thus, in citing the book, Johnson implicitly linked Hanna's conception of the classical Greek sōma to 20th century scholarly discourses on the sōma that had emerged through studies of biblical literature, particularly the writings of Paul, for which Bultmann and Robinson were preeminent analysts, and through which Bultmann and Robinson further initiated greater scholarly investigation of embodiment through the study of religious – particularly Christian – textuality.

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[25]Eddy, Martha. "A brief history of somatic practices and dance: historical development of the field of somatic education and its relationship to dance." *Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices* Volume 1 Number 1 (2009): 7.

[26]Embree, Lester, ed. *Encyclopedia of Phenomenology* (New York: Springer, 1997), 70.

[27]Johnson, Don Hanson. "Body Practices and Human Inquiry: Disciplined Experiencing, Fresh Thinking, Vigorous Language." *The Body in Human Inquiry: Interdisciplinary Explorations of Embodiment*, ed. Vincent Berdayes. (New York: The Hampton Press, 2004), 106.

[28]In relation to his argument, Johnson cites Husserl's Phenomenology and the Foundations of the Sciences (1980), Elizabeth Behnke's *Sensory Awareness and* Phenomenology (1989), and Husserl, 1980, ppar. 2, 3; Behnke, 1993, p. 11; Martin, 1995, footnote nine for Chapter Five, p. 271.

[29]Martin , Dale B. *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 254.

Hanna's earliest work expressing his understanding of the somatic emerged in 1970, in his strange and sweeping work *Bodies in Revolt: A Primer in Somatic Thinking*. His work on somatics continued, and he produced an essay titled "The Field of Somatics," which operated as a piece of writing to beckon such a field into being in 1976. Ten years later, Hanna produced what would become one of the most cited essays amongst dancers, "What is Somatics?", wherein he most simply and elegantly defined the field of somatics. He began it with the following statement:

> Somatics is the field which studies the sōma: namely, the body as perceived from within by first-person perception. When a human being is observed from the outside – i.e., from a third-person viewpoint – the phenomenon of a human body is perceived. But, when this same human being is observed from the first person viewpoint of his own proprioceptive senses, a categorically different phenomenon is perceived: the human sōma.[30]

Hanna's sōma, like Bultmann's, was not a body, but a person. And for Hanna, as for Bultmann, a person is not one who inhabits a sōma; a person is a sōma. With this idea, Hanna not only provided the basic foundation for movement-based somatic investigation, he further framed the mode of critique such movement-based investigation would present to other fields of inquiry. Over the course of his article, Hanna critiqued the fields of physiology, psychology, and medicine. "Medicine takes a third-person view of the human being," he wrote, and then: "physiology, for example, takes a third-person view of the human being" ; "psychology, for example, takes a third-person view of the human being," – Hanna worked systematically, essentially critiquing observational distance within healing practice.[31] For Hanna, somatic practice would be necessary – his argument was quite simply that knowledge on the body could not entirely be conducted as if the body were a thing merely to be externally observed: "the human is not merely a self-aware sōma, but it is acting upon itself," he wrote.[32] His argument proved powerful not only to the rise of movement-based therapies, but to the shifting basis by which the field of dance found justification in the 20th century. Whereas dance modernism had been a form of movement-based expression, the new ideas of dance moved the field toward movement research: research of movement through movement itself.

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[30]Hanna, Thomas. "What is Somatics?" *Somatics: Magazine-Journal of the Bodily Arts and Sciences*, Volume V, No. 4, Spring-Summer 1986.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Hanna, Thomas. "What is Somatics?". See: *Clinical Somatics*, https://somatics.org/library/htl-wis1.

Within dance studies the source for the term somatic has never been explicitly traced through Hanna to biblical scholars. Instead, it has been concretely identified with the field of psychology. Indeed, many movement-based somatic practitioners, seeking to provide therapeutic benefit in their practices, studied the works of psychologists, notably Freud and Jung, and thus implicitly attributed their appropriation of the term 'somatic' to the influence of Heinroth. Nonetheless, Hanna seems to have drawn his inspiration not only from psychology, but from later (mid-20th century) German ideas about the use of the term in the bible. Hanna's 1970 work *Bodies in Revolt* resonates with Robinson's idea of the sōma as whole personage as much as it does with the psychological idea that mind is expressed and enacted through the body. Yet, just six years after Hanna defined the sōma as the first-person experience of embodiment, thus drawing from Bultman and Robinson's idea of the physicality of personage in Pauline writings, Gundry published his work *Sōma in Biblical Theology*, and began his dispute of the claim that the biblical use of the word 'sōma' had anything to do with body as personage. This debate has continued through such recent works as Lorenzo Scornaienchi's *Sarx und Sōma bei Paulus: Der Mensch zwischen Destruktivität und Konstruktivität* (2008), which argues that Pauline use of the word sōma related the physical body to its objectified state, whether living or dead, as slave or corpse.[33]

So, Hanna's field of somatics drew upon a theological conception of the sōma that survived a mere 20 years in scholarship. This Hanna then brought into relation with the wider field of European philosophy. In essence, he reframed a series of European philosophers as somatic philosophers, and in so doing, he implicitly related the concerns of philosophy back to European religious disputes on the meaning of the bible and its narrative and etymological authority to articulate what the human body means. To read Hanna is to perceive a thinker who intuitively interconnected theology and philosophy—not overtly, but covertly. As problematic as that may seem, in so doing, Hanna was not necessarily distancing himself from what European philosophy long had been involved in doing over the last few centuries: reconceiving discourses that arose through religious study in the secular realm. And this remains paramount to somatics: the fact that the textual lineage of theoretics on embodiment cannot be historically extricated from the long-term, deep-time questions about the relationship of human nature to the nature of God.

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[33]Scornaienchi, Lorenzo. Sarx und Sōma bei Paulus: Der Mensch zwischen Destruktivität und Konstruktivität. (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2008).

To look back on discourses on embodiment in the early modern period is to see this fact re-stated, to see it functional, and operational. And though perhaps it is unsettling to think of the notion of 'somatic' through such a Euro-centric genealogy of thought, I propose that nonetheless, through the function of etymology in European discourse, it is exactly that. Theoretically and practically, the practice of somatics in dance etymologically and thus historically points back to a European lineage. And though the somatic has incorporated a wide range of non-European practices into itself, though the somatic has been extended to account for international, intercultural investigations of the body through the enactment of the body itself, the terminology and its historical justification is European. The somatic is therefore a field of inquiry that has both depended upon the Euro-centric invention of the 'west' and the appropriation of what is consequently non-western into itself. In other words, 'somatic' is deeply modern and finds its derivation in early modern thought. Through a history of the somatic, it is possible to see from a unique angle how different articulations of history are delineated in order to provide a sense of place in the now through the story of how 'our' place in time and thought emerged over the course of generations. Through the modernization and westernization of thought, certain ideas are offered up as being 'western', and the exterior world is added in addendum. The long story of somatics is therefore about how the place of 'European identity' has been reaching toward defining itself as a place where the whole world can be thought, can be engendered, while nonetheless not being a part of the world at large. Moreover, the site of the body has been an important realm wherein that way of seeing the European place has taken shape, for the body is the most basic form of place.

19th century medical discourses that first invoked the word 'somatic' did so while also basing their reflections on the somatic in earlier medical and theological thought from the early modern period when the term was not at play. It is on this basis that I have chosen to turn the term somatic to a period prior to its use to consider how the development of 'somatic' ideas has its roots in how writings of 'Renaissance' and 'Reformation' likewise related to antiquity. A history of ideas is, in the end, not merely one to be conjured through etymological genealogies; the history of ideas is formulated through how language is smeared relationally over the diversity of events which compose historical narratives. It is as if words have sticky surfaces, and they have been certainly used in that way, as if they pick up the connotations of occasions in which they are most heavily used. Particularly, in the 20th century, when 'somatic' was invoked within psychology and theology, the term was put to use to pick up stories from

previous centuries. Mulling over the interactions between language and body-based experience, Wittgenstein wrote: "Suppose someone said: every familiar word, in a book for example, actually carries an atmosphere with it in our minds, a 'corona' of lightly indicated uses."[34] And then he continued, "If it is like this, if the possible uses of a word do float before us in half-shades as we say or hear it—this simply goes for *us*. But we communicate with other people without knowing if they have this experience too."[35] It is precisely within such a problem that the body, experience, subjectivity, language, history, and understanding come together. They do not come together on assurance, but on the shaky grounds that emerge from the fact that one can never know, nor confirm, that one's ideas – leaving one's body and travelling on one's voice – might land fully intact within the understanding of another. One can't even truly know if those ideas manifest fully intact in one's own understanding of oneself.

Within the expanding field of dance of the 20th and 21st centuries, the somatic has been explored more keenly through practices than through writings. Through practice, the somatic is necessarily explored not for how it is indicative of embodiment, but for how it can be illuminative of embodiment. Somatic practices seek to affirm that the body's own possible range of action and experience provides the very means by which the nature of the body might be investigated. There is in somatic practices by consequence an attempt toward producing self-evidential reflexivity within the acts of the body; one's experimentation with the body aims toward articulating the body back toward itself and thus drawing the body forth into an exposure of itself via its own behavior. In all this, the somatic is positioned outside the body, distanced just enough from the sōma itself to partake in expressively foregrounding what exactly the sōma is. Nonetheless, the somatic reaches from the outside not toward the body as it seems from outside, but toward the body as experienced from within – the somatic reaches toward the lived body as inexorable from the fact of living itself.

The idea in dance of an active practice that can be somatic reverses and upends the passivity that, for about two centuries, framed the term somatic. Prior to the active seeking of 'somatic practices' in dance, the human actions related to 'somatic' were amongst medical practitioners and psychologists considered acts arising from embodiment's own impulse, over which one had little to no control. The automation of the somatic is also present in writings

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[34]Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Philosophical Investigations*. Translated by G. E. M. Anscombe. (London: Basil Blackwell & Mott, 1978), 181.
[35]Ibid.

from antiquity. As Oedipus argued about his own sōma, its choices were enacted in ignorance, as accidents. The somatic was merely a series of conditions needing justification, it was merely the problem of the body, it was merely the body as an excuse for irrational or detrimental behavior. And so, the dancerly taking-up of the notion of somatic was an act of reversal, and a question thrown back to how 19th century psychologists and medical thinkers drew on the long history of discourses both relating and isolating psyche and sōma. The question posed by the invention of somatic practice is thus: *can one choose to perform the consequence of one's body over one's being?* And, more deeply: *how is the act of being alive, itself, manifested as embodiment – not as object or subject, but as enacted subjectedness and subjection, objectness and objection?* To approach such questions of embodiment, somatic practices explore answers not by treating the body as an intact, yet dualized, and isolated place from which subjectivity arises, but enact subjectivity through the relations between bodies in practice. In such processes, the bodies of books have been imbued with a serious status as interlocuters, and thus as bodies themselves.

Of course, even the most fundamental explorations of embodiment conducted through dance are not confined to dance itself. The notion of body-based practice and its implications are equally present in, for example: sport, martial art, military training, contemplative practices, religious ritual, singing, etc. Somatic practices have embraced this fact. The social and political conditions that reorganized experimental explorations of embodiment in dance around the term 'somatic' in the 20th century provided a new umbrella through which various practices – long present in movement-based arts to investigate embodiment – could be newly investigated as relational forms through which bodies discursively excavate the terms of embodiment itself.

As an idea, then, a somatic history approaches the body as a realm accessible not purely materially or conceptually, but through action, through practice, through the body expressed through its own enactment over time. By consequence, such a pursuit has further created a means by which dance studies can freshly be used to turn back to history to see it by new means. It is through what dancing has done to my methodology of historical analysis that the thinking behind this thesis began in earnest. By consequence, I look at a simple friction that emerges when books (1) seek to give perspective on the body by discussing its use through the example of dance for its relation to the body, but (2) nonetheless articulate ideas of embodiment through how they themselves derive from the body. In other words, what I seek to show is quite simply that no writing is devoid of teleology informed – as dance is – by the body. While early modern writings sought to use dance as an example through which the body could be clarified,

they were nonetheless, like dance, all the while implicitly manifesting ideas of their own on the body. Early modern writings were, in other words, subjected to the terms of their supposed subject matter. And that, at its heart, is the point of somatic practices. One cannot put a body merely on stage where through dance it will communicate ideas about the body. Somebody has to be there, in that body, being that. One cannot write, merely, about what it is to be in a body, likewise, without being a body oneself, and using the tools of embodiment and physicality to send that idea out into the world for other bodies to encounter. As an artform, dance has been used to point to a body-based failure of remove that is everywhere. And in its way, dance has thus haunted the rise of empiricism, the hopes of science and philosophical knowledge. This thesis is here to speak of that haunting, but not necessarily to put it to rest.

…

To achieve its end, this thesis pays particular attention to writings produced by authors who have not been considered a part of dance history because their actual participation as audience to dances is either highly questionable or non-existent. The dances included in this thesis are thus dances of the mind—performed between the page and the imagination. The central thematic shared by the writings explored in this thesis is their presentation of dance as a thing that enacts a force upon the bodies that perform it. This shared position amongst the writings investigated in this thesis is thus profoundly somatic as it turns the concern for dancing back onto the body of the dancer, and thus toward the problem of first-person experience.

While each early modern text herein explored presents a perspective on what dancing does to the body, each refers not to actual dancing bodies, but to a network of sources through which dance is conceived. This thesis will explore how dances so conceived in book culture, despite their status as exterior to performed dance, have been nonetheless consequential to the physical practice of dance. In the simplest sense, one could say that just as the acts of dancing have produced writings on dance, acts of writing on dance have produced acts of dancing. But the historical relationship between the dancing body and the dancerly pen is not so simple as that—dancers have not merely re- staged what was written of them, and writers have not merely re-presented what was danced. Writers and dancers in their co-creation of 'what dancing does to bodies' have relativized and destabilized one another. The history of dance is thus not only about the real dancing bodies that once existed, but about the participation of those real dancing

bodies, alongside so much else, in the production of perspectives on the dancing body which drives dance's practice into a vast variety of expressions.

All that said, this thesis now turns to its subject matter in a series of case studies connected in loose ways to a singular printing house in Paris and its book production. Specifically, this work turns to the efforts of the woman book publisher Yolande Bonhomme in Paris and the indirect consequences of her labors in book culture on discourses of embodiment in the 16th century. I turn to Bonhomme, her family, her networks, and her business not because they are the most luminary examples, but because they speak to what books were, and what they continue to be, as a place wherein embodiment is expressed. All the while, as I use the term 'somatic', I use it with an acknowledgement of the difficult etymological and thus political and social position such a term carries as it brings its difficult history with itself.

Chapter I.

The Reader's Life as Measured in Reading the Dance of Death:

The *Danse Macabre* of Parisian printed Books of Hours

I once heard a learned man say that time is nothing but the movement of the sun and the moon and the stars, but I did not agree. Would it not be more likely that time was the movement, not only of heavenly bodies, but of all other bodies as well? If all the lights of the sky ceased to move but the potter's wheel continued to turn, would there not still be time by which we could measure its rotations?

-Saint Augustine, *Confessions*

This chapter sets out to demonstrate the complex functions of the *Danse Macabre* in facilitating the embodied practice of reading and contemplation amongst the owners of printed Books of Hours in early to mid 16th-century Paris. Commencing its analysis through the figure of the *Theologa* amongst the *Danse* of women and her female publisher Yolande Bonhomme, the chapter then progresses from an initial analysis of their relationship and into a process of contracting and expanding foci—first to an expanded sense of the *Danse Macabre* as a genre, then to the contraction of the *Danse Macabre* for printed books, then deeper into the *Danse Macabre*'s operation in the Office of the Dead. From there, the focus of the chapter expands to how the *Danse Macabre* networked with other genres of images found within the Book of Hours. Before it concludes, the chapter zooms out to consider the whole body of the book and its relationship to the body of its reader. The Parisian printer Yolande Bonhomme's particular *Danse Macabre* images will thread through all these investigations.

…

Perhaps the most important narrative structure passed from embodiment to literature is the idea of beginning-middle-end. This structure—the structure of lifespan— is not only the structure in which we all live our lives. It pervades our work. Furthermore, the structure of beginning-middle-end is the foundation for the time-based arts, typically identified as literature, theater, music, and dance. Such works not only take time to be made—they take time to be shared. Through them, the structure of lifespan bridges the problem of mortality. One picks up a book written 400 years ago and one reads it from beginning to end because the lifespan held within its binding is not bound to the time when

it was made. One could call this superimposition of the structure of lifespan to literature a form of representation, but that would be missing the point. The conditions through which we reproduce the structure of lifespan into works are physical conditions. The structure of lifespan cannot be differentiated into the isolated realms of form and content but becomes a part of the embodiment of the time-based arts, just as it is a part of our own embodiment— it is the shared physicality from which the realms of form and content diverge from each other. Perhaps, most importantly, the structure of lifespan is the foundation for pedagogy. Because we die, we teach. Because we teach, we send the information from the present into a future we ourselves will not inhabit. And to teach, we bind up the structure of lifespan in other forms—so that, for example, a biography might be transferred (however imperfectly) to the pages of a book that (like the life that inspired it) will end.

It is from this perspective that this chapter approaches a very tiny fragment of history, with the idea that the relations between the body, lifespan, and the time-based arts of literature and dance are eloquently expressed by the early modern history of the *Danse Macabre* in printed Books of Hours. First depicted in the 15th century in wall paintings showing a line of dancers alternating between skeletal death-figures and living people, the *Danse Macabre* had since its inception shown the act of dying as a performative, morbid act of intimacy between the bodies of the Dying and the bodies of the Dead. Its central gesture – the gesture recapitulated through all its expressions – was the gesture of physical contact between the living and the dead that joined them in their act of dance. Ultimately, the *Danse Macabre* gives tangibility to the idea of a dance between Death personified and various persons who are on their way toward the state of being themselves dead.

This chapter specifically looks into *Danse Macabre* marginal images of the printed Books of Hours made by the woman publisher Yolande Bonhomme in early-to-mid 16th century Paris. As historically inconsequential as such a historical figure and her marginals may at first seem, when considered from the perspective of the book's relationship to lifespan, the narrative of the Bonhomme, her Books of Hours, and her *Danse Macabre* marginals presents a densely compacted microcosm for the larger field labeled by Douglas Robinson as "the somatics of literature."[1] The *Danse Macabre* of printed Books of Hours

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[1] Robinson, Douglas. *Estrangement and the somatics of literature: Tolstoy, Shklovsky, Brecht.* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

is most important for the way it was networked into its context, which in various ways built relationships between the lifespan of readers and the lifespan of literature through the image of dance.

Contained within the Office of the Dead of printed Books of Hours, the *Danse Macabre* adorned a section within the book of hours whose purpose, as described by Christine Mary Geisler Andrews, was "to reduce the time loved ones spent in purgatory."[2] They were thus books through which the living read and contemplated words to literally move the dead from purgation to heaven. The books were performative portals linking Christian reading practice with the movement of souls in the afterlife. By nature, this brought Books of Hours into the purview of dance – which through the medieval tradition that associated dance with cosmic movements – had long been indicative of human correspondence (in both senses of that term) with divine order. As written by Gregor Rohmann, "if cosmos was an eternal round-dance, then every communication between immanence and transcendence, every state of liminality in fact, could be described as a dance."[3] To read a relative out of purgatory, most certainly an act relating to a state of liminality, could through Rohmann's terms itself be described as dance, and the reader gazing upon *Danse Macabre* marginals thus described as a dancer looking upon the image of dance. This, in fact, is exactly how the *Danse Macabre* was composed to function – as a mirroring device in which the reader perceives herself by perceiving her likeness.

The widespread nature of such a practice is best exemplified by what we know of how printed Books of Hours in the 16th century were used and who owned them. Printed Books of Hours, and the Office of the Dead within them, were amongst the most common books produced in the late medieval period and were often the only book owned by middle class families.[4] Most importantly, evidence shows they were treated as family heirlooms passed down from one generation to the next on the promise that the inheritor would pray

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[2] Andrews, Christine, and Hindman, Sandra. *The Boucicaut Workshop and the Commercial Production of Books of Hours in Early Fifteenth-century Paris.* (PhD Diss., Northwestern University, 2006), 57.

[3] Rohmann, Gregor. "Dancing on the Threshold: A Cultural Concept for Conditions of Being Far from Salvation," *Contributions to the History of Concepts.* Volume 10, Issue 2 (Winter 2015): 69.

[4] Reinburg,Virginia. *French Books of Hours: Making an Archive of Prayer, C.1400-1600*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 84.

for the soul of the departed relative. In the majority of cases, acts of bequeathment were from elder to younger women.

Within the Office of the Dead, The *Danse Macabre* depicted an allegory well known by the beginning of the 16th century of figures of death pulling selected victims from each class of society away into a dance that takes them to the grave. Historically, the *Danse* depicted the victims dancing and including the text of their conversing with death about their demise. The *Danse Macabre* used the form of dance and its beginning-middle-end structure to comment on lifespan. As such, the *Danse Macabre* powerfully reiterated the metaphorical relationship between time-based art and lifespan by collapsing it: this particular dance ends with death.

The passage of Books of Hours through bequeathment, the purpose of the Office of the Dead within such books, and the operation of the *Danse Macabre* within the Office of the Dead worked at various scales to interact with the lifespan and mortality-consciousness of the religious reader. Altogether, bequeathment, imagistic operation, and contemplative reading coalesce the form, content, and usage of Books of Hours, and thereby address lifespan and mortality through a format of repeated encapsulation (images within marginals, marginals within office, office within book). Yet, perhaps the most stunning aspect of these books was their further usage to teach literacy. Just as the physical condition of lifespan necessitates the structures of pedagogy, the book of the 16th century most tied in form, use, and content to lifespan was an important 16th century reading primer.[5] The Book of Hours was thus multi-functional, but each of its functions was dependent upon the ways they were layered into others.

To take part in such mutli-layered functions, and performatively relate book and body, the *Danse Macabre* was retrofitted to the architecture of the page where it was constrained to the margins. All but one of the arrangements of bodies by which dance's choreographic forms were generally identifiable in imagery of the period were set aside. Only the coupling of bodies, and its vague indication of danced form, remained. No boisterousness of movement remained; the *Danse Macabre* in Books of Hours quieted the suggestion of dance movement to the quotidian act of walking. The *Danse Macabre*, in

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[5] Reinburg, Virginia. "Chapter 3: Prayer Book and Primer." *French Books of Hours: Making an archive of prayer c. 1400 - 1600.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 100-109.

such a state, became not only a suggestion of its former large-scale, muraled expressivity, it became a suggestion of dance itself.

In its displacement into literary form, the *Danse Macabre* thus expanded upon what had long been the nature of its tradition: to displace the meaning and performative possibilities of dance beyond its recognizable corporeal performance. By nature, by its very point, a dance of death could not be faithfully performed by living bodies. Death inhabits a threshold between tangible materiality, lived experience, and the invisible realms of the afterlife and divine. While conceptions of what exists beyond lived experience have long been translated into visibility by theological narratives and religious images, the experience of dying in the 15th century found its expression in word-and-image descriptions of a dance. In the 16th century, ideas of dancing related as much to cosmic movements and thus to the passing of time as to caroles and pavanes. And thus, it seems, the *Danse Macabre* capitalized on the underlying ambiguity of religious and philosophical conceptions of dancing that had given dance neither entirely to the human body, nor resolutely to the cosmic bodies and their measurement of time.

Figure 1-1. The *Theologa*.

From a Book of Hours printed by Yolande Bonhomme, 16th century.

1.1   The maker as measured in the made

The *Theologa* and her escorting figure of death were a part of a procession of 66 characters who form the *Danse Macabre* printed on the margins of the Office of the Dead in many Parisian Books of Hours in the 16th century.[6] As the *Danse Macabre* scholars Martin Hagstrøm and Ann T. Harrison have indicated, the figure of the *Theologa* is hard to figure out when compared to other figures in the marginal *Danse Macabre* of Books of

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[6] Chaney, Edward Frank. *La danse macabre des charniers des Saints Innocents à Paris*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1945), 7.

Hours. She was not a woman of the church, as "those roles were already taken by the abbess, the prioress, the Franciscan nun and the ordinary nun" which were represented with their own printed figures in *Danse Macabre* imagery.[7] Citing a mention of the women preaching at the Petit Pont in the part of the text 'spoken' by the *Theologa* in Guyot Marchant's *Danse Macabre* des Femmes (1486 and 1491), Harrison proposes that the *Theologa* is herself a public preacher. Other aspects of the *Theologa* particularly point toward her high status and learning—a late 15th century manuscript (B.N.fr. 995) shows her wearing a dress "in dark blue tinged with gold," the Petit Pont was in proximity to the intellectual Latin Quarter, and the book the *Theologa* holds in her hands "is the largest" of all those held by the women characters in the Danse.[8]

Parisian book publisher Yolande Bonhomme printed a particular marginal image of the *Theologa* in the midst of her dance with the figure of death (fig. 1-1) many times in the years when she directed the publishing house on the Rue St. Jacques "à l'enseigne de la Licorne" (under the sign of the unicorn) in the Latin Quarter of Paris between 1522 and 1557.[9] One could say the *Theologa* in this image is an approximate representation of Bonhomme – not of her particular personage – but of her social status as a woman printer of religious books in early-to-mid 16th century. Like Yolande Bonhomme in her publishing house, the *Theologa* played a somewhat ambiguous and unexpected role in the amongst the characters of which she was a part.[10] While scholars of early modern book culture continue to wonder how exactly guild law made an exception to the norm and allowed widows like Yolande Bonhomme to become the heads of publishing houses in the 16th century, scholars of late-medieval Macabre iconography remain unsettled about who exactly is that *Theologa* who breaks the norms of the women depicted in the *Danse*

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[7] Hagstrøm, Martin. "Marginal thinking: 04. The 66 dancers." *The Dance of Death, http://www.dodedans.com/Emargin04.htm.*

[8] Harrison, Ann T, and Hindman, Sandra. *The Danse Macabre of Women: Ms. Fr. 995 of the Bibliothèque Nationale* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State Univ. Press, 1994), 78.
It is notable, however, that Ms. Fr. 995 tends to dress women on middle class status in finer robes than they would have worn. Thus, the *Theologa*'s large book is better evidence of her status, as even with the advent of printed Books of Hours, few sold to the middle class would have been so large a size.

[9] Beech, Beatrice. "Yolande Bonhomme: A Renaissance Printer," *Medieval Prosopography* 6 (1985), 79 - 100.

[10] Hagstrøm, Martin. "Marginal Thinking: 04. The 66 Dancers," see: http://www.dodedans.com/Emargin04.htm.

Macabre.[11]   Bonhomme and the *Theologa* are women who have ascended to an atypical social status – and not only that – their atypical status is granted to them for ambiguous reasons. As such, both slip through the usual social structures by which historians have come to understand 16th century Parisian life, and thus bring us to question whether there is something historians don't know about the possible positions and powers of women in the period.

Bonhomme didn't herself commission the image of the *Theologa*, and she certainly didn't carve it. She inherited the metal-cut or woodcut for printing the image from her late husband Thielman Kerver, who had used it to produce many Books of Hours before his death in 1522. It seems that Bonhomme changed as little as possible of what Kerver's publishing house "under the sign of the unicorn" produced before he had passed away. The evidence doesn't show that Bonhomme printed this little image because she liked it or identified with it. The evidence shows merely that she printed it because she became responsible for a publishing house that needed to survive and she had it available.[12]

In an aim toward clarifying the *Theologa*'s identity, Hagstrøm pointed out how in different translations of printed Books of Hours, many of the women of the *Danse Macabre* whose occupations were ascribed to them directly in one language were identified as the wives of men holding those positions in another.[13] The French "Chevaliere," for example, became in Dutch "De Ridders Vrou," or the knight's wife. This is true for some other figures as well, including the Latin version of the merchant woman, *Mercatrix*, who became the merchant's wife in Dutch. But none of the translations of Kerver and Bonhomme's *Danse Macabre* gives further marital clarification to the *Theologa* (Latin), or *La Theologienne* (French). Her role is translated into *De Wise*, or wise woman in Dutch. Quite uniquely amongst the *Danse Macabre*'s female characters, in no language does the *Theologa*'s identity arise from her direct attachment to spouse or church. [14]

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[11] Scholars interested in *Danse Macabre* figures are not numerous. Ann T. Harrison and Martin Hagstrøm have both done commendable work on the iconography of the Danse Macabre.

[12] Beech, Beatrice. "Yolande Bonhomme: A Renaissance Printer," 79 - 100.

[13] Hagstrøm, Martin. "Marginal Thinking: 04. The 66 Dancers," see: http://www.dodedans.com/Emargin04.htm.

[14] Despite the confusion of some scholars around the idea of professional women in the 16th century, the poetry in Guyot Marchant's *Danse Macabre des Femmes* does identify most of the career women as themselves running their own businesses, suggesting that perhaps translations to Dutch or Latin from the

On its own terms, the *Theologa*'s translation into *De Wise* does make sense. As is well known of the period, wisdom, philosophy, and theological learning were not isolated pursuits, but inexorably linked, especially in the Latin Quarter of Paris. Education was facilitated primarily through study of the scriptures. Similarly, Yolande Bonhomme was herself an educated, religious woman of the Latin Quarter – a literate, savvy daughter of Pasquier Bonhomme, who was one of the most famous booksellers in Paris.[15] She grew up in the publishing business, which – from the time of her birth to the time of her death – produced by-and-large theological and liturgical books, and was both deeply connected to the Church and the University of Paris. The tiny figure of the *Theologa* thus stands out amongst the 66 *Danse Macabre* characters in the many Books of Hours produced under Bonhomme's watch as that which most meaningfully relates to the complex and unusual identity of its publisher: the educated woman, versed in theology, untethered from marriage, and working independently from the church while disseminating theological ideas.

Like the other characters of the *Danse Macabre*, the figure of the *Theologa* gave a deathly warning to those who looked upon her knowing they shared her social status. Under the figure of the *Theologa* in Yolande Bonhomme's Books of Hours, a statement is written: "Rimantem divina sua mors deicit hasta"— Death strikes down one's sacred examinations with a spear.[16] Guyot Marchant's 1486 printed work *Danse Macabre des Femmes*, and the Bibliothèque Nationale's manuscript 995 version of the *Danse Macabre*—both of which drew their texts from the Cimetière des Innocents—make this warning more explicitly related to the figure's social identity:

> A woman who speaks as a member of the clergy,
>   To have a following or to be listened to,
>   Is one of the codfish on the Petit Pont
>   Who have large eyes and see nothing.
>   Wise is one who sails smoothly around,

<div align="center">
And the one who wants to know too much is a noisy calf.

Rising high often costs dearly.

We are all blind in our own deeds.[17]
</div>

The *Danse Macabre*'s warning to women theologians is certainly clear—it is useless for them to share their own thoughts or ideas, and useless to attempt to interpret the word of God. Their thoughts are as mortal as they are, and they are blind to the meaning of their own actions.

For whatever reason, Bonhomme seems to have heeded that advice despite her position as a powerful businesswoman and producer of religious texts. Unlike so many other publishers in the period, Bonhomme never wrote anything of her own, or if she did, it was not saved for posterity. Her published books are left behind with nary a whiff of her independent intellectual or aesthetic tastes upon them. Bonhomme passed through 35 years a publisher of books and yet little can be said of how the produced works reflect Bonhomme herself. She did little to change the Books of Hours she produced from Kerver's earlier productions. If anything, the minor changes she made from book to book reflected the changing desires of clients.[18] Images for each Book of Hours she printed were by and large selected from amongst a collection carved by an unknown artist whose prints remain nonetheless the defining feature of the books published "under the sign of the unicorn."[19] Even now, numerous of Bonhomme's published works in libraries are listed under her

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[17] As translated by Ann Tuckey Harrison. Original text reads: "Femme qui de clergie respond/ Pour avoir bruit on quon lescoute/ Est des morues de petit pont/ Qui ont grans yeulx et ne voient goute/ Sage est qui rondement si boute/ Et qui trop veult savoir est beugle/ Le hault monter souvent cher couste/ Chascun en son fait est aveugle." Harrison, Anne Tuckey. *The Danse Macabre of Women* (Kent, Ohio U.a.: Kent State Univ. Press, 1994), 78.

[18] In her work, Reinburg discusses the receptiveness of those who published Books of Hours to the needs and desires of the public. "A printed Book of Hours could be almost as individually designed as shop-copy manuscript. From an array of wares in the bookseller's shops, owners chose books by liturgical use, materials, and illustration. They bought short devotional texts to bind with offices and prayers. Some owners paid extra to have a book's engravings painted by hand or illuminated." See: Reinburg, Virginia. *French Books of Hours: Making an archive of prayer c. 1400 - 1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 35.

[19] Zöhl, Caroline. "A Phenomenon of Parallel Reading in the Office of the Dead." *Mixed Metaphors: The Danse Macabre in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 325 - 360. Zöhl's essay points out that the anonymous metalcuts used in Kerver/Bonhomme Horae were based on metalcuts by Jean Pichore.

former husband Kerver, with whom the insignia for the "sign of the unicorn" is more readily identified.[20]

Save for her identity as a woman, Yolande Bonhomme might thus easily be considered an uninteresting figure in the history of publishing. Indeed, much research on the phenomenon of 16th century women printers in Paris tends to focus instead on the bold, humanist printer Charlotte Guillard who published many notable works.[21] Nonetheless, Bonhomme was for Guillard a close ally in business, and they collaborated on at least one publishing project.[22] Yet for historians (until now) Bonhomme doesn't shine. She never printed anything overtly intellectually exciting. By contrast with Guillard, who never in her career stooped to printing conventional Books of Hours, the Kerver/ Bonhomme publishing house remains best known for the printed Books of Hours it produced. Such books – authorless, common, and standardized – were a good source of income for publishers up until the mid-16th century but were by no means an earth-shattering contribution to theological study in the period. Books of Hours were instead the most prevalent type of book available. With the rise of print in the late-15th century, the printed Book of Hours had become an affordable bestseller – a strong departure from their previous identity as fine, handmade, profoundly expensive family heirlooms.[23]

To assess Bonhomme's contribution it thus becomes necessary to redefine the basis for determining it. Researchers whose work has passed over or discounted Bonhomme's contribution have tended to look for definitions of exceptionalism that by nature blind them to Bonhomme's contribution as a publisher of printed Books of Hours. In essence – the exceptional task of expanding readership was best pursued through common books. While

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[20] Amongst the many Bonhomme Books of Hours investigated in the British Library, Bibliotheque Nationale, and Staatsbibliothek, many did not even include a mention of Bonhomme on the page with the publisher's crest. Others mentioned that the book was printed by Kerver's widow, and a few listed Bonhomme's name.

[21] See: Jimenes, Rémi. *Charlotte Guillard: une femme imprimeur à la Renaissance* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2017); Beech, Beatrice. "Charlotte Guillard: a sixteenth-century business woman," in: Renaissance Quarterly; No. 36, 3 (Autumn 1983): 345-367; Jimenes, Rémi "Passeurs d'atelier: La transmission d'une librairie à Paris au XVIe siècle: le cas du Soleil d'Or", *Gens du livre et gens de lettres à la Renaissance*, (Turnhout : Brepols, 2014): 309-322 ; Jimenes, Rémi. *Charlotte Guillard au Soleil d'Or: une carrière typographique*. PhD Dissertation, Tours, Centre d'études supérieures de la Renaissance, 2014.

[22] Beech, Beatrice. "Charlotte Guillard: a sixteenth-century business woman," in: Renaissance Quarterly; No. 36, 3 (Autumn 1983: 345-367).

[23] Reinburg. *French Books of Hours*, 2012.

Bonhomme merely continued the publishing house left to her by her husband, rarely swaying from its previous aesthetics or mission, the Book of Hours was merely an amalgamation of the psalter and breviary, simplified for a general public that hungered to engage in monastic-style daily prayer.[24] The unoriginality of Bonhomme (in her work) and Books of Hours (in their content) was exactly what was needed to expand readership of printed books amongst the middle classes, including middle class women.[25] While acting as a tool for private worship, the Book of Hours also widely served as a reading primer.[26] It further became a middle-class family heirloom inscribed with the details of births and deaths and passed down through generations. By printing such books Yolande Bonhomme thus partook in the dissemination of a resource well suited to the larger expansion of readership in the 16th century.

1.1.1 Books of Hours and reading as a practice

To understand Yolande Bonhomme's contribution (and the signification of the *Theologa*), it is necessary to think about the operations performed by Books of Hours in the period. The production of Books of Hours was not driven by its respected authorship or new ideas but by the expanding idea of reading as a practice – like other physical practices – that demanded daily engagement. And while Books of Hours prescribed themselves as the tool with which to conduct the daily practice of reading and prayer, within their contents they reflected the human body and its physical labors back at the reader—likening and thus building correspondence between the labor of reading and all

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[24] As argued by Christine Mary Geisler Andrews in her 2006 dissertation, "The Beguines, communities of laywomen attached to monasteries in the Low Countries, first commissioned a prototype of the Book of Hours—known as the Psalter- Hours—in the early thirteenth century. The texts of Psalter-Hours were meant to aid the Beguines in their mission to emulate monastic life and to replicate the daily and yearly cycle of prayers recited by monks and nuns. By the mid-thirteenth century, the Book of Hours had taken shape and gained in popularity." See: Andrews, Christine. *The Boucicaut Workshop and the Commercial Production of Books of Hours in Early Fifteenth-century Paris*, PhD Dissertation, Northwestern University, 2006, ProQuest Dissertations 3230338.

[25] See: Erler, Mary and Maryanne Kowaleski. *Women and Power in the Middle Ages.* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988). The book involves various commentary on the special status of Books of Hours amongst women, especially in terms of literacy, education, and mother-daughter systems of bequeathment.

[26] Reinburg, *French Books of Hours*, 2012, 100 - 109. It is especially interesting to note that by the mid-16th century Yolande Bonhomme even began to include a page called "La Croix de par Dieu," which Reinburg describes: "The picture - like the work itself - was likely designed as a teaching aid for reading, prayer, and Christian doctrine." 107 - 108.

other labors and embodied practices common to the middle and lower classes of the late-medieval and early modern periods.

Despite the profound shift in the consumers of Books of Hours from the transition to print, in many ways the Books of Hours produced in early-to-mid 16th century Paris followed closely the design of the more illustrious manuscripts that preceded them. In their way, Books of Hours were an inexpensive imitation of the illuminated manuscript, and thus sought to replicate the more valuable vellum *Belles Heures* of elites so well-known and admired by that time. Against the grain of this assumption about cheap imitation, scholars like Virginia Reinburg have shown how some forms of iconography blossomed only within printed Books of Hours.[27] Notable amongst these are the *Danse Macabre* marginals that first appeared in Parisian Books of Hours in the late 15th century. Just as the printed Book of Hours expanded readership beyond elites to include the men, women, and children of the middle class, the *Danse Macabre* showed up in its pages—listing off in variations of 48 - 66 figures a full stratum of characters from the highest to lowest social status, including men, women, and children. The *Theologa* appeared as a character amongst these *Danse Macabre* marginals just in time to have her image published as that of a woman akin to what she represented.

Nevertheless, beyond the resemblance of social roles between the *Theologa* and her 'maker,' conditions of book production in the period reduce the possible connection between them to almost nothing. It is utterly plausible (and probably true) that Bonhomme's involvement in producing Books of Hours with *Danse Macabre* imagery was little more than a product of pragmatics and social habit. The research of scholars such as Rémi Jimenes further shows that publishers in the period, regardless as to their sex, worked as a part of deeply collaborative teams that crossed over various publishing houses.[28] By

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[27] Reinburg, Virginia. *French Books of Hours,* 2012. Reinburg's book is fascinating for its exploration of how printed Books of Hours were devised in response to their function as a tool of expand middle class readership. However, Reinburg pays almost no attention to the presence of Danse Macabre imagery in her informative book. This chapter thus serves to expand the scope of her work. See also: Mareel, Samuel. *The Aura of the Word in the Early Age of Print (1450-1600)* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 68. Mareel particularly discusses the ingenuity of architectural forms amongst printed Books of Hours: "Books of Hours assiduously explored the shared properties of typography and architecture. A catalyst in the transposition of devotional motifs from the book to the building was the ubiquitous analogy of literary composition with architectural design."

[28] Rémi Jimenez to Lindsey Drury, December 2016. Further corroborated by the dissertation research of Christine Andrews on the commercial production of Books of Hours. See: Andrews, Christine, and

the time the *Theologa* was produced under Bonhomme's proprietorship, the figure was profoundly removed from any relation to her maker or context of recognizable authorship. Furthermore, she existed in a kind of book that, as observed by Reinburg, "needed no author, because its authority rested on the liturgy."[29] The *Theologa* was a product of transmutations over time, she was a sifted content, a copy of a copy of a copy, within a book that "many scribes, artists, printers, booksellers, owners, and readers shared in fashioning" over time.[30] An official version of Books of Hours didn't emerge until the years between 1568 and 1571, following the Council of Trent."[31] Associated with the growing readership amongst women and the middle classes, after the Book of Hours were put to print they continued to evolve to fulfill the role they were playing as the first book for a new class of readers. To do so, the Book of Hours appropriated the kind of contemplative reading used for worship by a millennium of monks and re-worked that reading in relation to a network of recognizable images to suit the needs of the laity. Unhindered by authorship and standardized for use according to local patron saints and customs of worship, the printed Book of Hours became a work through which the middle class – despite limitations of literacy – could privately engage with the liturgy and incorporate daily offices of prayer into their lives. Such books didn't merely act as the conduit through which reading became available to the middle classes; such books became the bodies through which reading thus became embodied to them.

Within the Book of Hours, the *Danse Macabre* provided a blatant, easy-to-comprehend content that further facilitated the role of the printed Book of Hours. The *Danse Macabre* wasn't just a genre of images warning of impending death—it was a procession of images designed to operate as a pedagogical tool to influence readers toward self-reflective reading. As it had been since its earliest manifestations in wall paintings, the *Danse Macabre* was about mirroring. Many of the Parisian laity would have been familiar with its lessons. The earliest known *Danse Macabre* from the Cimetière des Innocents introduced itself with an authorial figure's words, "en ce miroer chascun peut lire/ Qui le

Hindman, Sandra. *The Boucicaut Workshop and the Commercial Production of Books of Hours in Early Fifteenth-century Paris*. (PhD Diss., Northwestern University, 2006).
[29] Reinburg, French Books of Hours, 2012, 18.
[30] Ibid, 15.
[31] Ibid, 19.

conuient ainsi danser./ Saige est celuy qui bien si mire."[32] Likewise, as written by Francis Eustace and Pamela M. King, within printed Books of Hours the *Danse Macabre* "used the universal language of the bodily experience of the dance to help the reader reflect."[33] Within the Book of Hours, the *Danse Macabre* fulfilled its function as a mirroring device to a degree that it never had before.

1.2 The marginal as measured by its predecessors

Figure 1-2. Danse Macabre mural at the Benedictine Abbaye de la Chaise Dieu, France.

Mid-15th century Danse Macabre mural at the Benedictine Abbaye de la Chaise Dieu. It is almost certainly the oldest Danse Macabre mural remaining in existence, Analysis of pigments and figures suggest that it may have been made by the same artist who created the original mural at the Cimètiere des Innocents (1424) though its estimated dating of

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[32] Danse macabre de Guyot Marchat, 7 June 1486, BnF, Res. Ye 189. Quoted in "Selected Texts" of Gertsman, Elina. *Dance of Death in the Middle Ages* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 221. Researcher Martin Hagstrøm further translates this as, "in this mirror everyone can read, that he will dance likewise. Sage is he who mirrors himself well." See: Hagstrøm, *The Dance of Death*, http://www.dodedans.com/Espejl.htm.

[33] Eustace, Francis and King, Pamela. "Dances of the Living and the Dead: A study of Danse macabre Imagery." *Mixed Metaphors: The Danse Macabre in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 44.

1470 makes that unlikely, The work's most recent conservator Didier Legrand believes that the artist may have purposefully left the mural in a state of incompletion,. The mural was painted outside the areas reserved for monks, demonstrating that visitors and pilgrims would have been given access to view it. The above information on the Danse Macabre Mural at Abbaye de la Chaise Dieu can be found on the website: http://abbaye-chaise-dieu.com/-La-danse-macabre-.html. Photo by author.

Figure 1-3. Figure of death dancing with the child, Abbaye de la Chaise Dieu.

Death dances in the Danse Macabre mural of Abbaye de la Chaise Dieu. In the midst of movement, Death bends over deeply, casting the direction of his dance toward the swaddled figure of a baby whose head is just visible in this image. His pose almost harkens to a game of peek-a-boo, as death hides his face. Photo by author.

Though a story of the immortality of Christian faith versus the mortality of the body, the *Danse Macabre* did not require those who gazed upon it to believe that when they died a skeletal figure would come and take them dancing away into their own graves. To lay the groundwork for personal reflection on the nature of death, the *Danse Macabre* simply presented dance as an allegory. The *Danse* thus processed death, codified it, and re-presented it as a performance that, as fiction, was first pictorially depicted and then reanimated in the imagination of the reader. The strategy of the *Danse* was not to distance Christians from facing the cold facts of death through the playfulness of dance. It existed instead to facilitate contemplation of one's own death by first providing a re-articulation of death through the performed act of dance.

Throughout its history, the *Danse Macabre* was a dance representing death within a written and/or imagistic representation of dance—a caricature of a caricature, a representation of representation— that thereby clearly announced its metaphorical status. The *Danse* could be analyzed from the outside for its intentions, could be reflected upon as a thing put to use both as a mirror and as a way to build awareness of the mirroring in which humans engage for viewers in their attempts to see and thus reflect upon themselves and their society. The *Danse Macabre* is thus but one example within a vast range of representational genres marked, much like theater, for a pedagogical function that operates regardless as to its ultimate status as fact or fiction. Considered in this way, it becomes clearer why the *Danse Macabre* was depicted as a dance at all. The *Danse Macabre* could point to itself as a mere choreography, and thus as a representational performance reflecting – though not itself attaining – profound resonance in the truth of death. As a choreography, the *Danse Macabre* could further present the story of death as a drama manifested by the problems of bodies, rhythm, and time.

Many historical explanations of the dance of death motif locate its origination in plagues.[34] Various historians attribute the 15th century rise of the *Danse Macabre* in art and poetry to the Black Death of 1348, the dancing plague of 1374, as well as processional and theatrical dance practices.[35] As expressed by John Aberth, in 1348, "the Great

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[34] Aberth, John. *The Black Death: The Great Mortality of 1348-1350: A Brief History with Documents (*New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 160-161.

[35] For investigations of the roots of *Danse Macabre* in medieval dance practices, see: Richard Axton, *European Drama of the Early Middle Ages*. London: Hutchinson, 1974, p. 58 ; Eustace, Frances with

Chronicle of France testifies to a dance performed in that year to ward off the plague."[36]

Yet, within 30 years, dance took shape as a plague of its own. Aberth describes possible

sources for the rise of *Danse Macabre* in 14th century performance and poetry,

> A German scholar claims that the Dominican convent of Würzburg was the
> first to produce a poem on the Dance of Death in 1350, but others believe
> that the French poet Jean le Fevre wrote the first one in 1376. By the end of
> the fourteenth century, the dance was being performed as a kind of morality
> play in parish churches, and later as secular entertainment.[37]

The forces of mutual implication that had brought the symbological power of dance into

the orbit of death in the middle ages are many and varied. For example, dance was

incorporated into death-watch rituals.[38] Tracing through such literature, the mid-20th

century scholar of dance medical and religious history, E. Louis Backman (almost singular

at that time in his field), described the various belief systems behind such rituals. Backman

included the unrestful ghostliness of suicides and the executed, ideas that the dead "sought

to recover the joys of living," and medieval beliefs that the dead danced in churchyards at

night.[39] Backman cites a 1428 manuscript *The Prophecy of the Sybil*, the 14th century priest

Heinrich von Nördlingen, and the 14th century mystic Henrik Suso to describe medieval

beliefs around how "Christ led the dance to the grave," as from it, in a choreographic ascent

to heaven.[40] Backmann argued how,

> the dance is protective, partly because it comforts the dead by the
> resurrection and the bliss which it illustrates and promises, and partly by the
> imitative dance of the angels which by its magic has the power to fend off
> the forces of the Underworld and to force the latter to give up their prey.
> Possibly the dance had this last-named faculty because it revealed

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Pamela M. King. "Dances of the Living and the Death: A Study of Danse Macabre Imagery within the
Context of Late-Medieval Dance Culture." *Mixed Metaphors: The Danse Macabre in Medieval and Early
Modern Europe*, Sophie Oosterwijk and Stefanie Knöll, ed.s. (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars
Publishing, 2011), 43-71.

[36] Aberth, John. *The Black Death: The Great Mortality of 1348-1350: A Brief History with Documents*
(New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 160.

[37] Aberth, John. *The Black Death,* 2005, 161.

[38] See, for example: Sautter, Cia. "Women, dance, death, and lament in medieval Span and the
Mediterranean: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim examples." *Death in Medieval Europe: Death Scripted and
Death Choreographed* (Joelle Rollo-Koster, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2017).

[39] Backman, E. Louis. *Religious Dances in the Christian Church and in Popular Medicine* (London: Allen
& Unwin, 1952), 146.

[40] Backman, *Religious Dances*, 151.

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something of the mystery of the divine creation, the wonderful harmony by which the created world is ruled and constructed.[41]

His argument thus turned toward Christian theoretics of cosmic order, despite the fact that, earlier in his text, he had argued against Otto Henne-Am-Rhyn's idea that "the dance of the dead represented the perpetual dance of the moving stars round the earth," saying dismissively that, "there is no need to show the fallacy of this interpretation."[42]

Medieval conceptions of divine harmony, however, were saturated in Platonic and neo-Platonic thought. As expressed by Rohmann, "Christian discourse on heavenly harmony and on the round-dance as mimesis of the spheres developed out of Pythagorean cosmology and late antique controversies on the legitimacy of dance as a means of religious communication."[43] However, Backman saw any such controversy in dance's alignment with the devil or with the godly as ultimately resolved in the medieval through the intricacies of divine imitation. Describing the clapping and other practices of death-watch dancing, Backman related them to "homeopathic-apotropaic magic; that is to say, one does just what the demons do… the demons were often thought to imitate divine actions: just as the angels dance, so also the demons dance," and thus, as well, could congregants partake in the economy of imitation through dancing.[44] In the words of James L. Miller, "since the human composite of body and soul – like all else constructed by the Craftsman – was a harmonious structure … man too could hope to participate in the choral dance of the gods. Not permanently, of course, for the human body was destined to disintegrate at death."[45]

Backman further articulated the churchyard death-watch dances as predecessors to the *Danse Macabre*. He connected them in two ways. First, he related the poetry of *Danse Macabre* to the song-based incantations for churchyard death-watches. Such "incantationes; that is to say, readings, conjurations, magic formulae," were, according to Backman, protections against the dead and encouragement for them to move on.[46] Second,

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[41] Backman, *Religious Dances*, 154.

[42] Backman, *Religious Dances*, 146.

[43] Rohmann, Gregor. "Dancing on the Threshold: A Cultural Concept for Conditions of Being Far from Salvation," *Contributions to the History of Concepts.* Volume 10, Issue 2 (Winter 2015): 56.

[44] Backman, *Religious Dances*, 142.

[45] Miller, James L. Measures of Wisdom: The Cosmic Dance in Classical and Christian Antiquity (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 31.

[46] Backman, *Religious Dances*, 142.

Backman argued that churchyard death-watches and *Danse Macabre* shared in their revealing of divine harmony through dance:

> In the Dance of Death is found the peculiar suggestion that the living themselves dance toward their own death. To die is to dance; death is a wedding dance; one dances in death towards the bridegroom; one is conducted by Christ, the Virgin Mary and the dancing host of angels through death to Paradise. All these ideas are a part of late medieval mysticism.[47]

In Backman's view, the religious operation of dance was multiplicit – repurposed, rearticulated, and thus shifted by each of the sources and all forms of enactment. Through the vast variety of differences, however, Backman always saw all such variations as pointing toward a unified medieval conception for the purpose and meaning of dance. Rohmann, on the other hand, sees dance in the Middle Ages as indicative of an unsolved internal conflict in meaning,

> On the one hand, the believer was supposed to comprehend himself spiritually as a member of the eternal round dance and to aspire to become such in his afterlife. On the other, bodily expression as earthly practice was more and more associated with moral damnability and with Satan. The consequence was not a clear-cut denegation but a manifold and always contested adaptation of dance within the medieval Western church.[48]

The conflict in meaning Rohmann articulates is one between conception and execution, and it is precisely along those lines that the *Danse Macabre* fractures performativity from conceptualization. In becoming a visual and textual source, the *Danse Macabre* swapped the venue of its performance from the exterior to the interior – from the churchyard to the sanctuary resident within the body itself.[49] In becoming a visual art and poetic form, the *Danse Macabre* ultimately shifted the physical act of death dancing from outward dancing to reflective contemplation.

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[47] Backman, *Religious Dances*, 151.

[48] Rohmann, Gregor. "Dancing on the Threshold: A Cultural Concept for Conditions of Being Far from Salvation," 58.

[49] This general trend is well documented amongst medieval scholars. For example: "Christian theology locates sacred place beyond church walls in a new locus …The three major bodies of the Middle Ages were the human body, the social body, and the body of Christ." See: Hayes, Dawn Marie. *Body and Sacred Place in Medieval Europe, 1100-1389* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 7.

1.2.1 From Ritual to Mural

Figure 1-4. Close-up of *Danse Macabre* Mural in Simon Marmion's painting.

Scene Della Vita di San Bertino, 1459, presently at the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin. From Wikimedia Commons.

The original form of the *Danse Macabre* as visual and poetic media is still debated. It is generally agreed, however, that the first work integrating the *Danse Macabre* poem with corresponding images was a fresco painted across the southern cloister of the Cimetière des Innocents in Paris, completed in 1425.[50] It was later demolished in a project

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[50] As noted by Martin Hagstrøm, this is evidenced by chronicle sources. See: Hagstrøm, *The Dance of Death*, http://www.dodedans.com/Eparis-innocents.htm. A 1729 publication of 15th century chronicles include two entries on the dance: "Item, l'an 1424. fut faite la Dance maratre [sic] aux Innocens, & fut commencée environ le moys d'Aoust, & achevée en Karesme ensuivant." The chronicle also mentions that a friar spoke with his back turned to the mural: "le dos tourné vers les Charniers encontre la Charronnerie à l'endroit de la Dance macabre." See: De La Barre, Louis Francois Joseph. *Memoires pour servir à l'histoire de France et de Bourgogne* (Paris: chez Julien-Michel Gandouin, quay de Conty, aux trois Vertus. Et Pierre-François Giffart, ruë saint Jacques, à l'Image sainte Therese, 1729), 103, 119-120.

to broaden a road. As a part of extensive work on various European expressions of the Dance of Death, the historian Martin Hagstrøm took pains to prove that, despite conflicting sources, "the witness of the Clairambault manuscript and the historian Henri Sauval makes it clear that the mural remained on the wall until it was demolished in 1669."[51]

In part by citing Simon Marmion's St. Bertin Altarpiece (fig. 1-4) which in its background depicts a few spectators investigating the dance of death painted across the walls of a cloister, Elina Gertsman in her book *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages* (2010) surmised how the 15th-century *Danse Macabre* mural "was received by its contemporary audience" in a performative manner.[52] There has been much speculation amongst scholars as to why the *Danse Macabre* transitioned from walls to books to then all but disappear. For her part, Gertsman connected the end of the performative *Danse* not in its movement from body to mural, but in its transference from mural to book-form, where it could not have the vivacity and power it had held in monumental wall paintings. Gertsman focused on Hans Holbein's 1538 *Danse Macabre*-based images as exemplary of the de-somatization of the *Danse Macabre* in printed books, arguing that Holbein's images broke the performative feedback loop between viewer, image, and text that had formerly allowed the *Danse Macabre* to hold such power over its viewers. In Holbein's work, "the reader / viewer becomes a spectator rather than a participant," Gertsman wrote.[53] For Gertsman, the de-somatization of the dance was also indicative of a shift between late medieval and early modern periods in the way art works interfaced with the public:

> Whatever transformations the Dance of Death underwent in the late Middle Ages, and whether it appeared in a majestic Benedictine Abbey or in a humble parish church, a city graveyard or a monastic cloister, a small village or a large urban center, the Danse Macabre required physical

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[51] Martin Hagstrøm's writings are only to be found on his extensive website historicizing and providing close analysis of various Dances of Death and their textual sources. See: http://www.dodedans.com/Eparis-date.htm

[52] Gertsman, Elina. *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages: Image, Text, Performance* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 163.

[53] Ibid., 180.
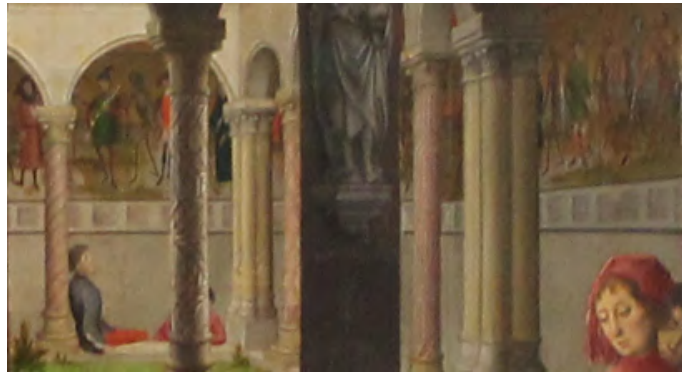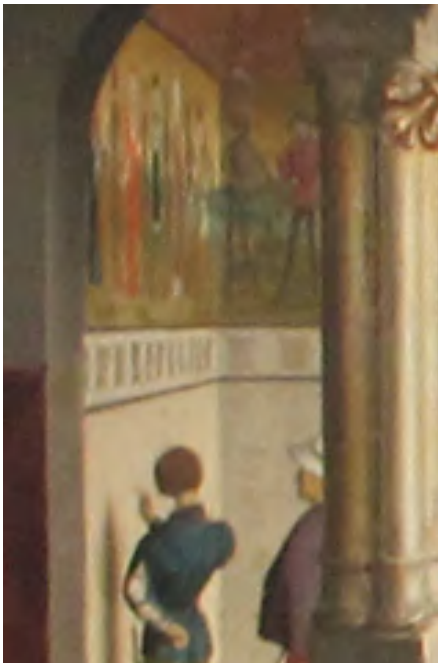
Figure 1-5 (top). Simon Marmion's altarpiece Scenes from the *Life of St Bertin*.
Figure 1-6 (bottom left). *Danse Macabre* in the background and its contemplators.
Figure 1-7 (bottom right). *Danse Macabre* mural along two walls.

The second of two paintings composing Simon Marmion's altarpiece Scenes from the Life of St Bertin (1459). The painting is held at the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin. Image from Wikimedia Commons.

involvement from its viewers, and demanded somatic participation. This kind of participation was destined to slowly ebb away and be replaced by very different patterns of viewing in the early-modern era.[54]

Using Holbein's early modern printed book as an exemplar of what caused the shift in viewing practices that marked the transition between the two periods, Gertsman concluded her book by reiterating the notion that the wall painting alone could be identified as somatic:

> The medieval *Danse of Death* points to the role of fifteenth-century wall paintings and panels in the shaping of the late-medieval practices of viewing, which, fundamentally somatic, included seeing, reading, and hearing. It also indicates interaction between the viewing community, the spoken and written word, the image, and finally, the space within which this image is meant to be viewed. In fusing visual, theological, literary, folkloric, and dramatic traditions, the Dance of Death paintings demanded a kinesthetic mode of looking, offering beholders a foretaste of their last performance, a glimpse of their final dance.[55]

In the end of her monograph, Gertsman made a point to reiterate the notion that – as has been remembered by one of the reviewers of Gertsman's work – when Dance of Death moved into the space of printed books, "what was once punctuated by live performance and corporeal confrontation began to recede into disembodied engagement and private contemplation."[56] However, private contemplation, as was facilitated by 16th century religious contemplation of printed books, was by no means disembodied. The creation of *Danse Macabre* imagery shifted from walls to pages in an era that was newly expanding on the already-present medieval challenge to external expressions religious practice.

Religious practice of the medieval period that sought to configure sanctity within conceptions of embodiment expanded with the rise of print culture to further install such sanctity within the written word.[57] The printing press had shifted religious discourses to the cheaper medium of paper, monastic reading practices had slipped the confines of abbeys and monasteries, and the book of hours became the bestselling printed book. The

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[54] Gerstman, Elina. *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages*, 159.

[55] Gerstman, Elina. *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages*, 180.

[56] Dickason, Kathryn. "Review of The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages: Image, Text, Performance." *Dance Research Journal*, Volume 44, Issue 2 (January 2012): 103-109.

[57] Mareel, Samuel. *The Aura of the Word in the Early Age of Print (1450-1600)* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

Danse Macabre moved from wall to page precisely when the page was rising as a central construct for the embodied practice of the Christian faith amongst the widest net of adherents. In this transition, the *Danse Macabre* did not become an indicator of the disembodiment which the rise of early modernism inflicted upon the embodied religiosity of the middle ages. If anything, the *Danse Macabre's* move to the page indicates its participation in the interiorization of embodied religious practice. The somatic, as defined by Thomas Hanna, is the 1st person experience of embodiment.[58] If considered as such, the possibility that the interiorization of embodied religious practice that emerged with the rise of early modernism, rather than to disembody, served instead to deeply and complexly re-embody religious practice within the somatic interior through the interface of the printed book. The notion of contemplative reading practice as embodied experience was not at all foreign to the 16th century. Indeed, such ideas had by the 16th century been cultivated through centuries of monastic investigation into the relationship between embodiment and practice.[59]

There are many wall paintings similar to that depicted in Simon Marmion's altarpiece (fig.s, 1-4, 1-5, 1-6, 1-7) recorded across Europe – in various churches within a hundred kilometers of Paris, as well as in Basel, Strasbourg, Copenhagen, Heidelberg, Berlin, and Lübeck, amongst other cities.[60] Most such images were originally painted within churches and Cathedrals, and many were painted in the mid-15th century, within a few decades of the Paris original. Linked in a circle dance or 'carole', the depicted characters in each of these wall paintings were nonetheless given their own interaction with death through the movement of the viewer. The experience of death as a spiritual journey determined by ethics in life thus permeated the *Danse Macabre* as it had not only many other *Macabre* forms, but many expressions of death before it.

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[58] Hanna, Thomas. "What is Somatics?" *Somatics: Magazine-Journal of the Bodily Arts and Sciences*, Volume V, No. 4, (Spring-Summer 1986).

[59] See, for example: Brantley, Jessica. *Reading in the wilderness: private devotion and public performance in late medieval* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007) ; Gayk, Shannon and Kathleen Tonry (ed.s). *Form and reform: reading across the fifteenth century* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State Univ. Press, 2011) ; Williams, Drid. Anthropology and the Dance: Ten Lectures (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

[60] Kurtz, Leonard Paul. *The Dance of Death and the Macabre Spirit in European Literature* (Genève: Slatkine, 1975). Reprinted from the New York: Columbia University Press, 1934 edition. See also: Williams, Drid. "Religious and Quasi-religious Explanations." *Anthropology and the Dance: Ten Lectures* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 84-103.

Walking the length of the walls, readers seeking to take in the poetic lines written below the corresponding dancers would consequently give each participant their own moment to express their passing to death in words. With its combination of the linked circle dance and poetic commentary, *Danse Macabre* wall paintings thus depicted each participant's dual experience of the dance—while each was represented in a shared experience of dancing the measured, rhythmic time that organized the social structure of the choreographed dance, each dancer was portrayed through language as progressing toward the inevitable abrupt ending to the dance – and thus their life – independently of the others. The *Danse Macabre* of wall paintings thus compositionally foregrounded two simple truths about death itself: (1) that all humans share in it as a part of the overarching rhythm of lifespan and time, and (2) that death nonetheless takes each human individually. Despite the extent to which death connects all living beings, each living being – owing to the constraints of embodiment itself – dies the death of dying alone.

1.2.2 From Mural to Book

Over the vast number of variations in *Danse Macabre* imagery, two central logics hold in most of its depictions: (1) The living figures are coupled with dancing corpses in a procession danced mutually by the living and the dead, and (2) The living are ordered according to their social rank. There were thus generally two kinds of alternation present (with some exceptions): that between the living and the dead, and that between the ecclesiastical and the secular amongst the living. In contrast with the organization of the living by social standing and profession, the dead of course had no such social structure. They are all equally dead; they are rendered equals by dying. *Danse Macabre* imagery aimed to make a point of that very fact from its earliest known depiction (1424) at the Cimetière des Innocents. Scholars generally argue that the poetry written below the figures in the dance was transcribed in manuscripts and in the printed work of Guyot Marchant following after the original text from the Cimetière.[61] It begins the *Danse* with the words of an authorial figure who blatantly states,

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[61] See: Wijsman, Hanno. "La Danse macabre du cimetière des Saints-Innocents et un manuscrit de Philippe le Bon," *Douzième congrès international d'études sur les Danses macabres et l'art macabre en* general.

<div align="center">

Neither for nobility nor honor
Nor wealth nor poverty
Nor high estate
Nor beggarliness
Will Death renounce equality.[62]

</div>

On the one hand the *Danse* could represent the whole of society by including a breadth of its archetypes in procession, but on the other hand the figures of death, equalized, without status, could simultaneously depict the erasure of status in death.

There is general agreement in *Danse Macabre* scholarship that the procession of dancers from all social ranks means, as claimed by Martin Hagstrøm, that the dance is "a mirror for society" which thus seeks to include a wide net of representations for social roles.[63] Viewers in their contemplation of that societal mirror could thus gaze upon their own representative, contextualized within the larger human march toward death. To accomplish both a societal mirroring and personal reflection, the *Danse* had to bifurcate its operation: it had to create enough social roles to both represent the social body, allow any viewer could find a rough representation of him or herself, and it had to contextualize each of those social roles within a representation of a societal whole engaged in a singular choreography. The dance allowed each viewer to zoom in on a particular figure and zoom out to see that figure's placement within what could be called a larger social choreography, which, organized in sequence of highest-to-lowest, was in its initial depictions at once a circle dance and a horizontal re-visualization of the body politic.

Transmutations in the *Danse Macabre* from mural to in print-form resulted in an increase in female figures included in the dance. First in 1486, and again in 1491 Guyot Marchant created versions of the *Danse Macabre des Femmes* with images and text for women just as printing was expanding book culture toward the use of women and the middle classes in the late 15th century. The *Danse Macabre des Femmes* was, within a few

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Gent: Gand, (21-24 Septembre 2005), Meslay-le-Grenet Association Danses Macabres d'Europe,Vol. I, (2005): 135-1442.

[62] As translated by Ann Tuckey Harrison. Original text reads: Pour nobles ne pour honneur/ Pour richesses ou povrete/ Pour porter estat de valleur/ Our du tout de mendiate/ Ne dissere mort equite." Harrison, Anne Tuckey. *The danse macabre of women: Ms. fr. 995 of the Bibliothèque Nationale* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State Univ. Press, 1994), 50.

[63] Adherents to this idea include Elina Gertsman, Martin Hagstrøm, Caroline Zöhl and others. See: Hagstrøm, *The Dance of Death,* http://www.dodedans.com/Espejl.htm.

years, incorporated into *Danse Macabre* marginals in Books of Hours, further supporting the notion that the *Danse Macabre*'s figures changed and developed in line with the intention to provide readers a rough counterpart for themselves in the *Danse*. It is interesting to note that, as marginal art, the *Danse Macabre* was re-staged in a much more vertical fashion – a set-up that ultimately reworked the *Danse Macabre* to resemble the pagination of the book, and thus the reader's experience of the isolation of the running narrative of religious text into the paginated state of the Book of Hours.

Women were minimally included in *Danse Macabre* murals. Incorporation of the peasantry and secular figures into imagery in churches was itself unusual, and it seems women were primarily left out of this development. Furthermore, evidence points to the idea that *Danse Macabre* murals were related to the *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts* fable (dating back as far as the 13ᵗʰ century) and its imagistic depiction in religious buildings and texts. The 'three living and three dead' was a medieval narrative that was popularized across much of Europe. It told of a discussion on mortality, regret, and choices between three young men and three corpses (who were in some cases identified as three dead kings). As a descendent of previous *Memento Mori* formulations, the *Danse Macabre* was perhaps conditioned by the male-centric nature of preceding death-narratives. However, unlike the Cimetière des Innocents, not all Danse Macabre murals showed exclusively men. Gertsman, for example, identified two women amongst the figures in mural at the Abbaye de la Chaise Dieu – the Canoness and the Religious Woman or Nun, though other conflicting identification of these figures has been made.[64]

For their part, *Danse Macabre* marginals mostly split the figures of men and the figures of women apart from each other in the Books of Hours. However, Thielmann Kerver and Yolande Bonhomme interspersed some men amongst the women dancers in their marginals, an uncommon choice for *Danse Macabre* imagery in printed Books of Hours. The Kerver/Bonhomme printing house basically followed the typical descendance from the highest position amongst the men (the Pope) to the lowest (at the Abbaye, the lowest were the swaddled child followed by the lay brother or monk, whereas in

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[64] Gertsman, Elina. *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages,* 2010, 130. Information sheets at the Abbaye label these as the Canon and the lady courtier. In the work of Achille Iubinal & Anatole de Planhol (1841), they were instead identified as the canon and La Moniale Bénédictine (identifiable as female).

Bonhomme's procession the lowest is the Hermit). Kerver/Bonhomme followed this with an ordering of women from the Queen to the Fool (who is apparently female, *La Sotte*). As with the alternation of the living and the dead, the descending order of social status amongst men usually coupled with an alternating pattern between ecclesiastical and secular figures. This rule is basically followed in both Abbaye de la Chaise Dieu and in Kerver/Bonhomme marginal *Danse Macabre* prints. In the case of the Kerver/Bonhomme women's dance, however, this ecclesiastical/secular alternation was disturbed in the ordering of figures.

In addition to the inclusion of a women's dance, there is a primary difference between how *Danse Macabre* wall paintings were generally designed and how the *Danse Macabre* was generally transferred to book form. This is of course the size of the *Danse Macabre* images. When transposed to books, such images could never attain the monumental expanse of *Danse Macabre* wall paintings, that much is sure. Perhaps this difference can be more meaningfully investigated, however, if it is considered in terms of how the *Danse Macabre* was more generally reworked to fit the structure of books. The *Danse Macabre*, divided to follow the pagination of books, ceased to be expressed as a horizontal procession. Its mural images, which showed dancers as all linked in procession, was in book now expressed as a series of dancers all, in one way or another, framed distinctly both by visual representation and the form of the page. In both marginal art and at least one early manuscript, each character was isolated from all but their deathly partner.[65] The cohesion of the dance was attained by the cohesion of the book, the rhythm of movement was attained by the rhythms of reading, of turning pages, and of the ways in which the Book and its Hours was connected to times of day through its division of the day into times of prayer.[66] In part, such rhythms were related to whether the Book of Hours was being read aloud or in private—both of which were done at the time.[67] Despite this

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[65] Harrison, Anne Tuckey. *The Danse Macabre of Women*.

[66] Stein, Wendy A. "The Book of Hours: A Medieval Bestseller." In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, June 2017), http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/hour/hd_hour.htm.

[67] Further research on methods for reading the Book of Hours has been primarily investigated as case studies that may (or may not) speak toward a 'holistic' approach to reading such books in various linguistic and cultural contexts in the period. For an idea as to the reading practices of women with manuscript Books of Hours in the middle ages (which may have conditioned later use), see, for example: Goldberg, Jeremy and Pat Cullum. "How Margaret Blackburn Taught Her Daughters: Reading Devotional Instruction in a Book of Hours." In *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain*, Jocelyn Wogan-

obvious difference in form and the fact that it was conditioned by a shift in embodied practices of worship toward monastic-style reading, Gertsman has argued that the reduction in size and the tendency of some printed works away from the expressive act of dancing de-somaticized the experience of the dance—an argument, as earlier stated, that Gertsman rooted in her analysis of Hans Holbein's *Les simulachres et historiées faces de la mort* (1538). Gertsman specifically points to Holbein's images in printed books to argue that the performative engagement facilitated by wall paintings is lost when moved to the page.
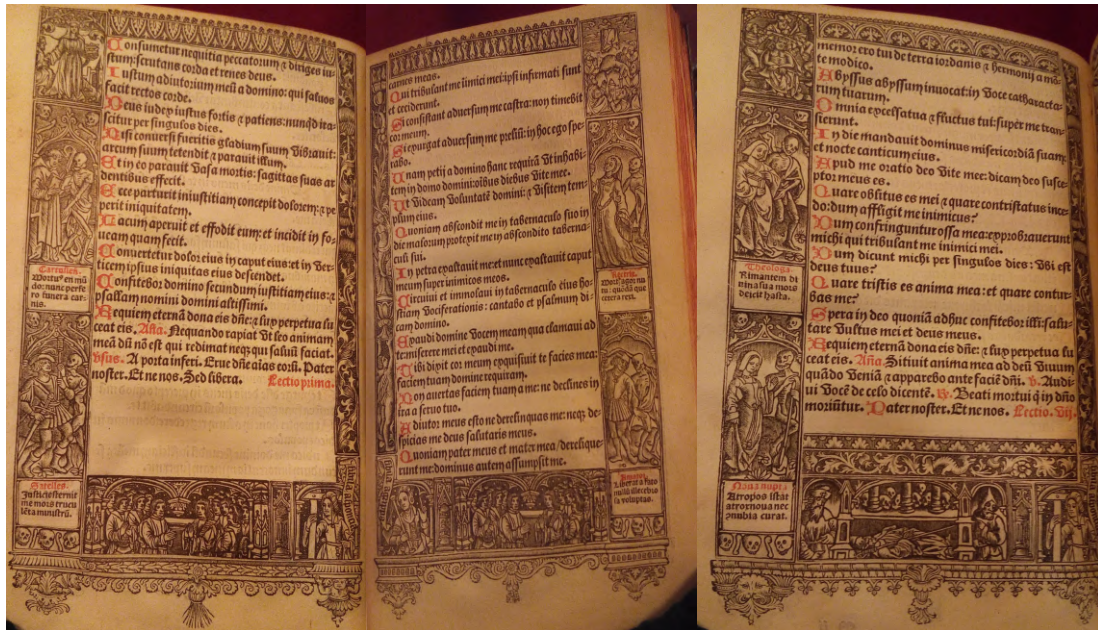
Figure 1-8 (left). A page from the *Danse Macabre* men's dance.
Figure 1-9 (center). A page from the *Danse Macabre* mixed-gender page.
Figure 1-10 (right). A page from the *Danse Macabre* women's dance.

Fig. 1-8 includes the Carthusian and Sergeant, fig. 1-9 includes the Woman Ruler and male Lover, and fig. 1-10 the Theologa and Newlywed. From Ces presentes Heures a lusaige de Paris [et Incipiunt Commendationes defunctorum] (Latin), 1525 / 1524 Bbliothèque Nationale de France listed date. Published by Yolande Bonhomme. Photographed by the author, Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Gertsman described how, for example, the characters in Holbein's work no longer gaze back in the direction of the viewer, and how their engulfed state removes them from

Browne, Roaslynn Voaden, Arlyn Diamond, Ann Hutchison, Carol Meale and Lesley Johnson, eds (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2000), 217-236.

direct encounter with the viewer.[68] As the dancing that once explicitly connected all the figures in one performative act was replaced with depictions of the vastly different labors of quotidian life, Gertsman further sees the allegorical status of the *Danse* and its relatable power as a fable as lost. Gertsman thus sees the somatic and somatic experience of the *Danse Macabre* as precisely conditioned by its being explicitly life-size, explicitly looking back at its viewers, and explicitly dancing.

However, if a consideration is to be made of the *Danse Macabre*'s somatic engagement with viewers, Holbein's *Les simulachres et historiées faces de la mort* does not make sense as a representative of the *Danse Macabre*'s larger transition from wall to page. The Book of Hours and the church wall were both religious structures designed with religious practice in mind, a fact that cannot be extended to Holbein's *Les simulachres et historiées faces de la mort*. Though Gertsman marks the *Danse Macabre*'s transition to print as a force which "tamed" the *Danse*, I would argue instead that, while Gertsman was justified in defining *Danse Macabre* wall paintings as "fundamentally somatic," *Danse Macabre* in Books of Hours didn't tame the somatic experience of the dance but moved it in all its intensity toward internalization by relating it to the broadening of monastic ritual reading practice.[69] Gertsman's argument further confounds somatic experience with the forces by which externality is achieved – large size, confrontational manner – but such a perspective denies, for example, the somatic power of meditative, attentive, and attuned experience. Because the *Danse Macabre* was related to the internalization of piety in Books of Hours, the *Danse* was re-configured in its somatic relation to provide a metaphor in dance for the meditative methods of the 16th century that were expanding to the laity. In so doing, the *Danse Macabre* in Books of Hours was explicitly pointing to the idea that one deals with death in a performative manner.

The move of the *Danse Macabre* to Books of Hours not only speaks to the larger trends in religious practice of the period that partook in facilitating the expansion of reading; it related the performativity of death to the act of reading as well. The *Danse Macabre* in Books of Hours did so by relating the problematized performativity of death

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[68] Gertsman, Elina. The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages, 2010, 179.

[69] Gertsman, Elina. "Epilogue: Taming the Dance of Death." *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages*, 2010, 163 - 180.

as a dance with the internal performative act of reading as a solution. Research on medieval and early modern systems of bequeathment support the idea that Books of Hours were passed down in families following promises that inheritors of the books would pray for the souls of those who entrusted the books. Visualizing the dance while reading the Office of the Dead became a means not only to prepare for death, but simultaneously to perform ancestors out of purgation and into heaven through prayer and meditation on their behalf. The core performative idea presented in the *Danse Macabre* was a universal inability gracefully to accept death, and that idea was consistently presented in all the *Danse Macabre*'s expressions, which never presented a character within its dancing ranks who was truly capable of the moral obligation to accept their own death. To that premise, the Book of Hours provided a performative solution that addressed such a universal problem with the forces of love and family relation. The idea was deeply founded in funeral practices that operated to take care of the deaths of loved ones through post-mortem obligations to their souls. Seeing the *Danse Macabre* and its presence in Books of Hours in this way, it becomes apparent how the earlier mural-format was not so much upended by the later book-based one as responded to, addressed, and thus related to a larger field of religious practice which treated the book as a cross-body medium linking generations through the dancerly performance of death and the contemplative performance of reading.

Heð superest meritis merceðem sumere ðignam Optima pio meritis. et ðiciosa pati
Aspice iudicium) hoc metuenðum : iuðice tanto Qui vocat. et Venit illa timenða ðies

Figure 1-11. *La Pucelle Vierge* followed by *La Theologienne.*

From Guyot Marchant's La Grande Danse Macabre des Femmes (1491). Photo from BNF Gallica.

1.3   The Danse Macabre as measured by the page

The arrival of the *Danse Macabre* into its use in Books of Hours was, in fact, the journey of an image from the cemetery to the Office of the Dead. This means that the *Danse Macabre* moved from the physical site of funerals to a literary site composed of the words read at funerals. First, the *Danse Macabre* emerged in printed books in the work of Guyot Marchant in 1485, which directly copied the fresco at Paris's Cimetière des Innocents.[70] By 1486, Marchant had added the women's dance (fig. 1-11). Following after Marchant's

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[70] David Fein, describing Marchant's duplication of the cemetery murals in book-form, writes, "Although the contribution of Marchant's book to the spread of the *danse macabre* throughout Western Europe during the next few decades cannot be clearly delineated, the transformation of the murals into a portable version can only have accelerated the popularity of these images and their accompanying text." See: Fein, David. "Text and Image Mirror Play in Guyot Marchant's 1485 Danse Macabre," *Neophilologus,* Vol. 98 (2014): 225–239. Quote from pgs. 225-226.

transposition of the *Danse Macabre* to the textual form, marginals of the *Danse* in printed Books of Hours followed Marchant's formulas for character organization and the poses of bodies. Befitting Gertsman's critique of book-based *Danse Macabre*, Books of Hours marginals literally marginalized the presence of dance. Following Holbein and Marchant's images to their logical conclusion, *Danse Macabre* marginals marginalized the visible expression of dance while nonetheless suggesting dance through the less dancerly motifs of symbolic objects and gestures that had also been present in murals.

The most significant alterations to the *Danse Macabre* in its transition to marginals in printed Books of Hours was not only the total dissolution of the procession into framed fragments (though there had been earlier framing devices, such as painted architectural features like columns dividing the dance), but also (a) the near complete removal of dance-like gesture, and (b) the removal of the accompanying poetic text (that had been present in both mural-form and Marchant's book).[71] As most of the signifiers of dance had been edited out of *Danse Macabre* marginals, the meaning behind them could not be conveyed unless readers had an exterior reference point through which to know and understand what the *Danse Macabre* meant. Changes to the *Danse* in Books of Hours were perhaps not merely aesthetic; they could have served two pedagogical functions for readers. First, such changes reiterated the internalization of somatic experience necessitated by the physical practice of reading the Book of Hours as a form of prayer. Second, the deconstruction of the *Danse* into separate, framed, vertically-oriented marginals required readers mentally to piece it back together into horizontal procession, just as the physical act of reading necessitated that one piece together threads of meaning that traverse the distinct pages of books. The *Danse Macabre* treated the layout of the book as an abstraction of time's flow in reality and reiterated the abstraction within itself (and within the frame of each page). In its marginal state, the *Danse Macabre* spoke as much to the performative act of reading that was core to the text as it harkened to the history of *Memento Mori* imagery and its place in religious contemplation of death.

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[71] As written by Fein, "Running beneath the frescoes was a poem, providing a dialogue between the figures of each panel." See: Fein, "Text and Image Mirror Play in Guyot Marchant's 1485 Danse Macabre," 226.

Figure 1-12 (left). *La Theologiene* in Guillaume Godard's Books of Hours.
Figure 1-13 (center). *Theologa* in Kerver/Bonhomme Books of Hours.
Figure 1-14 (right). *La Theologiene* in Simon Vostre's Books of Hours.

Three versions of La Theologiene/Theologa from early 16th century Parisian Books of Hours. Each printer maintained variations on a similar theme, printing these images of the Theologa in the many editions of Books of Hours printed in the first half of the 16ᵗʰ century.

By the time the *Danse Macabre* arrived in Books of Hours, its identification as 'a dance' was facilitated by its previous horizontal depiction in murals. This is because, similar to many representations of dancing in the medieval period, the most important motif that served actually to represent dance in *Danse Macabre* in its expression in wall paintings was how procession was depicted. Bodies were linked by physical connections such as handholding and gestural similarity to reinforce the idea of procession. Dances were performed in groups in the period, and so recognizable formations of bodies were more important to the representation of dance in visual art than was the codification of gestural behaviors amongst dancers. The most recognizable and certainly most heavily used formation was that of the circle dance, which many *Danse Macabre* wall paintings implied if not directly represented in their arrangement on walls.[72] The suggested arrangement of

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[72] There are many examples of Danse Macabre wall paintings that encircle spaces within churches, and further examples of wall paintings that—though they run along linearly across an expanse of wall, nonetheless include architectural reference points, etc. to clarify the circularity of the dance. Two

bodies in *Danse Macabre* murals made as much use of architectural spaces as of familiar dance motions to indicate recognizable choreographies in the period. Further, murals of the *Danse Macabre*, like images in Guyot Marchant's late 15th-century printed books, also tended to show more gross body movements than did the marginals, especially for the death figures which had often been the more expressive partners in the *Danse Macabre*. The reduction in expressivity can be seen, for example, amongst the images in Kerver/Bonhomme's publications (fig. 1-13). While in the three marginals the death figure's pose amongst Godard, Vostre, and Bonhomme don't outshine that of the *Theologa*, in Guyot Marchant's 1491 *Danse Macabre des Femmes* (fig. 1-11)*,* the death figures take up most of the space in the scene with their large movements.[73]

Regardless as to this difference between Marchant's *Danse Macabre des Femmes* and the later marginals, the common format for ordering the bodies of the *Danse Macabre* that emerged amongst Parisian publishers of printed Books of Hours was basically adapted from the processions of men and women in Marchant's works— 30 male figures and 36 women dancing in duets with the dead. This 66-figure procession in printed Books of Hours was one of the most exhaustive ever created amongst *Danse Macabre* processions.[74] Simon Vostre may have printed the first of these *Danse Macabre* marginals, with what would become a somewhat standardized procession. His work was followed by other Parisian printers on the Rue St. Jacques, including the Kerver / Bonhomme establishment. The included characters, their arrangement and the actual images were generally quite similar amongst an array of Parisian printed books, with a few important exceptions: the publisher Guillaume Godard, for example, varied the number of figures. Godard included 48 in total – 24 men and 24 women.

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interesting examples include the Totentanzen of Marienkirche in Lübeck and Berlin. Martin Hagstrøm points out that the city of Lübeck appears twice in the background of the dance, thus showing the dancers are circling. The dance in Berlin is organized around Jesus on the cross, shows half the participants facing away from Jesus. Hagstrøm speculates that this is because all the dancers circle around the Jesus who hangs in the middle. See Hartmut Freytag's *Der Totentanz der Marienkirche in Lübeck und der Nikolaikirche in Reval* & *Der Berliner Totentanz zu St. Marien* by Peter Walther.

[73] Marchant, Guyot. *La danse macabre des femmes* (Paris: Monographie imprimée par Guyot Marchant, 1491).

[74] The wall painting of Marienkirche in Lübeck had 24 characters, Berlin 28, Basel 43 (if Adam and Eve aren't included), 40 in the wall painting at the Cimetière des Innocents in Paris, 34 at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, following the text from the Cimetière des Innocents as translated by Lydgate. These are but a few of a great number of wall paintings, in all of these the number of living figures range from the low 20s to the 40s.

It is noteworthy that each frame for the *Danse Macabre* from Guyot Marchant's publication encloses groups of 2 dancers and 2 dead per page, within architectural frames. This perhaps mimicked how the *Danse Macabre* was presented on the wall of the Cemetière des Innocents. Yet, within Books of Hours this same frame was reduced to enclose singular duets. It is interesting to question why the *Danse Macabre*, so noteworthy for its horizontal sprawl across the walls of churches, would be altered so drastically to fit vertical space on the page.
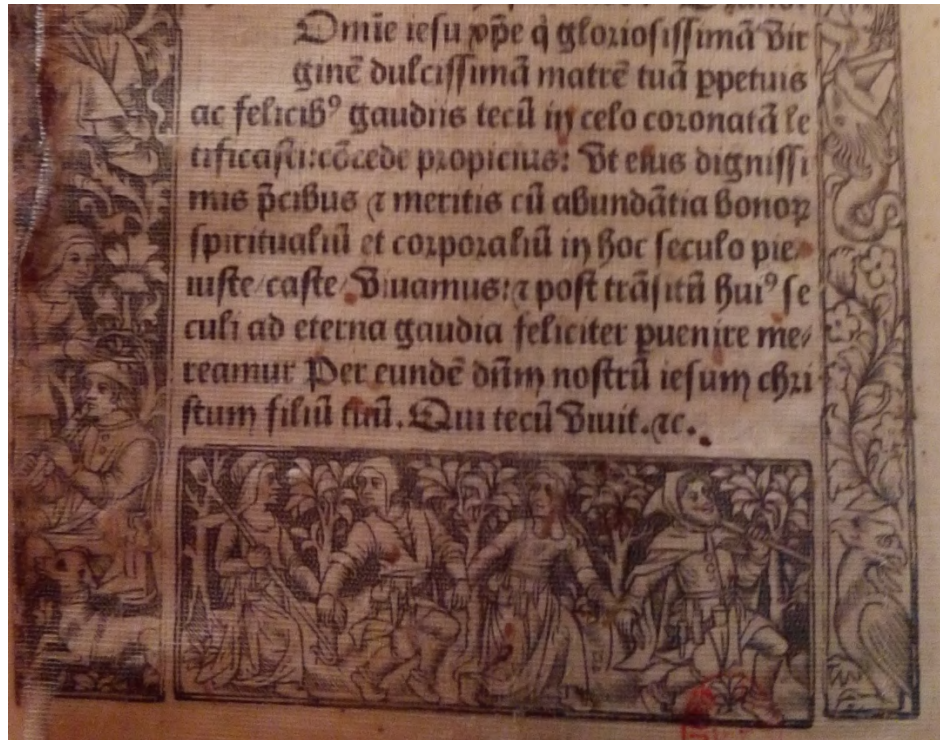
Figure 1-15. Horizontal dance from a Thielman Kerver scrap (1501).

A remaining fragment of a 1501 book of hours published by Kerver shows a horizontal procession of dancers, alternating men and women. Bibliothèque Nationale Res. B. 9065. Photo by the author.

Earlier designs involving dance in Books of Hours maintained its expression as procession across the bottom of the page, for example, as an early Kerver scrap shows. (fig. 1-15). The reconfiguration of *Danse Macabre* into vertical marginals severed any direct visual

semblance of danced procession in order to gain similarity to the book-form and its pagination. By consequence, gross movement had to be minimized. The narrowing of the frame narrowed poses as well, and further required that the bodies of the dead were overlaid with their victims to minimize horizontal sprawl. Unlike the *Danse Macabre* murals before them, Books of Hours thus brought the dead and their resisting, unwilling victims into a greater intimacy of body-contact.

Other alterations in pose between Marchant's work and the marginals provide further interest: the positions of death and the *Theologa* in all three marginals (fig.s 1-12, 1-13, 1-14) infers that death perhaps holds the elbow of the *Theologa* in one hand. It is clear in the Godard and Vostre versions that he pulls forward on her robes with the other. In the Kerver/Bonhomme, death reaches toward her robes without (yet) touching them. In all three marginals—the *Theologa* points with her index finger toward her book, though again in the Kerver/Bonhomme version she is on her way to completing the action; as with death's reach toward her robe, her own gesture is en-route. The noticeable difference between the expressivity of the death figure's body and the poised, almost motionless understatement of the Theologienne's body in the Marchant publication has disappeared in the marginals.

Death and the *Theologa* are both very active, though their activity shows up as gestural minutiae. The Godard and Kerver/Bonhomme versions pose her in a more resistant state; in them her body ever so slightly recedes backward, and her chin is lowered as if she is stubbornly resisting the forward pull of the death figure. The Kerver/Bonhomme image reinforces her resistance with a tilting head and rotated torso—it is as if she is about to pull away from death by turning toward her free side. In the Godard and Vostre versions, the exposed shoulder of the death figure is lifted and shifted forward, thus implying its participation in physically straining to pull the *Theologa* forward, while in the Kerver/Bonhomme, the folds in the *Theologa*'s robe that sweep upward and back reiterate her backward resistance. Even her pointing finger, aimed toward the book, also points backward, as if she resists death's movement through her relationship to the book itself. In each of the various *Theologa* marginals, death seems to be trudging forward with its victim in a close grasp; the split in its robes exposes its pose, frozen in the image as if mid-walk.

Holding one elbow near her side, and with the other involved in pulling her book back from the dancing corpse grasping her hand, the Theologienne from Marchant's printed work (fig. 1-11) nonetheless holds an expression almost indifferent to her presence in the *Danse*. She seems to be standing still, her chest is slightly popped forward in a pose suggesting absence of fear, and she almost smiles. Though she holds her book, she doesn't gesture toward it. Her hand is raised in death's clasp, and her robes sweep forward toward the action. Both La Theologienne and La Pucelle Vierge on the page seem to lean into the action from the waist while their upper and lower bodies lean away from it. However, there is nothing in the dancing situation to suggest that this lean responds to how they are being pulled forward by the death figures. The leaning of weight in their standing positions suggests instead that their weight distribution is of their own volition, as if we see them right in the moment before their bodies must respond to the forward trajectory of the dance they find themselves within.

By considering the presence of pose and gesture in marginals, it becomes possible to see how tiny details that differentiate the *Danse Macabre* marginals from their Marchant predecessor further work to translate the poetic language that once accompanied *Danse Macabre* images into pose and gesture. Without a conversation between death and the *Theologa* in words, there remains a conversation between their bodies. They do so not by bringing the body into the large, expressive movements one might associate with an image of dancing, but by relegating meaning into the smallest of gestures and shifts of weight, thereby channeling into images of pedestrian movement the very ancient idea—extending back to Lucian— of dance as a gestural language.[75] The Latin phrases at the base of the Kerver/Bonhomme marginals were not necessarily the words of the death character, but instead commented on the scenario from the exterior. The *Theologa*'s "death strikes down one's sacred examinations with a spear," is a good example of this. Further, there was no requirement for innovation amongst *Danse Macabre* marginals. The language of gesture and its symbolic encoding had already been profoundly developed by medieval visual artists for wall paintings, stained glass, and illumination arts. Medieval visual art forms already treated gesture and the posing of bodies in a highly encoded and thus dancerly,

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[75] Harmon, A.M. (trans). *Lucian Vol V.* (Cambridge: Loeb Classical Library of the Harvard University Press, 1972).

deeply choreographic fashion.[76] The transformation of the *Danse Macabre* into its marginal form thus highlights the flexibility of the idea of dancing within its representational forms. In other words, the *Danse Macabre* didn't need to show an act of dancing to be considered a dance in Books of Hours. On many levels, the *Danse Macabre* instead exemplifies the flexibility through which images could establish dance as metaphor. Within Books of Hours, that flexibility extends even to the idea of the *Danse Macabre* as metaphorical to the act of reading the book itself.

Readers of Books of Hours were given the task of imaginatively fitting the isolated *Danse Macabre* duets back together in procession, and of relating the characters and their pose and gesture within the *Danse* to the words of the Office of the Dead framed by the marginals. Caroline Zöhl has called this "a phenomenon of parallel reading," between images and their placement in the Office of the Dead, which was incidentally the section of the Book of Hours most notable for its heavy inclusion of images.[77] *Danse Macabre* marginals can be understood as miniature pages within the pages of Books of Hours—each a framed, isolated fragment of a whole. Like the pages of the book itself, the framed Macabre marginals could only be pieced together into their meaning in entirety by carefully moving through the sequence. Thus, the reader of the Office of the Dead followed a pagination not only determined by the feuilles of the book. The pages of the *Danse Macabre* ran vertically down each of the books feuilles, in series of 2 or 3 (fig.s 1-12, 1-13, 1-14). The process by which reading accumulated words into their meaningful whole over the course of different pages is a movement process that bridges the isolated frames of particular pages. The organization of *Danse Macabre* marginals makes sense as a choreographic tool to inform this process imagistically.[78] As Gertsman pointed out in her research on *Danse Macabre* wall paintings, the movement of the viewer through the space

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[76] For more on the symbolism of body and pose in medieval art, see, for example: Stein, Wendy A. *How to Read Medieval Art* (New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art distributed by Yale University Press, 2016).

[77] "Taken in their totality, the miniatures that mark the beginning of the Office of the Dead are the most iconographically varied of all those that appear in Books of Hours." See: Wieck, Roger S. "Office of the Dead." *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life*. (New York: Braziller, 2001), 124 ; Zöhl, Caroline. "A Phenomenon of Parallel Reading in the Office of the Dead." *Mixed Metaphors: The Danse Macabre in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 325 - 360.

[78] Considered in this way, the Danse Macabre operates on the page as a 'meta' version of what W.J.T. Mitchell called the 'imagetext.' See: Mitchell, W.J.T. *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation.* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994).

over time to see the entirety of the wall brought that viewer into a performative, somatic relationship to the paintings. In that case, architecture determined both the layout of the image and the movement of the viewer. The same is true of the reader's relationship to the *Danse Macabre* in the Book of Hours. The architecture of a book is of course vastly different than a wall, and so it is necessary to reconceive of the reader's movement-based relationship to the *Danse*. The *Danse Macabre* marginals challenge the reader to see embodiment and movement across the divisions of pagination, and to use the act of moving their eyes from framed image to framed image to move through the dance procession. *Danse Macabre* marginals thus model the practice of reading. Each page is thus literally and metaphorically a piece of a dance. To see the whole dance, one must turn the page.

1.4   Reflected Bodies: Mirrors and Mirroring in and around the *Danse Macabre*

Figure 1-16 (left). Bonhomme Marginal: Young woman (bottom) to old woman (top).
Figure 1-17 (center). Bonhomme Marginal: Young woman (top) to skeleton (bottom).
Figure 1-18 (right). Bonhomme Marginal: Kerver/Bonhomme crest (top) and young woman's body with skeletal head (bottom).

(Previous page): Three vertical refractions. Vertical marginals like these, which Bonhomme used in her Books of Hours between 1522 - 1557, operate in a way much akin to the Danse Macabre by relating the body of a young woman to the aging and death process. Note how in the middle marginal death touches its hand to the bottom of the globe where the young woman rests her feet. A clock-like form is above her. The connection between young and old is reversed in the first marginal—the young woman is the root of the old woman. In the last marginal in this group, the Kerver crest is placed overhead of the amalgamation of death with the young woman.

The idea of the *Danse Macabre* as a mirror arises not only from the relation between figure and witness, but in an essential point made by the very images that compose the *Danse*: that the bodies of the dead—the corpses—though they are different from the living, nonetheless mirror back to them the very destiny that lays in wait for their own bodies. This is why death is portrayed as a dancing corpse—death personified and mobilized in action is death made like us. This mirror exists within the *Danse* itself, where it mirrors the mirroring act between figure and witness in the mirroring between social figure and dead figure. The argument for the *Danse Macabre* as a mirror thus rests not only upon the mutual identifiability between its societal figures and witnesses, but also upon the fact that human bodies are recognizably similar to dead corpses. Through one's representative, and through the mirroring between representative and corpse, one finds the further inferred mirror between the corpse and one's own living body. The death figure in the *Danse Macabre* is a figure that has been anthropomorphized so that it too can shine its mirror through its dance partner upon us, the external witnesses of the dance. More formally, however, one could identify the *Danse Macabre* with medieval speculum literature, a genre of literature emerging from medieval encyclopedic impulses.[79] Some speculum literature (like *Speculum Stultorum*) shared in the *Danse*'s satirical nature and dependence upon

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[79] Franklin-Brown, Mary. *Reading the World: Encyclopedic Writing in the Scholastic Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 273.

archetypal figures.[80] The image of the authorial figure at the beginning of Marchant's 1486 *Danse Macabre and 1491 Danse Macabre de Femmes*, which purportedly drew directly from the Cimetière des Innocents, also resembles a portrait from the *Speculum Historiale* of its author Vincent of Beauvais in a copy translated to French by Jean de Vignay between 1478-1480 (fig. 1-20).[81]

Figure 1-19 (left). The Authority from the *La Danse Macabre des Femmes* (1491).
Figure 1-20 (right). Portrait of Vincent of Beauvais from *Speculum Historiale*.

A Study in likeness: There are many such images of the authorial figure at his desk in medieval manuscript and early modern texts. As written by Sarah Blake McHam, "the placement of an author portrait at the beginning of the text had its roots in the classical tradition and survived into the Middle Ages, where it was used exclusively to honor the evangelists and major theologians and their connection to God. Typically, these Christian authorities are shown writing at their desks, often responding to divine

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[80] Floyd, Harvey LeRoy. *Nigel's Speculum stultorum: a study in literary influences*, PhD Dissertation (Ann Arbor, MI: Vanderbilt University Microfilms, 1969).

[81] Beauvais, Vincent of, translated by Jean de Vignay. *Le miroir historial* (a French translation of the Speculum historiale), Books 1-5. Royal MS 14 E I vol 1, British Library (Royal 14 E. i, vol. 1, f. 3r).

inspiration."[82] Fig. 1-19, photo by Martin Hagstrøm, Fig. 1-20, Wikimedia Commons (text held at the British Library).

There is, however, one problem with 'mirroring' model for relationship between the printed Book of Hours and its reader: though such books produced at the advent of print's 'age of mechanical reproduction,' were modeled after illuminated Books of Hours and were very much in the vein of works of art, they nonetheless were not considered fine works of craftsmanship. They were depersonalized and unoriginal to the degree that customers who wished to customize their texts had to choose from a number of prefabricated options. Whereas in illuminated manuscripts medieval illuminators would include portraits of the commissioners in the guise of biblical figures in manuscript Books of Hours, that kind of vanity exercise in reader-to-content mirroring did not exist in printed versions.[83] The ethic of modesty in the printed Book of Hours was driven, in part, by the pragmatic reality of the printed book as mechanical reproduction. Middle class readers who purchased printed Books of Hours in the late 15th and early 16th centuries did not expect to find their own artfully produced likeness carefully painted into it. Regardless of their standardization, however, printed Books of Hours were for private prayer practices, and as such, needed to enter into highly personal relationships with their owners. Amongst other imagistic and structural strategies in these printed books, the *Danse Macabre* emerged within marginal art as a uniquely capable of providing an explicit variety of social roles with which their readers could identify. The usage of the *Danse Macabre* form attests to the idea that the concept of identity was artistically addressed for the laity as an extension of social role and the practices it entails. Furthermore, Bonhomme's Books of Hours networked images from the *Danse Macabre* with other expressions of embodiment and physical practice in her printed books. Acts of mirroring thus existed not only between the

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[82] McHam, Sarah Blake. "Chapter 4: Erudition on Display: The 'Scientific' Illustrationos in Pico della Mirandola's Manuscript of Pliny the Elder's National History." *Visualizing Medieval Medicine and Natural History, 1200–1550,* Jean A. Givens, Karen M. Reeds, Alain Touwaide, ed.s. (New York: Routledge, 2006).

[83] "Portraits of the owners of Books of Hours also appear among the illuminations, sometimes as family portraits. This too reflects a developing sense of individuality among wealthy Europeans, as does the more realistic, individualized portraiture that was increasingly appearing on tombs." See: Poos. Lawrence R. "Social History and the Book of Hours." *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life* (New York: Braziller, 2001), 35.

image and the reader, but between the images themselves. Thus, intimacy with a standardized, depersonalized book could be forged not only through role-based identification and practices such as prayer, but through personal contemplation of its images and their various connections. One became connected with one's imagistic counterpart because one's imagistic counterpart was already connected with other imagistic counterparts in turn. As presented by the *Danse Macabre*, identity was thus always a networked factor – for images and people alike.

Printed Books of Hours show a deepening complexity to the layers of mirroring in the *Danse Macabre*. The physical mirroring in the *Danse Macabre* in printed Books of Hours is that between a reader and their social archetype as represented in the *Danse* (as with Bonhomme and the *Theologa*), and printed books show the most diversified set of middle-class characters amongst all *Danse Macabres*. Such books were therefore well constructed to represent the by-and-large middle-class identities of their readers. With the Book of Hours in hand, the middle class reader experienced the modesty of their reading experience not only through the privacy of home-based and internalized reading, but through their own book as an affordable replica, and their own identity as replicated and replicatable within it. Such a modesty was not so much about privacy and difference as it was materially expressed as a shared state.

The relation of women and their shared status to this shift is clear. From the last decade of the 15th century, *Danse Macabre* in printed Books of Hours and their more nuanced representation of social strata included a greater diversity not only of middle-class characters, than ever before, but explicitly represented and engaged with wide classes of women to a greater degree. This change demanded a shift in what social mirroring meant, as not all women's roles could be directly reduced to occupation. With characters like the old woman, pregnant woman, young girl, beloved wife, and others, the *Danse* also included a greater number of roles not related directly to status but to phase of life. Through the inclusion of such characters, the women's section of the procession thus re-emphasized that readerly reflection could be based on idea that death can come at any time, which was an idea previously most linked in wall paintings to the infant.[84] The women's dance

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[84] It is important to note as well what Anne Tuckey Harrison pointed out concerning the *Danse* of women—that the women's dance also emphasized vanity and greed. As Harrison described it, the *Danse* of

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emphasized its point to match the focus of the men's dance on the idea that death annihilates discrepancies of wealth, honor, and privilege. Nonetheless, the trick in the mirror of the *Danse Macabre* is that, by first finding the likeness of oneself amongst the characters, one can be led toward recognizing the fallibility of that character's difference from all others. The *Danse Macabre* is a bait and switch—in the end it aims to disturb the very social basis by which viewers are drawn into identifying with it. The *Danse Macabre*'s ultimate logic is therefore that any death of any person foretells of your own. Through the *Danse Macabre*, printed Books of Hours thus more explicitly pointed to the idea that the private experiences of contemplative practice and death itself are shared.

Beyond its use of characterization and social roles to relate to the reader, there are a great number of ways in which the *Danse Macabre* played with and depicted mirroring between the characters within itself. Through this mirroring between figures, the reader would have been able to see her representative's similitude to the death figure she dances with. As earlier described, in *Danse Macabre* marginals the figures of death and victim are often in some kind of vague physical mirroring state to enforce this idea. Within the Kerver/Bonhomme marginals, this shows up most intensely in gazes and directions of attention. The victim and death figure are either reflecting each other's gazes or reflecting each other's direction of gaze. Their bodies are quite often turned in the same direction as well. Their poses don't suggest that they're moving in the same way, but instead that for better or worse they're moving together, and that their movements together are physically derived from the fact that they are partnered through the dance as through processes of life and death universally shared.

This is quite opposed to the relationship between the living and the dead in earlier wall paintings. In her monograph on the subject, Gertsman investigated the opposed dancing styles often depicted between the living and the dead. Using Bernt Notke's painting of the *Danse* from Lubeck, Gertsman pointed out that while the deathly figures danced wildly and expressively, their living counterparts were involved in executing a much more demure dance even as they were clutched in the grasp of the dancing skeletons.

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women was produced in a time with many negative ideas about women, and thus Marchant's version had an especially critical humor. See: Harrison, Anne Tuckey. *The danse macabre of women*.

Gertsman and others have analyzed this as a complex commentary that frames class as much as death as a thing that moves to still the body. As Gertsman writes,

> The contrast between Death and the living is thus primarily a contrast of movement. The difference in kinds of movement depicted suggests that the living are executing a different kind of dance from their morbid partners: whereas the former are performing an aristocratic bassa danza, characterised by measured steps and controlled gestures, the latter are affecting a kind of a peasant dance, plebeian and therefore immoral.[85]

But just Gertsman labels the dancing style of the deathly skeletons in the *Danse Macabre* as marked by their lowness of class and immorality, the figures of death are nonetheless the voice of morality within the painting. As Gertsman points out, the death figures speak to admonish the living for their foolishness. This they do, again and again, by clarifying to the living that death eradicates difference of class—amassed wealth, prestige, and power cannot follow one into the grave. In other words, to die is to become a part of a universal plebiscite.

Books of Hours present the deathly figures in a much more intimate, private scenario with their victims. It is as if the marginals mimic the intimate, private scenario that arose in the early modern period more and more as the state of reading. The death figures are often in a level of proximity or contact with their victims that would have never been allowed in aristocratic dances. In the marginals of the *Theologa*, for example (fig.s 1-12, 1-13, and 1-14), the bodies of the *Theologa* and death are intimately posed in a somewhat synchronized manner. Even with the resistance given death by the *Theologa*, the harmonization of their duet is palpable. This soft, inexact refraction of pose between the living and the dead in the *Danse Macabre* echoes the often-present imperfect synchronization of bodies in images of the *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts*, which accompanied the *Danse* in Marchant's work and was also often found in the Office of the Dead. As described by Sophie Oosterwijk, "the Legend of the Three Living and the three Dead is an obvious parallel to the *Danse* in presenting a dialogue between the dead and the living, who are often shown as each others' mirror images."[86] In Kerver/Bonhomme Books of

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[85] Gertsman, Elina, *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages*, 65.

[86] Oosterwijk, Sophie. "Dance, Dialogue and Duality in the Medieval Danse Macabre." In *Mixed Metaphors: The Danse Macabre in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 23. Oosterwijk further cites Christine Kralik's essay, "Dialogue and Violence in Medieval Illuminations of the Three Living and the Three Dead" within the same volume.

Hours, the *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts* provided the image at the start of the Office of the Dead, just before the *Danse Macabre*. The image is perhaps the most famous from the Kerver/Bonhomme Books of Hours (fig.s 1-21, 1-22).

With the *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts*, the *Danse Macabre* is given its first and most easily witnessed similitude. It is not surprising—the *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts* had accompanied the *Danse Macabre* as well in Marchant's earlier publications. The fable extends deeper into history than the *Danse Macabre*—manuscripts with images of the *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts* existed in the late 13th century.[87] According to Christine Kralik, who wrote on the *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts* in *Ends of the Body* (2013), "several courtly compendia contain the story of the *Three Living and the Three Dead* in French verse, accompanied by an illumination that presents the young men and the corpses in two groups as though in conversation."[88]

The Kerver/Bonhomme print of the *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts* (fig. 1-22, below), like the Kerver/Bonhomme *Danse Macabre* marginals, displays vague synchronization between the bodies of the dead and the living. The fable itself constructs the basis for this— it is, of course, three hunters who meet three death figures in the woods. The numbers of bodies provides the basis for further synchronization. In the Kerver/Bonhomme image, it is notable that though hand gestures are different amongst the three living and the three dead, body position is, in fact, mirrored. The pattern isn't replicated but inverted—in the true mirroring fashion—so that the character with his back turned is on the outside of both pages. Hand gestures, though different, allude to one another slightly while reflecting different emotional responses. The middle death figure actively points his left arm inward toward the action while the middle hunter reaches the same arm up in surprise, with a palm

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[87] See: Christine Kralik, "Death is not the End: 'The Three Living and the Three Dead' in the Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I," in *The Ends of the Body: Community and Identity in Medieval Culture*, ed. Suzanne Conklin Akbari and Jill Ross (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 61–85. Kralik cites the following as examples of this: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Fr. 25566 (fol. 217r, 218r and 223v), MS Fr. 378 (fol. 1r and 7v), and MS Arsenal 3142 (fol. 311v). For Paris, BNF, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal 3142, fol. 311v, see H. Martin, *Catalogue des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal III*, Paris, 1887, 256–64. For BNF, MS Fr. 378, fol. 1r and 7v, see BNF, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Françaises*, vol. 1, Paris, 1868, 32. For BNF, MS Fr. 25566, fols. 217r, 218r, 223v, see BNF, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Françaises* vol. 13, Paris, 1868, 647–50.

[88] Kralik, Christine "Death is not the End: 'The Three Living and the Three Dead' in the Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy and Maximilian I," 61.

Figure 1-21. *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts* printed by Yolande Bonhomme (1556).

From Heures a lusage de Paris, toutes au long sans rien requerir. Paris: Yolande Bonhomme, 1556. Photographed by the author at: Staatsbibliothek – Unter den Linden Rara- und Musik-Lesesaal. Printed book.
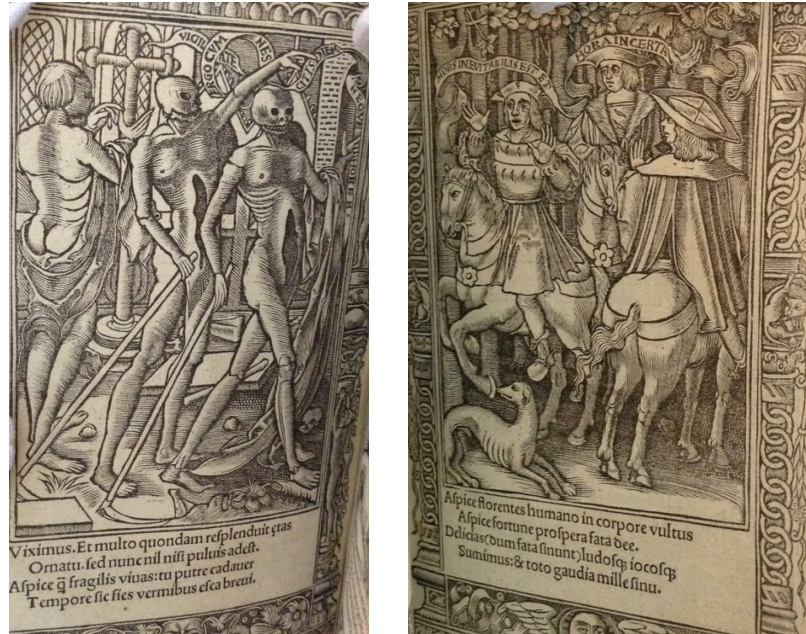
Figure 1-22. *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts* printed by Yolande Bonhomme (1531).

From Hore deipare virginis marie secundum usum Romanum. Paris: Yolande Bonhomme, 1531. Photographed by the author at the British Library.

opening slightly away. And while the inside death figure, in mid stride, holds a staff in one hand and seems to gesture with his open palm at the hunters with the other, the inside hunter holds up both open palms in surprise, and his horse, though not in mid-gait, is in the midst of rearing. The outside death figure gestures with his inside hand as if to grasp a cross behind him, while the inside hand of the exterior hunter, who likewise has his back turned to the viewed, is also raised. While the death figures carry gestures expressing their advance, the hunters are in positions of surprise and defense—as if themselves the hunted. By consequence, the mirroring between Vifs and Morts further provides a basis for comparison and contrast for an external viewer—subtle differences between movements are more sharply clarified if the general shape of the movements is similar. Such inexact synchronizations—this near-mirroring between the bodies of the living and the dead— serves to express an underlying dilemma: though through fear and unwillingness the living express their discordance with the dead, their bodies nonetheless harmonize with the bodies

of the dead. The repulsion against death merely serves to reinforce it. In an ironically choreographic way, the living who reject death are sculpted to its machinations by so doing.

Eustace and King connect such forms of mirroring between death and its living partners to the concept of kinesthetic empathy, writing of the *Danse Macabre* that "there are examples of empathy in the dyads."[89] Eustace and King contextualize their notion of empathy with simple examples of mirroring in everyday life: how people "'fall into step' with each other" while walking somewhere while talking. Eustace and King extend this concept of kinesthetic empathy to dance by giving an example of a toddler learning to communicate, in part, by mirroring and being mirrored by its caretakers in expressive acts of dance:

> As soon as the human infant achieves a stable upright posture it expresses the desire to dance. It is initially a solitary activity, but just as the first smile is mirrored back by the primary carer so do the infant's first efforts at dancing elicit a response from those around it, and immediately dance is established as a form of communication. It seems to be an inherent capability of homo erectus to communicate through body movement and to 'entrain' to each other's rhythms.[90]

The notion of the baby dancing by mirroring movements allows Eustace and King to justify the presence of dancing in the *Danse Macabre*. In a way, their theoretical approach draws from the idea that the pedagogy of dance, like the pedagogy of the *Danse Macabre*, stems from mirroring between bodies.

Yet their argument, perhaps accidentally, recalls Jacques Lacan's problematic 1936 conception of "the mirror stage" to mind, which similarly relates the development of the child to the experience of the mirroring—though in this case it is the child deducing the individuation of his or her own body by discovering him or herself in the mirror.[91] Lacan's notion of the mirror stage begins with the fascinating proposition that a child has to learn to perceive his or her own body as isolated from those of others. The reflection in the mirror provides an inverse to acts of 'mirroring' that exist in dance—in the mirror the baby discovers that one body and one body alone truly reflects back her own image. So, while

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[89] Eustace, Francis and Pamela King. "Dances of the Living and the Dead: A study of Danse macabre Imagery." *Mixed Metaphors: The Danse Macabre in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, 67.

[90] Ibid. They footnote their argument with: Macdonald, Jeanette. "Dance? Of Course I Can." *Dance Movement Therapy: Theory and Practice.* Helen Payne (ed.), (London: Routledge, 1992), 202-17, at 204.

[91] Lacan, Jacques. "The Mirror Stage." *Écrits: a selection* (New York: Norton, 1977).

'mirroring' as dance brings bodies into synchronization and similitude, the baby in front of the mirror gains perspective on her own body as an intact but fragmented exterior, different from all others, controllable only by herself.

However, a certain problem exists at the center of Lacan's idea of the baby with the mirror. To self-differentiate, the baby nonetheless needs to identify similarity. For the image in the mirror is most certainly not the baby herself— but is instead a limited representation of the baby that can look as she does, but that nonetheless has none of her three-dimensionality or tactility. So, the baby in Lacan's theory pairs herself with an imperfect similitude in order to differentiate her own body from the rest of the world. She becomes alone not in complete solitude – but with the image in the mirror that is her partner. The heart of Lacan's theory is therefore the idea that human individuation rests upon the imperfect ways we discover to pair ourselves with the exterior world. Lacan factors the imperfection of reflection into his theory—saying that subjectivity arises because we see difference across similitude and similitude across difference. In other words, the difference of any person's body to all others is made on the same basis as the sameness of that person's body to all others. Difference and similitude are always mutually implicated with each other. It is this way with the *Danse Macabre* in the Book of Hours – the reader enters into solitude only through the companionship of the book, and gazing upon the *Danse Macabre*, sees a procession of individual deaths in the companionship of death itself. The *Danse Macabre* differentiates itself from all other images in the book only because they are companion images. Similitude and difference, difference and similitude – both are required for the process of mirroring between reader, images, and book. As expressed in a recent art theory conversation on Lacan and the mirroring between objects and bodies:

> There is a feedback mechanism at work, for the act of perceiving an object as "one" thing correlates with, and conditions, the act of perceiving your own body as "one" thing. The wholeness of the objects serves as an external model for the wholeness of your own body, and vice versa. So by giving objects bodies you give yourself one… So the often discussed sensation of objects staring back at you is really a "caricature," so to speak, of the inherent reciprocity between your body and that of the things that are not you. The Lacanian mirror stage, from this standpoint, is simply an easy-to-understand – and certainly easy-on-the-eyes – fable of this much broader and general process of reciprocal articulation of the self and the world. A

caricature of a caricature, if you will. Even in the absence of mirrors, objects serve as mirroring devices.[92]

The reader, paired with an inanimate book, and the *Danse Macabre* character, paired with nonliving death, is engaged in comparable refractive processes. In one way, it can be supposed that the Danse Macabre is allegory that metaphorizes how the dead corpse reminds living people of the object-hood of their own bodies. Yet, the allegory exists by challenging the corpse's very status as inanimate. The objectified body of the corpse does the impossible, it does the alive: it dances, is speaks, it escorts the living into death. Likewise, Books of Hours were not inanimate objects to their owners—but acted as correspondents with the living. These books were objects whose design allowed them (as quoted above) to "serve as mirroring devices;" by doing so they became animate. Each Book of Hours, with the same general contents, with the same general purpose, was nonetheless individuated from all others by relationship to its owner. As an object identified as singular and thus given a singular body, the Book of Hours could further become a body that could be opened and explored for its internal world.

1.4.1 An Expansion of Mirrors

Though at first Lacan defined the mirror stage as a specific phase in psychological development occurring between 6 and 18 months, by the 1950s, Lacan was using his original notion of the mirror stage as an allegory that, like the *Danse Macabre* itself, could quickly and succinctly summarize the subjectivity inherent in human recognition and identification with their own bodies.[93] Lacan thus opened up the theory of the 'mirror stage' to an expanded field of inquiry.

Similarly, the notion of 'mirroring' that emerges from *Danse Macabre* can be expanded to metaphorically account for many relations within the Book of Hours. Bonhomme's Books of Hours are brimming with images that relate to the *Danse Macabre* and the *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts*. The image of the corpse creates the central tie, but from

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[92] "Unconditional Restoration - Discussion Restored by No Collective and Shinichi Takashima." *Matters of Act: A Journal of Ideas*. Issue 1 (Fall 2016.): 59.

[93] Lacan, Jacques. "The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire." *Écrits: a selection*. (New York: Norton, 1977).
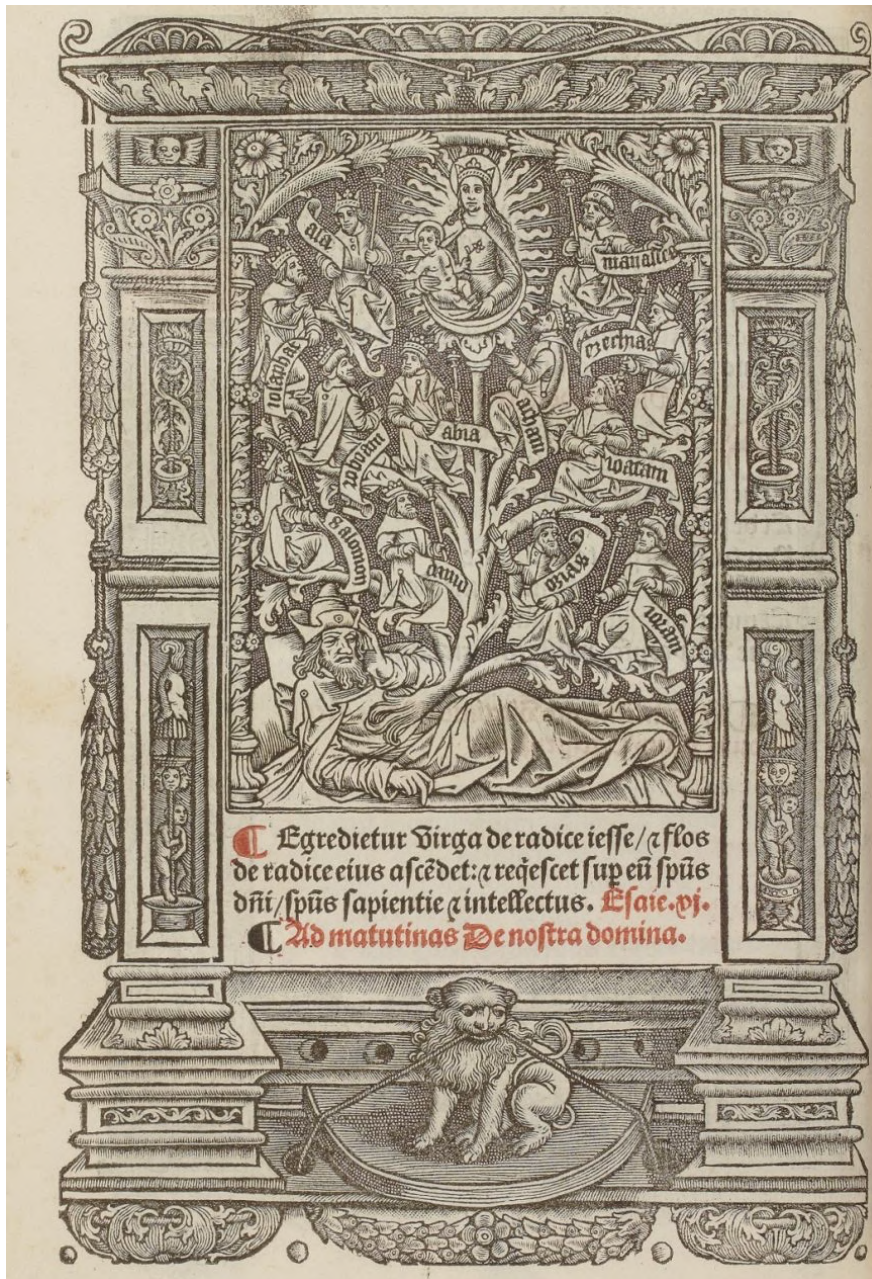
Figure 1-23. Jesse and his family tree in Bonhomme's Book of Hours.

Ces presentes Heures a lusaige de Paris toutes au long sans rien requerir. Paris: Yolande Bonhomme, 1525. BNF Gallica.

that tie, more connections can be drawn. For example, figure 1- provides three related marginals. Spread out in a seemingly random fashion over the course of the book, such marginals depict variations of time's ravages on the body. In the first, a young woman is at the base of a tree that grows toward the image of an old woman. This image implies that the growing process of time sprouts old age from young. Furthermore, the image alludes to yet another within the book that uses the metaphor of sprouting branches (fig. 1-23). Manypublishers of Books of Hours in Paris shared in using this exact image of the Old Testament figure Jesse as is described by Isaiah 11:1. Hand to head in thought, Jesse sprouts his family tree out of himself. Also expressed in many late medieval murals, the image shows many branches producing Old Testament figures – Jesse producing his son David as well as Isaiah, Solomon, Abe, and others. The center of the tree provides the stalk that suspends them all, and from it, at the top of the image, sprouts mother Mary and her baby Jesus in a flower-like orb. It is as is to say, against the notion of a family tree or sequential timeline in which each figure is responsible for the next, in this image the stem that results in Mary and Jesus provides the pillar of strength through which all biblical characters were dependent, even before Mary and Jesus were alive. The image of the corpse further connects the *Danse Macabre* and *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts* to the image most commonly placed at the very beginning of printed Books of Hours in the period – that of the astrological man (fig. 1-24).

With this image (fig. 1-24), the first pages of the Parisian Book of Hours presented a mirror for the internality of its user with the astrological man relating the seasons, the internals of the body, the four humours, and the celestial bodies to the calendar of the book itself. The astrological man further connected that most basic idea of internality—the interior of the human body to the most grandiose externality of the stars themselves. Such ideas profoundly interconnect back with the idea of dance fundamental to both the *Danse Macabre* and the presence of dance itself in Books of Hours – that is – the connection between embodiment and universal organization. Christian ideologies of dance were rooted in relations between microcosm and macrocosm that posited human mortal life as related to and caught within the measuring of time given by the celestial bodies.

Figure 1-24. Astrological Man in Bonhomme's Book of Hours.

Note the smudged-out genitals. From Ces presentes Heures a lusaige de Paris toutes au long sans rien requerir. Paris: Yolande Bonhomme, 1525. BNF Gallica.

Despite the profound standardization in the design of the astrological man across a wide array of 15th and 16th century Parisian publishers, the image tends to come in two forms. In one, the figure is a skeleton, and in the other, he is a body that has seemingly been surgically opened up in order to reveal his organs. Despite the various differences

between the skeleton and the surgical figure, much remains consistent between them: the fool squats between their legs, the sun shines directly above their heads, the figures representing the four humours and their representative animals adorn the corners: Choleric with lion, Sanguine with ape, Phlegmatic with sheep, and Melancholic with pig. Even the moon figure resides in the same lower right area, and the presence of the text in both, for example, "Luna le chef," (Moon, the head). Planets are diagrammatically connected to various parts of the body. Meanwhile, the squatted fool holds a staff which is outfitted with a reflection of his own face. With his mirrored face in his staff, the fool re-presents the function of the scene he's squatting on, essentially saying: *here you can see yourself and thus your correspondence to the exterior world*. As with the Danse Macabre, the reader was supposed to find the representation of him or herself in the humoral categories on the page. Like the fool's mirror-image carved on his staff, likewise the reader was to find a model of him or herself in the astrological man.

In 1949, Harry Bober published a PhD dissertation titled "The Illustrations in the Printed Books of Hours," which focused primarily on analyzing images of the astrological man in order to decode the larger network of images within Books of Hours. Within this work, Bober defined the two most common genres of the astrological man according to the difference between the skeletal figure and the surgically opened man.[94] The former he called the "Skeletal Planet Man with Temperaments" and the latter the "Visceral Planet Man with Temperaments."[95] Bober's research traced the images to medical texts where, as in Books of Hours, a calendar was used. The humoral medicine of the period necessitated that medical doctors use calendars in order to trace the positions of the planets and thus deduce the causes for their patients' illnesses.[96] The transposition of the image to printed

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[94] There are 4 types in all but only two will be dealt with here.

[95] Bober, Harry. The Illustrations in the Printed Books of Hours: Iconographic and Stylistic Problems, 3 volumes (PhD Dissertation, New York University, 1949), 100.

[96] Aquinas's *Summa Theologica* and the *Summa contra gentiles* can be credited with this assumption. Tayra M. C. Lanuza-Navarro has described the similar influence of such texts on medicine in early modern Spain: "Aquinas argued that the stars influenced the physiology of living things. This made his ideas particularly useful for the defense of astrological medicine. Influences on living bodies were explained through the astrological inclinations that were connected with people's temperament (in Galenic terms)." See: Lanuza-Navarro, Tayra M. C. "The Dramatic Culture of Astrological medicine in Early Modern Spain." *Medical Cultures of the Early Modern Spanish Empire* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2014), 201.

Books of Hours allowed the middle class to engage in basic home-care without the immediate assistance of a doctor. As Bober explained:

> As far as the printer or publisher was concerned the figure lent the "scientific" stamp to his product, making his calendar the most complete, advanced, and accurate "Home Medical Adviser" available. Just how it first got into the printed Hours cannot be determined, but is a simple extension of textual content long present and its propriety and relevance to the calendar easily justifiable. Given the competitive market in the field of Horae printing, once the illustration was used it became almost a necessity for all, much as the loaves of wrapped white bread at the corner grocer's seem all to need the label "vitamin enriched" to compete with each other.[97]

Despite Bober's explanation that the inclusion of what was essentially a humoral diagram could be explained with a metaphor about selling white bread at the corner grocer's, it is possible instead that the astrological man relates more deeply to the nature of the printed Book of Hours. The illustration certainly deepens the relationship between reading the book of hours and the embodiment of the reader. Through the astrological man, the actual practice of reading – at least according to humoral medicine – could be good for the reader's health by expanding their knowledge of their body and thus their ability to treat it. Increasingly connected to religious belief in the late medieval and early modern worlds, humoral medicine significantly connected the internals of the body to the external and spiritual manifestations. Within some of Bonhomme's Books of Hours, the astrological man was further placed at the beginning of a calendar that included intricate prints in which the months of the year were related to the phases of life. January was birth, and each month showed a new phase in the life – through childhood, adulthood, and old age – to death in December. Thus, the placement of the astronomical man's body, tied to the seasons through the ultimate calendar of the sky, led into a series of images whereby the aging body of a person was symbolically tied to the passage of months and thus allegorically to time itself. In all this, the body became the means by which the meaning of time transcended its own measurement.

Despite the profound differences between images in the *Danse Macabre*, *Trois Vifs et Trois Morts*, the woman and skeleton marginals, Jesse at the root of the plant, and the astronomical man, nonetheless all these images position the human body in an image to

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[97] Bober, Harry. *The Illustrations in the Printed Books of Hours* (New York University, 1949), 112.

speak of its relationship to time. Whereas the images from the Office of the Dead warn that the time given to the living runs out, Jesse's image disrupts the typical linearity 'family tree' time with the "spirit of wisdom and understanding," and the astrological man shows the correspondence between the body's anatomy, its illness, and the positions of planets, sun, and moon in accordance with the movement of time in its seasonal cycles. Again and again, the Book of Hours seeks to engage the reader in considering the relationship of embodiment to time, but diversifies its arguments to include, for example, the unknown and subjective amount of time one has until death and the body's implication in the measurable, objective time of seasonal cycles and astronomical movements.

By tracing the *Danse Macabre*'s relationships to other images and texts within the Book of Hours, it begins to become apparent that the books contained within them a network of textual and imagistic commentary on the nature of time. This makes sense, as Books of Hours were objects designed to mediate the experience of mortal time by imbuing it with rhythms of prayer and contemplation through the practice of reading. The name of Books of Hours (Ces Presentes Heures in French, Horae in Latin) gives away this operation of the books. One of the earliest terms for the Book of Hours, Horologion (meaning 'hour teller'), was used interchangeably in Greek to refer to any device for keeping time.[98] Like a clock, hourglass, or sundial, the Book of Hours was since its earliest use a means to keep time. Like all forms of timekeeping, the Book of Hours segmented time according to distinct logic not necessarily shared by other time-keepers. The Book of Hours used Canonical Hours. In so doing, the Book of Hours uniquely foregrounded human practice as the means for timekeeping. Rather than defer time purely to an object or external source to be read, the Book of Hours incorporated the very act of reading into itself as the means by which time was kept. In so doing, the Book of Hours related time to the exercise of embodiment – and therefore pointed not only to the objectivity of time as charted through sunrises, sunsets, and the religious calendar. In the Book of Hours, time was something to be kept, at its heart, by being attentively spent. Within this context, the *Danse Macabre* blossomed as a specific poetic about time and mortality based in a depiction of a human embodied practice that was offered up within the Book of Hours to a timekeeping measured

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[98] Black, Matthew. *A Christian Palestinian Syriac Horologion: (Berlin MS. Or. Oct. 1019)* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1954).

by the human embodied practice of reading. Within this network, the practice of dancing in images became a metaphor for the practice of reading the book itself, both a way to practice the spending of time that thereby kept time.

Even if considered independently of their connections with other images in Parisian printed Books of Hours, the *Danse Macabre* were stunningly similar in design across the variation of printing houses that produced them. In some way, all of the renditions of the *Danse Macabre* were related. In its retrofitting to the pages of Books of Hours, the flowing procession of the dance was split apart much like the flowing procession of time is split by the turning of the books' pages. As earlier discussed, through its logical segmentation to fit the physical operation of a book, the *Danse Macabre* changed in operation and thus in meaning. The experience of the dance as a whole necessitated that readers piece the dance together and imagine it as a whole within their own minds. Through its arrangement, the *Danse Macabre* thus became a pedagogical agent not only for the reflective content within Books of Hours (on death), but further for learning the process of reading. In other words, the *Danse Macabre*, through its segmentation across the pages of Books of Hours, described the redefinition of time into segmentation within the sequential pages of Books of Hours. Thus, the *Danse Macabre* in Books of Hours does not only reflect upon the nature of time in death, but upon the re-structuring of time for reading.

1.5   Mortal Time: the book, the clock, the body

Amongst medieval or early modern forms of time keeping, the Book of Hours was for keeping the time of lifespan. Timekeeping with the Book of Hours had to be performed by the reader, and the particular lives of its various readers thus partook as a source and audience for its timekeeping. Many Books of Hours show evidence of this fact, as readers scrawled the births and deaths of the family members and loved ones into its calendar pages.[99] Through the engagement of its readers, the Book of Hours thus transformed the events of beginning and ending in life into a cyclical format, as generations of readers noted the beginning and ending events of their loved ones year after year in its calendars. As well,

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[99] This is noted in numerous scholarly works on printed Books of Hours in France and England. See, for example: Febvre, Lucien. *Life in Renaissance France*, 29.

the Office of the Dead in Books of Hours was used for funerals and private devotion for loved ones thought to be in purgatory. With the Office of the Dead, a reader could respond to the event of death with cycles of prayer which subjected the singularity of any particular death to repetitions of the performance of a certain compositional framework.

If considered through the prism of attentiveness and time, the dance of the *Danse Macabre* provides an interesting analogue for contemplative reading and prayer. Events of dancing in the early modern period, for example – whether weddings, feast days, or other celebrations – were events that cut the constant movement of time with the succinctness of their event-hood. Yet, within any event itself, dance makes room for itself by stretching out and then filling up time, giving sensorial life to the experience held in the balance between the boundaries of beginning and ending that enclose an event. And in this way dancing, like eating, like speeches, like music, like stories, and all such aspects of festivity, imbues an event with a depth of embodied experience that will allow the event, through attentiveness and intensity, to sever the rest of life into a less radiant, more forgettable before-and-after around itself.

As a literary tool for religious practice, the Book of Hours was clear in its relationship to time through its connection to Canonical hours and its calendar. It further presented time through its text and images. Such books presented the time of the created universe, its consequences for the human body and, as with the plant erupting from Jesse's body, its inapplicability to God whose spiritual wisdom was not constrained by the linearity of events in procession, but contained all interrelated times.[100] Nonetheless, there are a number of historians who have instead argued that such images were merely an attempt to make the books more entertaining for laypeople who wished independently to invest in the

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[100] As written by Saint Augustine in the eleventh book of his *Confessions*, time as God would experience it wouldn't really follow our conception of time at all, "*But it is unthinkable that you, Creator of the universe, Creator of souls and bodies, should know all the past and all the future merely in this way. Your knowledge is far more wonderful, far more mysterious that this. It is not like the knowledge of a man who sings words well known to him or listens to another singing a familiar psalm. While he does this, his feelings vary and his senses are divided, because he is partly anticipating words still to come and partly remembering words already sung. It is far otherwise with you, for you are eternally without change, the truly eternal Creator of minds. In the Beginning you knew heaven and earth, and there was no change in your knowledge. In just the same way, in the Beginning you created heaven and earth, and there was no change in your action. Some understand this and some do not: let all alike praise you.*" See: Augustine, *Confessions*, translated by R. S. Pine-Coffin. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1961) 280.

economy of monastic prayer.[101] However, if considered as a network of theological commentaries on the body and time, it is clear that the images in the printed Books of Hours would have together held the capacity to instigate contemplation of the literary contents in the Book of Hours. This would more closely align the Book of Hours to monastic approaches to the practice of worship rather than merely to prayer's perceived function in beseeching God. The Canonical Hours had continued to develop within monastic practice in response to theological discussions which centered on the practice of worship. As articulated in *The Shape of Liturgy*, by Dom Gregory Dix, the Canonical Hours emerged in the fourth century as a ritual sanctification of time.[102] This would make sense— as the presence of the Divine Offices connected to Canonical hours in the Book of Hours followed after the more complex monastic Breviary. Jan Curtis suggests:

> St. Benedict thought of the Office as 'providing the Kairos, the privileged moment, for the reception of the Spirit'… The liturgical pattern of the Divine Office denies that work and worship are opposed and incorporates our entire history in a communal rite which, by re-enacting events of salvation, provides the Kairos for the reception of the Spirit in time.[103]

Many writings which emerged in the medieval period, such as Saint Anselm's *Monologion* (1033-1109), stressed contemplative practice and thus influenced its development of the time-based monastic prayer practices that would develop the Breviary and later the Book of Hours. Most such writings were rooted in the works of Saint Augustine, as Saint Anselm's certainly was. Anselm attributed the inspiration for his *Monologion* to Saint Augustine's *On the Holy Trinity* (early 5th century).[104]

As for Augustine, it was through his reading and recitation of psalms that he became inspired to consider the time-based nature of the practice of prayer. The psalms were also central to the Book of Hours. Augustine was moved to contemplate the experience of time by the living as a mode of existence not shared by God, and he did so by contemplating the

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[101] Recent scholarship attesting to such an idea includes Virginia Reinburg's *French Books of Hours: Making an Archive of Prayer* (2012), Nicole R. Rice's Lay *Piety and Religious Discipline in Middle English Literature* (2008), amongst others.

[102] Dix, Gregory Dom. "The Sanctification of Time." *The Shape of Liturgy* (Westminster: The Dacre Press, 1945).

[103] Curtis, Jan. "W.H. Auden's Theology of History in "Horae Canonicae": 'Prime', 'Terce', and 'Sext'." *Literature and Theology* 11, no. 1 (1997): 47.

[104] Anselm writes of his influence in the preface of the *Monologion*.

passage of time in the reading of psalms, and, agonizing over the limits in the human experience of time, he returned again and again to the psalm and his modes of practicing it. He wielded the idea of reading a psalm as a model for the human experience of time, which Augustine understood as a consequence of the limits of the human mind and body. Augustine's words express the complex duty the Book of Hours and its contained *Danse Macabre* held for its reader as a means both to contemplate time and refocus its passage to the worship of God. Augustine wrote *Confessions* to point out how his own indulgence in worldly pleasures thwarted him from worshipping God. And yet, when he turned to God, he discovered that nonetheless, even in praising God, he was bound to the human experience of time. Of reciting psalms Augustine wrote,

> Before I begin, my faculty of expectation is engaged by the whole of it. But once I have begun, as much of the psalm as I have removed from the province of expectation and relegated to the past now engages my memory, and the scope of the action which I am performing is divided between the two faculties of memory and expectation, the one looking back to the part which I have already recited, the other looking forward to the part which I have still to recite. But my faculty of attention is present all the while, and through it passes what was the future in the process of becoming the past. As the process continues, the province of memory is extended in proportion as that of expectation is reduced, until the whole of my expectation is absorbed. This happens when I have finished my recitation and it has all passed into the province of memory. What is true of the whole psalm is also true of all its parts and of each syllable. It is true of any longer action in which I may be engaged and of which the recitation of the psalm may only be a small part. It is true of a man's whole life, of which all his actions are parts. It is true of the whole history of mankind, of which each man's life is a part.[105]

Augustine conceived that through subjection to time human practices of religious observance necessarily connected adherents back to the limits of their mental and sensual faculties as much as to the divine. As Alan Burdick has commented, "Augustine was really the first to talk about time as an internal experience – to ask what time is by exploring how it feels to inhabit it."[106] Augustine wrote of the internal experience which determines time, saying that within it "there are three tenses or times: the present of past things, the present

[105] Augustine, *Confessions*, 278.

[106] Burdick, Alan. *Why time flies: a mostly scientific investigation*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2017.

of present things, and the present of future things."[107] The Book of Hours emerged not to remedy that fact, but to make use of it. Within the Book of Hours, the subjectivity of time structured prayer, and prayer structured the passage of time in each and every quotidian day. Armed with psalms and devotional images, the Book of Hours provided an intervention into Augustine's expanded present by providing a tool through which adherents could measure time through attentiveness to their presence in the present. Through the Book of Hours, the internal experience of time was thus to be given audience. Through attentiveness, the adherent was to perform her internal experience of time for herself, and through prayer thereby to offer it to God. The book was the mirror in which she accomplished this act. And then, enabled by their attentiveness to lived time, adherents would gaze upon the *Danse Macabre*'s mocking performance of its end. Thus, what an adherent does in engaging with the Book of Hours is both use the body for all its religious capacity, and contemplate the body for the ways it derails religious commitment. The body that uses the book and prays is the same body that is tempted by vanities and indulgences. The mortal time stretched and filled with prayers for the dead is the same mortal time that leads to death.

Foundational to Books of Hours and their measuring of mortal time through engagement with their readers, was, however, the fact that mortal time was tied into and thus interstitially related to time itself. Mortal time could only be conceived of and felt through acknowledgement of what time itself, in fact, was. Likewise, the question of dance that arose through such books was the question of how the *Danse Macabre* could relate back to dance itself. To answer such a question, *Danse Macabre* marginals and their engagement with viewers can be answered within the bounds of literature by referring to another literary dance that, like *Danse Macabre*, was turned into an image and became a dance of time by so being, The question of time and dancing enacted between image and reader within Books of Hours is thus spoken to, in this thesis, by the Tempus Dance engraved as an image and witnessed by the protagonist of the 1499 *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. And that is where our story leads.

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[107] Augustine, *Confessions*, 11.20.26.

Chapter II.

The Protagonist Passing Time with the Dance of Time from Past Times:

The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s Poliphilo and the Tempus Dance
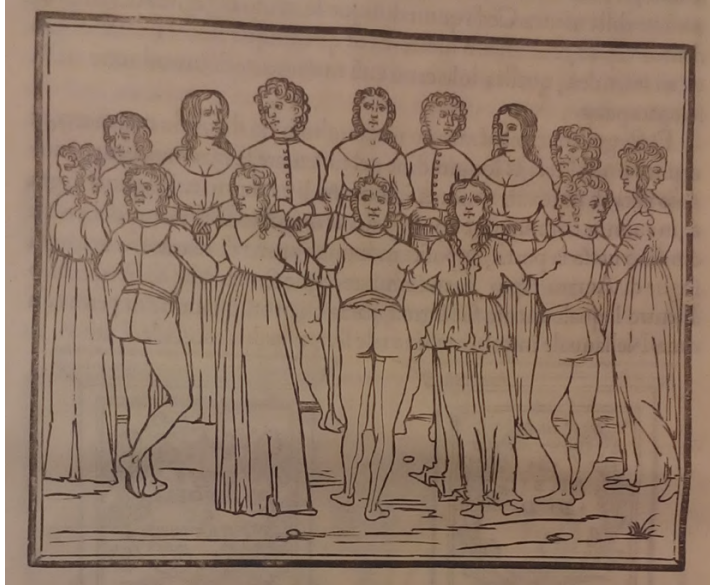
Figure 2-1: Tempus dance, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499)

Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, 1545 reprint. Photographed at Getty Research Institute.

Figure 2-2: Tempus dance, *Le Songe de Poliphile* (1546)

Two-faced maidens and youths from Jacques Kerver's publication, 1546. BNF Gallica.

Included amongst the images in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499, printed by Aldus Manitus in Venice) was a dance-in-the-round of two-faced maidens and youths (fig. 2-1). This image of the dance of 'Tempus' in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,* like the *Danse Macabre* in Books of Hours, served to literally and figuratively illustrate the meaning in the moving body to a larger conversation held in image and text. Across the divide between religious and secular texts, dance has consistently maintained certain metaphorical components. One of these is that it has been used again and again as a choreographic simulation of relationships between the body, time, and sensorial experience. The metaphorical operation of dance to illustrate larger ideas means that the question about dance in text thus becomes a question about text through dance. In this chapter, the circle-dance of two-faced maidens and youths in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is the jumping off point for just such an investigation. The analysis that begins with that dance expands toward a larger conception on the text itself. And so, this chapter is a hunting ground, it searches through the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* and the vast erudite analyses that have surrounded it over the course of time in order to grasp how this literary work invokes somatic interior. The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is fascinated with bodies, layered with different kinds of interiority, and brimming with ideas about the nature of first-hand experience. It reaches out with that fascination through the touch of its protagonist. Seeking to pass over the passage of time and the unyielding material surfaces of objects, the protagonist Poliphilo, whose name means 'lover of many things,' spends some time with the dance of time on his erotic journey through the material stuff populating the interior of his dream.

Through the Tempus dance, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* gives a doubled literary and sculptural representation of dance – a dance arrested into the sculptural form and then

arrested again into the printed space of a page – that foregrounds the importance of time and movement by pausing the likeness of both into imagistic form. In so doing, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* wove the idea of dancing into a larger dream-tour of fantasy art, ritual, and architecture of antiquity, ultimately inquiring after the entwined natures of physical form, sensorial experience, and desire. The somatic interior exposed through the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is not based in body so much as in the between-space of sensual interaction and encounter. Its protagonist Poliphilo produces the interior space of his experience and thus the interior space of the work through his desiring, thus manifesting interiority not only as a thing held between the formulation of bodies, but as driven by and manifested as *erotics*.

…

The printing house of Yolande Bonhomme, 'under the sign of the unicorn,' arrived into the history of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* and its Tempus dance in the mid-16th century. Bonhomme's son, Jacques Kerver, worked with two translators – Jacques Gohory and Jean Martin, on a French translation of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*.[1] On the verso side of the 8th page of their 1546 edition is the image of the Tempus dance (fig. 2-2), presented in the text as a relief carving of a dance-in-the-round on the base of a larger statue. It is described in the French thus:

> …si perfaictement entaillez & figurez en leurs mouvements, & en linges
> volans, qui n'accusoient l'ouvrier d'autre default, sinon qu'il n'avoit point
> mis de voix en l'une, ny de larmes en l'autre…
>
> …So perfectly cut and figured in their movements and wafting garments,
> which could not expose the craftsman to critique of any default, except that
> he had not put a voice in one, and no tears in the other…[2]

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[1] For basic information on Jacques Kerver, see: Renouard. *Documents sur les imprimeurs, libraires, cartiers, graveurs, fondeurs de lettres, relieurs, doreurs de livres, faiseurs de fermoirs, enlumineurs, parcheminiers et papetiers ayant exercé à Paris de 1450 à 1600*. Recueillis aux Archives nationales et au Département des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale (Paris: Chez H. Champion, 1901), 22.

[2] *Hypnerotomachie, ou discours du songe de Poliphile, deduisant comme Amour le combat à l'occasion de Polia* (Paris: J. Kerver, 1561).

The work, originally put into print by Aldus Manitus in 1499 in Venice, was translated and published by Kerver in Paris in 1546, 1554, and 1561.[3] Titled *Hypnerotomachie, ou Discours du songe de Poliphile, deduisant comme Amour le combat à l'occasion de Polia*, the publication in part serves to illustrate the difference between Kerver's work and that of his mother and father before him. Prior to Jacques Kerver's career as a publisher, with few exceptions the Kerver/Bonhomme publishing family had produced texts primarily for purposes of the church and for worship within the Catholic faith, such as (of course) Books of Hours. The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, on the other hand, was an erotic allegory, a story of a dream within a dream, that spilled over with sensual fascination rooted in a fantasized antiquity. Through this work, in part, Jacques Kerver became the first figure in the Kerver/Bonhomme publishing family to redirect the publishing house *à l'enseigne de la Licorne* toward the alchemical and occultist leanings that were to form part of 16th century Parisian humanism.

The *Hypnerotomachie* wasn't the only text Kerver published that contributed to the distinctly different list of publications from his mother and father before him. He began producing texts with his mother in 1539, with whom he produced various astrological texts, works related to antiquity and humanism, one of the first agriculture treatises, and a number of religious works.[4] Independently, Kerver's work turned more resolutely occultist, as exemplified by his publication of Trithemius, Nostradamus, various works on Hieroglyphics, and his work on *The Book of Fortune*.[5] He also seemed to have held sway over Bonhomme in his collaborative work with her, as Bonhomme, when working alongside her son, seemed to produce a number of texts that fell outside her usual plane.

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[3] Bowen, Willis Herbert. "*Jacques Gohory (1520 – 1576)."* (Cambridge, Mass: Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Harvard University. September 1935). Details of Gohory's various occupations: p. i; details of his involvement in Kerver's *Hypnerotomachia* publications: pgs. 69-70, 123, and elsewhere.

[4] These include: *Firmini Repertorium de mutatione aeris: tam via astrologica, quam metheorologica de Firminus* (1539); *Les ephemerides perpetuelles de l'air: autremet l'astrologie des rustiques: donnant un chacun jour par signes très familiers, vraie et asseurée cognoissance de toutz changementz de teps, en quelque pays et contrée qu'on soit de Antonio Mizauld* (1547); *Gulielmi Philandri Castilionii in decem libros M. Vitruvii Pollionis de Architectura Annotationes* (1545); *Les Douze livres des choses rustiques de Columelle* (1551); a Brevary in 1544, and the Commentaries of Aquinas in 1555.

[5] These include *Nostradamus's L'Almanach pour l'an 1557, les Présages merveilleux pour l'an 1557*, and *La Grande Pronostication pour l'an 1557*; *Polygraphie et universelle escriture cabalistique*, traduicte par Gabriel de Collange (1561); work on hieroglyphics in 1543, 1551, and 1553; and the unfinished *Livre de Fortune,* which Kerver worked on in the late 1560s.

For his part, what Jacques Kerver took from his mother's publications was perhaps a sense of the graphic layout of printed books. This is perhaps best illustrated by his production of a French translation of the macaronic *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,* which, in the opinion of historians, easily ranks as his most formidable contribution to Parisian publishing in the 16th century. This is due in part to its importance for the rise of interlaced philosophical, architectural, and literary ideas as explored in French books through the interweaving of image and text.[6] Through Kerver's French publication of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, the book became both an architectural manual and an encoded occultist mystery. Though historians have often framed these two functions as dueling, they were instead perhaps complementary, serving to bring facets of ritual and the enticement of secret knowledge into contact with the factual tactility and straightforward visibility of the architectural and literary surfaces of buildings and pages.

Kerver's work as a publisher of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* shows the value he held on accessibility. In its original publication, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* was written in a composite form of Italian intermixed with Latin and Greek, encoding the work through its occupation of the liminal spaces between languages. Through its translation to French the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* was rendered more readable, and thus more accessible. This caused the text to surge in popularity.[7] The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* not only acquired new readership through its translation to French; Kerver's publication subsequently caused retroactive demand for the original version. Thus, the popularity of the French version extended interest back toward the original, causing the second printing of the work in 1545 in Venice to sell far better than the first printing in 1499.[8]

For his translation, Kerver also commissioned an artist to produce updated versions of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s numerous images. As expressed by Efthymia Priki, in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*,

> Woodcuts and text are interdependent, functioning together to make meaning. The story unfolds through the interaction between textual and visual narration. It is also interesting that in several pages the typed text

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[6] See, for example: Korta, Jeremie Charles. *The Aesthetics of Discovery: Text, Image, and the Performance of Knowledge in the Early-Modern Book.* (PhD Dissertation, Harvard University, 2015), ProQuest Number: 3738863.

[7] Bowen, Willis Herbert. *Jacques Gohory (1520 – 1576)*, 205.

[8] Ibid, 193.

becomes a visual space as well, by taking different shapes, such as goblets and drinking vessels, creating a 'visual-typographical-textual assemblage,' a technique that has been termed as 'technopaegnia'.[9]

As Priki further explains, the French editions of the work, beginning with that produced by Kerver, built upon the 'visual-typographical-textual assemblage' used in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, ultimately altering the meaning of the text in various ways by grabbing onto this core mechanism. For his part, Kerver sought to fill in the blanks where the original text had left some descriptions up to the imagination of the viewer. Toward that end, Kerver added thirteen images to the French language edition of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*.[10] Kerver's publication of the work in French was thus not merely operational as a translation, but further, as an attempt at clarification or elucidation of the text through its translation and re-visualization in imagistic form.

Despite the vast difference between Jacques Kerver's work and that previously produced by the Kerver/Bonhomme publishing house, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* and Bonhomme's Books of Hours share in the commonality that both are heavily design-based and showcase intricate relationships between image and text. As a part of that commonality, both included images of dance. Of course, dance is not central to either Bonhomme's Books of Hours or Kerver's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili.* Consequently, in both cases, dance was used to serve ends other than as a mere description of itself. In other words, in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* as with Books of Hours, dance was not about dance per se, but was instead laced into the larger concerns of the texts with embodiment.

2.1 The Somatic interior through Encapsulation and Occupation

In the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, what we learn about dance through the Tempus dance we learn not so much from the bodies of the dancers as from and through the body of the book's protagonist. The Tempus dance as we experience it in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is presented as encapsulated by the perspective of the protagonist and his affective response to the dance. Through the protagonist and his embodied experience, the whole of

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[9] Priki, Efthymia. "Crossing the Text/Image Boundary: The French Adaptations of *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*." *The Journal of the Early Book Society* vol. 15, (2012): 338.
[10] Priki, "Crossing the Text/Image Boundary: The French Adaptations of *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*," 341.

the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* produces within itself a sensuous layering of the interior, as manifested in processes of occupation and encapsulation. The reader's perspective is encapsulated within the first-person narrative of the book's protagonist, the protagonist is likewise encapsulated in his dream-state, wherein a depicted dance encapsulated within its placement in a dream is seen by the protagonist and then further encapsulated within the terms of his reading. On the flip side, this concept of encapsulation can be conversely considered through a framework of occupancy: through a first-person narrative, the protagonist's imaginary body is occupied by his reader, while the protagonist's imaginary body occupies a dream wherein an image of a dance occupies the surface of a sculpture. The somatic, arising through such conditions of interiorization, emerges through a network of bodies that together trespass the reification of 'real' and 'fictional' space through the driving force of desire. In the case of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,* the somatic even emerges within a network somewhat independent of the encapsulation of body itself: in certain ways, the book is written upon the idea that the physical bodies of the actual reader and narrative protagonist (who is dreaming the story while asleep in his bed) remain elsewhere to what is written in their pages. Nonetheless, the sensual connection between the two remains intact, tied together by the telling of a dream by the one to the other.

Readers of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* obviously read the book for vastly different reasons and with vastly different intentions from readers of Books of Hours (as discussed in the previous chapter). It is notable that the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili was not a religious book – it was produced as an object of pleasure. The book and its illustrations are quite simply beautiful. Readers have long approached reading the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* as an entertaining puzzle, and a well of encoded messages. Perhaps this is because the whole of the book is written in a strange and particularly daunting mixture of Latin and Italian, with various sprinkles of Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, and imaginary versions of Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. Liane LeFaivre is particularly interested in pointing out, however, that the encoding of the work caused some to struggle while deciphering the meaning of the work. Quoting the seventeenth-century author and poet Niccolo Villani, LeFaivre highlights a typical exasperated response to the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, "o

idiom of idioms! o ridiculous scribblings made up of Italo-Greek-Latin words!"[11] Yet readers and scholars of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* have—just after complaining of its indecipherability—also complained that it was formulaic. As expressed by Willis Bowen, "Why did it have two Italian and four French editions during the years between 1499 and 1600? Why has it been reprinted, revised, and studied even in the present century? The text itself is dull and uninteresting to most readers."[12] The narrative has been pigeonholed as a trivialized knock-off of the work of many other Italian authors, from Dante to Boccaccio.[13] Bowen further described the work as "a too long prose version of the Roman de la Rose, except that the allegory is much less artistic."[14] A general consensus has thus emerged over the centuries that the point of the work was its indecipherability and that its formulaic narrative only served to point the reader toward its encoded difficulty as the point. Though some of the book's admirers have just shrugged while enjoying the images, others have amassed hefty quantities of symbiological interpretation of the work. Such a tradition extends from the occultist leanings of its French interpretants (beginning with Jacques Gohory and François Béroalde de Verville), who initiated the process by which the text would become a refractile surface for an endless variety of interpretations:

> Verville's alchemical 'paratext' contributed to the *Hypnerotomachia*'s reception as an alchemical allegory, especially by psychologist Carl Gustav Jung who used it as such in his studies, having found many points of convergence between the work and his psychoanalytic theories on the anima archetype, the collective unconscious, and the individuation process. More importantly, the fluidity of interpretation relating to the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* that allowed the French editors to experiment with the text/image boundaries and that allow every reader to approach it from an infinity of perspectives originates from the choices made in the Italian edition, which enhance the book's enigma.[15]

Thus, the 'fluidity of interpretation' coloring the work's continued circulation and reinterpretation amongst its European readership is post-factually used to articulate what it

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[11] "O idioma di idiomi! o ridiculo zibaldone, d'italo-greco-latini vocaboli!" Niccolo Villani is quoted in: LeFaivre, Liane. *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: Re-Cognizing the Architectural Body in the Early Italian Renaissance* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005), 84.

[12] Bowen, Willis Herbert, "Jacques Gohory (1520 – 1576)," 202.

[13] LeFaivre, *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, 61

[14] Bowen, "*Jacques Gohory (1520 – 1576)*," 203.

[15] Priki, "Crossing the Text/Image Boundary: The French Adaptations of *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*," 343.

was in its original state. Further compared by some to *Finnegan's Wake*, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* has like Joyce's opus been framed either as impenetrable hogwash or as a work demanding the attention of scholarly readers, for whom all worthy subjects of inquiry are treated as encoded secrets.[16] Thus, the presence of the somatic interior in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* also arises as an interior exposed through decoding, and decoding is an act the book presents as a form of reading in which both the protagonist and his reader together participate. In other words, decoding, in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, is an erotic stripping of coded clothes for the naked meanings hidden beneath.

Within the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,* images have been probed just as much as text for what they might render up to the decoding process of reading. The work has thus been deeply inspected as a complex of iconographic influences. Its literary and imagistic symbology have been scrutinized for their meaning by first being framed as complexes of specific references. The common idea driving this response to the book has been that the mingling of various appropriated signs and symbols discovered in the book can nonetheless produce an exact reading – if not of the book's meaning itself – then of what it retells, condenses, and rearranges from literary, theological, artistic and philosophical history. In other words, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s exactitude has been connected to the composite context it draws around itself through references, the ways it couples itself. On the flip-side, readers have long made displays of erudition through various attempts to decode it accurately through the unfurling of citations from its grasp. Yet, the somatic does not appear with the solving of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s assumed riddles. It is instead discovered in the pedagogical journey of the reader, who by necessity hooks into the journey of the protagonist's body to do any of that aforementioned interpretative work. Like the erotic, with which the Hypnerotomachia is so much concerned, the book is about the process of experience rather than about the end result.

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[16] See: Winton, Tracey Eve. "The Dream and the Wake: An Alchemy of Words and Scenes in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* and *Finnegans Wake*." *Renascent Joyce*, Sam Slote, ed. (Florida: University Press of Florida, 2013), 38-56.

2.1.1 The encapsulation and occupation of Poliphilo

In her work *The Fragility of Goodness*, Martha C. Nussbaum wrote of the nature of a protagonist by comparing Protagoras and Socrates in the Platonic text named for the former. "Socrates is the real protagonist of the *Protagoras*," wrote Nussbaum. She based the point on the argument that Socrates is "the real model for our activity as readers and interpreters."[17] Poliphilo, in the text, interprets many things he sees. Included amongst all those things, he interprets the Tempus dance. Poliphilo thus shows himself not to be a Protagoras protagonist. His work as a real protagonist in the text "was to enter into a responsive exchange of views about its content," as Nussbaum wrote.[18] Through sensual engagement, Poliphilo transforms himself into a reader of the text's context – his surroundings – and thereby exposes to the readers (of the book he is encapsulated within) a reader, who though like themselves, is nonetheless embedded within the text.[19] Poliphilo as protagonist thereby becomes the reader for readers, the reader within, who through the framework of the text, reproduces reading as an embodied act. The *within the text*, as proposed by the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, is thus *within a world*.

The interiority of Poliphilo's embodiment, the first-person perspective of the body, is made by his status as protagonist into a thing to be shared with an exterior reader. The space for the somatic is thus contained within a textual body that feels to its readers as if it comes both before their own bodies, and as if it journeys with them through the text. The body of Poliphilo introduces the encoding so centralized by historical and literary analyses of the book through his descriptions of his somatic experience, and by doing so, he makes his somatic experience necessary to such analyses. In other words, Poliphilo's first-person account, by being the building blocks upon which the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is created, serves to infect any erudite exploration of the text with a protagonist's somatic,

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[17] Nussbaum, Martha C. *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and ethics in Greek tragedy and philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 128.

[18] Ibid.

[19] It is worthwhile to note that Poliphilo is somewhat of a reader of 'the book of nature' in the sense that he attributes the fundamental act of reading to that which is engaged with his physical surroundings. Poliphilo is, of course, offset from the traditional notion of a 'reader of the book of nature' by his investment in art and architecture. For more on the book of nature, see, for example: Berkel, Klaas van and Arie Johan Vanderjagt. *The Book of Nature in Early Modern and Modern History* (Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 2006).

sensual subjectivity. It demands the grounds of experience to be the foundation for all interiors in its textual frame. Ultimately, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* challenges any possible polarization between the experiential and the cognitive by building the sensual world held between protagonist and reader in the thought-space of literature. Such a space, called a *Denkraum* by Aby Warburg, led "to the construction of an interior reflective space."[20] As with the mirroring device created through the *Danse Macabre* in Books of Hours, however, the thought-space facilitated in literature is not a lonely affair. Though, for example, Matthew Rampley describes such a space as facilitated by "the ability of the subject to extricate itself from the Other"; a space "intimately bound up with the ability of the subject to view itself as Other," the *Denkraum* of literature given through the protagonist provides the lonely affair of self-otherizing a friend and conversant.[21] Poliphilo isn't talking to himself. He is talking, in fact, to you.

As described by Gillian Silverman in *Bodies and Books* (2012), there is in reading 'the fantasy of communion.'[22] Silverman described the tactility driving such a fantasy, in part, by quoting Walt Whitman: "This is no book, / Who touches this, touches a man, / (Is it night? Are we here alone?) / It is I you hold, and who holds you, / I spring from the pages into your arms."[23] The erotics of Whitman's conception of reading and the tactility of his authorship are clear. However, if it is "the sensory perception of touch," that connects "author and reader" or "readers of the same text," the mention of such within a text – such as the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* – further connects touch to the theme of the text.[24] Through extremely tactile, sensual descriptions, the narrative of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* operates over the course of the work to build a portrait of sensorial experience and demonstrate the fundamentality of such experience to intellectual and pedagogical processes.

The somatic experience the protagonist expresses in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* overflows the narrative; it becomes clear that the descriptiveness of the text is more central

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[20] Rampley, Matthew. *The Remembrance of Things Past: On Aby M. Warburg and Walter Benjamin* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000), 89.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Silverman, Gillian. *Bodies and Books: Reading and the Fantasy of Communion in Nineteenth-Century America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

[23] Silverman, *Bodies and Books*, ix.

[24] Ibid.

to it than storyline. In part, by so doing Poliphilo displays the erudition expected of his readers. Yet, by reading the dream-world within the text, the protagonist's sensorial experience is not merely sensorial. He uses his senses to read through his exacting accounts of architecture, sculpture, and ritual. In the words of Henri Lefebvre, Poliphilo models the power of text itself, by which "all of social life becomes the mere decipherment of messages by the eyes, the mere reading of texts."[25] Yet, there is no reduction of reading, no 'mere' to it in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Reading, as sensuous, does not retract from the physical world.

Through this, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* hypothesized reading as a constellation of sensual acts far more expansive than the act of deciphering of words on a page, while at the same time reducing the act of reading the world to contours falling within the framework of cultured erudition ultimately expressible within the space of the book. Poliphilo alone is responsible for the book's expansive concept of reading, and within the book, his expansive concept collapses back down to the size of printed words. When Poliphilo turns to the dance in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,* he reads in the image of dance no expanded experience, akin to his own, amongst the dancers. He approaches the dance as one of many things in the world to be read like a book. For Poliphilo, the dance is itself not a method for reading. The sensorial experience of dancing in the work is expressed not as an experience of the dancer, but of the witness, the reader, who alone holds the capacity to expand and contract the world through the somatic experience of reading.[26]

This expansion and contraction, however, also require the protagonist (and thereby, the reader) to subject himself to the same. Like the Tempus dance, Poliphilo is readable, and he can be placed in the network of textual references. Scholars have pointed to how the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* borrowed from such earlier Renaissance works such as Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Boccaccio's *Corbaccio*, both written as first-person

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[25] Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 286.

[26] There is much new research on the relationships between dance and pleasure. See, for example: Kolb, Alexandra and Sophia Kalogeropoulou. "In Defence of Ballet: Women, Agency and the Philosophy of Pleasure," *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research*, Vol. 30, No. 2, (Winter 2012): 107-125. See also: Barthes, Roland. *The Pleasure of the Text*, Richard Miller, trans. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975).

narratives.[27] In these works, the protagonist-narrators are responsible for similarly extensive descriptions of what they witness; they give audience to the worlds they experience and thereby lend their sensorial experience to their readers through their accounts. As with any first-person narrative, the subjectivity of the protagonist is thereby offered as a direct presence in the written words. To do so, the protagonist who gives the entire account, who expands himself through his expansive reading, must also be reduced by the limits of his perspective. In the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, as with the *Divine Comedy* and the *Corbaccio*, what emerges is the narrative ability the text gains by positioning itself as a document written by a person with limited perspective. Dante in the *Divine Comedy* is full of questions which others answer and the protagonist of the *Corbaccio* obediently spends the course of the work listening to the advice of a spirit.[28] The sensorial experience of the protagonist is thus presented to readers not only to lend itself to them, but to expose itself as limited, and thus incomplete. The protagonist of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* often elucidates his own failure to be complete in his descriptions; he cuts himself off, describes becoming distracted, mentions that he could not finish an interpretation, and points out when he cannot, or does not want, to investigate something further. The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* wields the limits of the first-person account as a trusted source. Poliphilo may be limited to the scope of what his body can do, but he works meaningfully within that scope to learn. He passes through what he experiences, and thus all that he experiences becomes, to him, a series of moments reified into completed erotic encounters through his analysis of them.[29]

When in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* Poliphilo sees the Tempus dance-in-the-round carved onto the base of a statue, he reads the dance and interprets its meaning as best he can, just as he does with many other things he sees within the narrative. The dance provides him a mere momentary interaction that nonetheless resonates with the greater

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[27] See, for example: Lefaivre, *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, 10.

[28] It is worthwhile to note that, like the reader, the protagonist within the text also needs a protagonist external to himself to think through the story. For the Pilgrim, the central protagonists are Virgil and Beatrice. In Boccaccio's *Corbaccio* (1355), the idea of the necessity of creating an Other of oneself in order to think is expressed through the narrator's *Pensiero* – a personification of his own thoughts, through which he is consoled.

[29] In the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, it is notable that the reification of time does not follow clock-based demarcation of time, but instead the emphasis of sensual attention and its ability to record experience into memory.

thematics of his experience, through which he engrosses himself with an external world and expresses his sensual experience of it. The image of dance is contrasted with the protagonist's somatic experience. Like the many sculptures and works of architecture in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, its dance is objectified, and serves the protagonist-witness in a process of somatic discovery while being itself stripped of any true experience of its own embodiment. Placing its sculptural dance in such a status, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* doesn't critique dance, but transforms it from an experience into a work of art whose illusions are brought into embodiment through the protagonist's 'I' within the text that takes them on.

2.1.2 The somatics of Poliphilo's descriptive language

Though heavily studied for its wealth of references, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is not merely a scrambled road map of allusions.[30] The work pursues its narrative by doggedly linking the erotic and the divine, bodies and buildings, dreams and journeys, and love and self-actualization. Poliphilo crosses the division between forms of corporeal pleasure by treating food, architecture, dancing, clothing, sculptures, fountains, boats, tapestries, gardens, festivals, images, and rituals that populate the book with his virulent eroticism.[31] His eroticism arises as an inability to stop talking about all that he experiences, and so the work overflows with his loving descriptions, with his overwhelmingly passionate dedication to transferring every tangible detail into a corpulence of words. And in this, Poliphilo twists his tongue around the difficulty of words; he finds the means to articulate by weaving between languages, he codifies his language precisely because he seeks to do descriptive justice to the many things he adores. The unknown author of the

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[30] The treatment of the book as a slew of encoded references extends back into the early modern period. According to Ann E. Moyer, early modern readers filled copies of the *Hypnerotomachia* with marginalia: "They may amend the text, correcting errors; offer drawings that relate to the text or the illustrations in some way; explain difficult terms; track down the classical source used by the author; or offer an allegorical explanation of a name, an event, or some other aspect of the text." See: Moyer, Ann E. "The wanderings of Poliphilo through Renaissance studies." *Word & Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry,* Volume 31, Issue 2 (2016): 82.

[31] As Godwin phrases it, this is a "polymorphous eroticism" that "gives the Hypnerotomachia its intensity and atmosphere, saturated with the desire to gaze, to taste, and to comsume." See: *Hypnerotomachia Poliphli: The Strife of Love in a Dream*, trans. Joscelyn Godwin (London: Hudson & Thames, 1999), viii.

Hypernotomachia Poliphili puts the esoteric language of the book into Poliphilo's loving mouth, and thus from his mouth he produces from himself yet a further correspondence: that between words as an expression of his desire and arousal, and words as loyal description of the objects that induce them. Neither impetus exists without the other: Poliphilo's love is driven by the specific splendor of each object and body he encounters, and Poliphilo's rapt attention to the specificities of splendor is driven by his love.

Through his verbosity and his sampling from various linguistic knowledges to say just what he means how he means to say it, Poliphilo engenders a linguistic puzzle.[32] The tradition of academic frustration with the work's language is well described by Peter Dronke,

> In 1950 Mario Praz began a note on Poliphilo by alluding to the traditional view – 'the most beautiful illustrated book of our Renaissance… the most admired and perhaps the least read' – before giving his own subtle, though brief, impressions of the work's idioms and diction. The same year, however, Croce lent his authority to a harshly negative appraisal: the language of Poliphilo is wholly lacking in immediacy – 'it is no language but a jargon'. The late Roberto Weiss (1961) described Poliphilo as 'a serious runner up for the title of 'most boring work in the Italian literature'' – through, curiously, Weiss did not intimate whom he would award first prize.[33]

Yet, if Poliphilo's language is taken to be his own, and not merely that of an author whose only eloquence is jargon, it is possible to consider how such language attempts specifically to imbue Poliphilo's message with meaning. Poliphilo's language may be from different times and places, but he uses it because it is in him. The totally unique composition of Poliphilo describes both (1) exactly what he sees (2) in exactly the way he himself wills it into words through adoration. And so, to translate his words and thus the meaning of the objects Poliphilo describes in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, one cannot set Poliphilo aside. It is his love and attention that bestow on the reader the literary image of the object.

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[32] See: Painter, George *The Hypnerotomachia Poliphili of 1499: An Introduction to the Dream, the Dreamer, the Artist and the Printer* 2 vols. London: Eugrammia Press, 1963; Dronke, Peter. "Francesco Colonna's Hypnerotomachia and its Sources of Inspiration." *Sources of Inspiration: Studies in Literary Transformation : 400-1500*. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1997. See also: Carver, Robert H.F. *The Protean Ass: The Metamorphoses of Apuleius from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 186.

[33] Dronke "Francesco Colonna's Hypnerotomachia and its Sources of Inspiration," 162.

Conversely, Poliphilo does little to describe himself. When he does, it is through his response to what he experiences. Nonetheless, a consequence emerges from his first-person singular voice: the ambiguity of the word, 'I.' As written by the semiotician Émile Benveniste, "What then is the reality to which *I* or *you* refers? It is solely a 'reality of discourse,' and this is a very strange thing. *I* cannot be defined except in terms of 'locution.'"[34] Yet, there is much within the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* which disrupts the locution of the first person singular. For one, the protagonist's 'I' draws extensively from a wide variety of textuality—including romances, erotic texts, architecture treatises, Epicureanism, and Greek and Roman mythology—and at times directly quotes from other works, placing their language into the mouth of its protagonist.[35] When the author of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* placed what he had read into his own work by so doing, his protagonist becomes a medium, an 'I' through which a wide variety of quoted sources are passed to new readers. Just as the 'I' is relocated according to its speaker, the 'I' relocates other information as well into an utterance from the single body of its speaker. Yet, the protagonist 'I' has no such body—he is mere words— and so by its nature literature and reading further confound the locution of the 'I,' which becomes spoken by the protagonist *by being read* by the reader. The 'I' of literature is pronounced twice: once on the page, and again in the act of reading, and a literary power emerges from its resulting ambiguity between the protagonist as written and as remade by the reader.

The 'I' of first-person narrative holds within it an underlying question as to how fully enclosed the 'I' remains in such a position: is it solely that of the character, whose existence is contained within written pages? To what degree does it also belong to the reader who pronounces it, either internally (to herself), or externally (aloud and to others)?

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[34] Benveniste, Émile. *Problems in General Linguistics* (Miami: University of Miami Press, 1971), 218.

[35] Lefaivre particularly uses this fact to argue that the true author of the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili was actually Alberti. She writes: "A meticulous analysis of the Hypnerotomachia has found that it employs the same terminology as Alberti, gives to buildings the same measurements and proportions as Alberti, and uses the same antique sources as Alberti. Many passages repeat Alberti's words… Pozzi and Casella have found ninety-seven similar instances [to one given as an example by Lefaivre] in which whole passages from De re aedificatoria are plagiarized!" See: Lefaivre, *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, 36. It is worth noting, however, that practices of un-attributed direct quoting (plagiarism) were common in the period, and by no means adhered to contemporary conceptions of authorship by which plagiarism is at present defined. See, for example: Constable, Giles. "Forgery and Plagiarism in the Middle Ages." *Archiv für Diplomatic, Schrifgeschichte, Siegel-und Wappenkunde,* Vol. 29, Issue JG, (1983): 1-41.

Such might be the stuff of theater, as the 'I' allows many players to take up the role. Yet, the ambiguity of the 'I' has roots not only in the theater. The Psalms and the Song of Solomon from the Old Testament are written in the first person singular, engaging the literary 'I.' The Church's use of Psalms as a transferrable 'I' is deeply apparent in their ritual use. To speak a Psalm is to invite its words to ring as true for oneself as they rang for their originator. It is precisely the context-specificity necessitated by the use of 'I' and the disruption of context introduced by writing which allows for this ambiguity to emerge to thus implicate readers through the protagonist's first-person narrative. Through ambiguity, the protagonist's perspective provides the foundation for the larger system of encapsulation and occupation by which layers of literary witness compose the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Poliphilo's difficult language is ambiguous as well, and thus firmly in the spirit of the erotic. The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s erotics have thus incited iconographic interpretation, and the most extensive means by which the Tempus dance on the base of the horse statue near the beginning of the book has been studied (fig. 2-3).
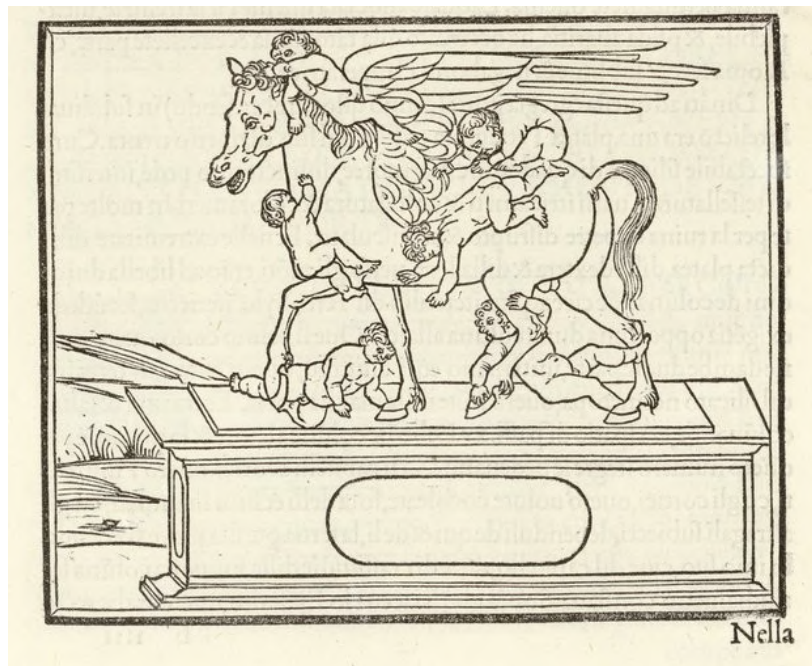
Figure 2-3. The *Equus Infoelicitatis*.

From Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, 1499. Image from BNF Gallica.

2.2 Iconographies of the Tempus Dance and its sculptural context

"Under this semicircular figure I saw this word inscribed: TIME," Poliphilo says in describing words written under the only image expressly of dance in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*.[36] What Poliphilo saw carved there on that base thus announced itself as a most interesting symbol – the arrested image expressing time itself.

The carved image of dance labelled as Tempus isn't exactly a major feature of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. As a relief that adorns one side of the base on a certain massive sculpture of a winged horse, neither can the Tempus dance be a thing considered in isolation. Wings outstretched, the bronze steed is described as being in full bolt, while numerous children cling to his mane, fall from his back, and roll between his legs. In the usual style of his extensive descriptions, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s protagonist Poliphilo reports on the horse before he is soon distracted by the other sculptures in the area. But before he moves on to other titilations in this unfamiliar place, Poliphilo also takes note of the rectangular base of the horse statue and its various reliefs and inscriptions. It is at this moment when Poliphilo describes the Tempus dance. Carved on the base of the horse statue, the Tempus dance shows 14 two-faced youths, men and maidens, dancing in two interlaced circles. Women hold hands with women over the bellies of men, and men do likewise. As described in the text (though not ultimately supported by the present image), sad faces adorn the backs of their heads, but their front faces smile in joy. Each youth has their head turned so that the person behind them sees their sad face, and the person they turn their front face to sees joy instead. Thus, every sad face faces a joyous face, no two faces meet in their emotional state. These dancers look as if to be composites for the faces or masks of the muses of theater and comedy, or like late-medieval depictions of the two-faced *Fortuna Bifrons*.[37] They also resemble the Janus of antiquity, the God of

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[36] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: The Strife of Love in a Dream*, Godwin, trans., 34.

[37] As expressed by Éva Knapp and Gábor Tüskés, since antiquity, Fortuna had been "an amalgam of several mythological figures, her physical attributes an admixture of external and internal qualities." Knapp and Tüskés further describe the development of the Fortuna Bifrons as an expansion of the figure eventually leading to, "the confusion of Fortuna and Occasio, the similarity in their attributes and shifts in their symbolic meaning led to the establishment of further links between Fortuna, Occasio, and Tempus on the one hand and Fortuna, Vanitas, and Mors on the other. There was ample classical precedence for this, as witness Cicero's 'Occasio autem est pars temporis.' In addition, Fortuna became associated with the motifs of fate, necessity, history, and the stage." See: Knapp, Éva and Gábor Tüskés. *Emblematics in Hungary: A*

time whose two faces gaze in opposite directions—one into the past and the other into the future. Poliphilo describes the carved dance depiction as an endless rotation by saying, "and thus it went on, one after another, so that a happy face was always turned toward the sad face of the next person."[38]

Though arrested in stone, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s round-dance of Tempus, literally defined as a dance of time through its inscription, is described by Poliphilo as an endless sequential procession that nonetheless progresses nowhere. Though already an image, already not a dance but a pose which only suggests movement, Poliphilo's reading of the Tempus dance produces a strange consequential notion of arresting time. Despite the fact that the dance is literally arrested through sculptural form, it is instead linked by Poliphilo to both time and arrest into both imagistic stillness and repeated, unaltering motion through its implied cyclical movement.[39] The rootedness of the dance in sculpture, however, is not treated as foundational to its arrested state. Poliphilo is much keener to point out how the dance was arrested into its own (depicted) rotation.

By contrast, the arrested state of sculpture in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is typically praised by its protagonist. Poliphilo makes the same claim for the relief of the two-faced dancers that he makes for many other stone works: he commends the unknown sculptor by describing how nearly alive the work seems, "carved in perfect imitation of their lively turning motions and wafting garments, so that one could not reproach the noble sculptor of anything but having omitted to give voices to some, tears to the others."[40]

Study of the History of Symbolic Representation in Renaissance and Baroque literature (Tübingen: Max Miemeyer Verlag, 2003), 115, 120-121.

[38] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Godwin, trans., 34.

[39] As noted by John H. Arnold, "the most frequently noted change between an 'antique' and a 'Christian' viewpoint on history is from seeing time as cyclical and eternal, to seeing time as linear and developmental (moving from the Creation to the eventual Apocalypse). The shift is not in reality absolute: antiquity did not lack any notion of linear development, nor did the concept of cyclical time disappear in the middle ages. But in any case, the clearer change is in the accompanying reworking of conceptions of human endeavor." In other words, what changed was how the human being was seen in relation to the passing of time, and the way that human performativity was organized within the overarching conception of time, its circulation, and its passage. See: Arnold, John H. (ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[40] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Godwin, trans., 34.

Because of its status as a sculptural relief, the Tempus dance is recognized by Poliphilo as having the artistic capacity to suggest the movement of circulating bodies. Through such a foregrounding of artistry, Poliphilo by consequence emphasizes arrest not as the stillness inherent to stone but as a symbolic choreographic subjection, and thus, as a dancerly problematic that renders itself available to metaphorization.[41] Nonetheless, the dance's arrest into stone further serves Poliphilo in his argument. As a sculpture, the dance is a single pose within a circle dance, a single moment which implies an important idea about the bodies of its participants: beyond the simple fact that the figures are circling in dance, the image suggests that as they circle they do not see the whole of what they are inside. Even though each dancer carries two faces, each holds a partial perspective owing to the positions of their faces. Each only sees, from each side, the face of another who does not share their same emotional state. A wider perspective is provided to the viewer of the relief, who like Poliphilo, using the unmoving nature of the dance to contemplate its meanings, can also see from an exterior position the limits of the arrested dance and the state of its arrest. From Poliphilo's point of view, the dance can be read as a single statement composed of image and text about the nature of Tempus as a cycling dance characterized by limited perspective.[42] Yet, as such, the image is nonetheless but one readable fragment of the larger statement made by the statue which it adorns: the winged horse.

Unless inscriptions and reliefs have been incorporated into the equine statue at random, perhaps the Tempus dance on its base provides a basic clue: this statue addresses the body's movement and its relation to time. Much of what Poliphilo says of the statue supports this idea. Because the dance is incorporated into the statue, arrested into a relief, articulated into Poliphilo's words, and contextualized into a dreamscape within the fictional framework, it cannot be analyzed without first addressing those factors which condition its presence in the world, to which we now turn.

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[41] This idea is similarly expressed by Victor I. Stoichita. Proposing Goya's painting *Blind Man's Bluff* (1789) was influenced by the Tempus dance of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Stoichita described the Tempus dance, saying, "through its perfect circularity, the movement of the dance is transformed into immobility." See: Stoichita, Victor I. *Goya: The Last Carnival* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1999), 76.

[42] Notably, Saint Augustine influentially described the relations between time and the limited perspective of the living in *Confessions* (AD 397-400).

2.2.1 Tempus over the statue's multiple surfaces

Just as the Tempus dance on the base of the equine statue hints at the relationship between time and the moving body, Poliphilo draws attention to the horse itself for how it addresses that same relationship. The final insight he gives on the statue before moving onto others further connects the play of movement and time within the statue toward his own concerns with the death of antiquity. Poliphilo says,

> I left this excellent, mysterious and unfathomable work and went back once more to look at the prodigious horse. Its head was bony, thin, and proportionately small, and it gave a remarkable impression of inability to keep still and impatience with waiting; I thought that I could see its flesh trembling, looking more alive that artificial. A Greek word was engraved on its forehead: ΓΕΝΕΑ. There were many other large fragments and pieces of lineaments among the great heap of broken ruins, but out of it all, greedy and winged Time had been good enough to leave intact only these four stupendous things: the portal, the horse, the colossus and the elephant.[43]

While Poliphilo points to the treachery of 'winged time' amongst the ruins, he stands in the presence of a fully-intact statue of a winged horse with the word 'Tempus' inscribed on its base. Like the relief of the two-faced dancers on the base of the statue, the horse itself is not merely depicted as moving, but as having through movement a particular relationship to time. Poliphilo describes the horse as impatient, as rushing. The dancers are not rushing per se – but their dancing, their movement in constant, unchanging rotation, is the only explanation Poliphilo gives for its 'Tempus' inscription. While the relief of the dancers expresses time as an unchanging experience of movement, Poliphilo's describes the horse statue as rushing, or bolting. Through its ΓΕΝΕΑ inscription, the horse is further related to a beginning or birth, and thus to linear time.[44] Appropriately, the statue is discovered by Poliphilo near the beginning of the book, the Tempus through which the narrative will unfold is mostly ahead of him.

So, what then is the time described by the statue? There is a definite implied futility in all the Tempus dance's implied endless turning-round. Yet, *Tempus* is a stretch of time, it doesn't last. It isn't so small as the momentary *Instancia*, and is not nearly so great as the

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[43] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Godwin, trans., 42

[44] 'Genea' is perhaps further related to the Bible's Genesis, and thus makes a wordplay of its placement at the beginning of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*.

time of *Aevum*— which can be understood as an aeon, an age, or the everlasting temporal time of angels. Likewise, the most famous passage of antiquity using the word *Tempus* acts as a transition between a self-reflexive comment on wasted time and a description of rushing horses. It is from Virgil's Georgics, "tempus fugit" (time flies). The sentiment arises as a device through which Virgil motivates himself to stop wasting time on extensive written description after delving into a luxurious narrative on horses bolting in lustful passion.

In *Georgics*, the section leading up to "tempus fugit," is titled *The Dangers of Desire*. The section provides suggestions for addressing the sexual impulses of domestic animals and finishes with a discussion about the love-madness of horses that causes them to race across the pastures. Virgil quips, "every species on earth, man and creature, and the species of the sea, and cattle and bright-feathered birds, rush about in fire and frenzy: love's the same for all."[45] Disregarding the division between sections, Virgil moves on to the *Care of Sheep and Goats* and says 'tempus fugit' just near the beginning of the new section. Placed in the context of the previous lines, Virgil's *tempus fugit* reads as a personal apology from an author who allowed his own words to become infected with the passionate impulse of his subject matter, and thus as errant as the horses he describes.[46] Virgil writes,

Love leads them over Mount Gargarus, and the roaring Ascanius:
they climb mountains and swim rivers. And as soon as
the flame has crept deep into their eager marrow,
(in spring above all, because spring revives the heat in their bones)
they all take to the high cliffs, faces towards the west winds,
catching the light air, and often without union,
made pregnant by the breeze (a marvellous tale)
they run over rocks and crags and through low-lying valleys,
not towards your rising, East wind, nor the sun's, but north
and north-west, or where the darkest southerlies rise
and cloud the skies with freezing rain.
Only then does the poisonous hippomanes, the horse-madness,
as the shepherds rightly call it, drip slowly from their sex,
hippomanes that evil stepmothers often collect
and mix with herbs and not un-harmful spells.

But meanwhile time flies, flies irretrievably,
while, captivated by passion, I describe each detail.

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[45] Virgil, *The Georgics* Book III: Livestock Farming. Lines 242-244.

[46] The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* likewise mentions its own digression in relation to the Equus.

Enough of the herds: a second part of my subject remains,
the tending of woolly flocks and hairy goats.[47]

Virgil, caught up in the pleasure of his description of bestial erotics, much resembles the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s Poliphilo, who pursues not only his beloved Polia, but the sensual experience of sculpture and architecture with much the same fervor as what Virgil describes of horse madness.[48] His verbosity is akin to what Virgil catches in his own work (thus producing the quotable 'tempus fugit'): "time flies, flies irretrievably, while, captivated by passion, I describe each detail." If the horse with wings alludes to the passage in Virgil, it wouldn't be the only well-worn Latin adage that seems to speak directly to Poliphilo from the surface of rock. Within a few pages, Poliphilo also discerns the adage *Festina Lente* from a Hieroglyphic inscription on a porphyry base. Symbolized by a dolphin wrapped in an anchor, this very Hieroglyphic became the symbol Aldus Manitus coincidentally took from the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* as the symbol for the Aldine Press (and subsequently many Italian publishers who were seeking to copy him did the same).[49]

In their commentaries on time, inscriptions seem to lend their advice to Poliphilo and thus as well to his reader. The effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the advice carried by such inscriptions plays out as the narrative of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* continues to follow its protagonist. As this process is repeated over the course of the book, Poliphilo displays a certain latency of response to the simple, concrete statements of works of art. The horse statue and hieroglyphic inscription warn that the passionate, impatient, rushing use of time only leads to unhappiness. Yet, Poliphilo does not immediately follow the time-based advice presented to him this early in the narrative. Instead, he is more lustful and uncontrollable at this point in the book than at any other. His actions harmonize with the messages in the horse statue and the hieroglyphic much later, when he meets Polia and

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[47] Virgil, *The Georgics* Book III: Livestock Farming. Lines 269-287.

[48] As written by Dronke, "He looks at the horse of Unhappiness once more, and sees the Greek word genea (birth or generation) written on its brow; he realizes that, of all these stupendous monuments, time has spared only the gate, the horse, the Colosus and the elephant (c 1v), and reflects how awesomely great the ancient artists had been. Francesco-Polphilo [Dronke's term for the author-protagonist composite], whose games-playing with his readers should not be underestimated, now describes the ornamentation o the gate at length; then he apologizes to the lovers who are reading him for the scale of his digression." See: Dronke, "Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia* and its Sources of Inspiration," 189.

[49] See: Roberts, William. *Printers' Marks: A Chapter in the History of Typography* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1893).

responds to her virginal presence with much greater self-control and patience. It is in this way that the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* introduces progressive time into itself: through the learning process of Poliphilo as expressed by his latent response to the advice he receives from the objects and people he encounters.[50] If the Tempus dance expresses the futile, circular recapitulation of time, Poliphilo expresses the potential, contrary to that circularity, to change. In the end, when Polia dissolves from his arms as he wakes from the sensuous dream he has experienced, he is nonetheless changed by the experience. The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* expresses the sentiment at its beginning, introducing itself with the words that "it is shown that all human things are but a dream, and many other things worth of knowledge and memory."[51] For Poliphilo, the knowledge and memory gained through sensual experience was a core necessity countering the fleeting nature of corporeality.[52] Toward this end, Poliphilo brought his senses into concert with each other to shape the dream-world he inhabited for his readers to engage in his sensual experience. As described by Juhani Pallasmaa, this is core to the functional relationship between artworks and the innate geography of imagination: "Literature and cinema would be devoid of their power of enchantment without our capacity to enter a remembered or imagined place. The spaces and places enticed by a work of art are real in the full sense of the experience."[53] It is precisely the reality of experience that Poliphilo's sensual-literary engagement seeks to inquire after. After all, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is a work of dream-literature that seeks to explicate how "all human things are but a dream," and how

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[50] The conception of architectural knowledge runs especially deep to the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili's* conception of time, extending all the way through Poliphilo's interpretation of architecture, and the use of the adage 'festina lente' within the book. As observed by Paul Emmons in "Bodies, Books, and Buildings": "The saying 'make haste slowly' was attributed to Augustus (to whom Vitruvius dedicated his Ten Books) as a motto for ruling the empire prudently by combining speed with restraint. Similarly, architectural work requires slow, deliberate design in the making of drawings, so that construction can be rapid. Emblematic representations of *festina lente* rightfully became associated with the prudently audacious architect." See: Pérez-Gómez, Alberto and Stephen Parcell. *Chora 7: Intervals in the Philosophy of Architecture* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016) 83.

[51] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Godwin, trans., 1.

[52] Poliphilo's sensual approach Maurice Merleau-Ponty called "coupling with the flesh of the world." See: Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. "The Visible and Invisible," Maurice Merleau-Ponty: Basic Writings (New York: Routledge, 2004), 260.

[53] Pallasmaa, Juhani. *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the* Senses (West Sussex: John Wiley a& Sons, 2012), 68.

reality is thus tied up in the experience of that dream and the memories and knowledge obtained in so doing.

2.2.3 The Ambiguous Multiplicity of Antecedents

Aby Warburg's only published work directly commenting upon the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* was his essay on Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* and *Allegory of Spring*. Within it, Warburg quipped about "all this confused erudition," through which he had to sort while tracing various possible iconological linages that may have influenced Botticelli's portrayal.[54] Likewise, iconographic research on even one of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s statues can show just how unwieldy the tracing of antecedents can become. The few researchers who have probed the Tempus dance and other figures on its host statue for their underlying symbolic or encoded meaning have had to make some leaps to conceptually tie together the elements that so easily share the same imaginative surfaces of marble and bronze in this fictional sculpture from the last year of the 15th century.

However, though much of what has troubled scholarship on the sculpture and its group of images has been the diversity of the lineages that may have informed it, the horse statue witnessed by Poliphilo does not push its possible antecedents apart. As a sculptural grouping of imagistic variety, the statue draws referential images together into a state of mutual ambiguity, rendering iconographical influence as the basis for the work's appropriation and re-articulation of antiquity into its own world. This world is then rendered up to readers through its interpretant Poliphilo, whose own dream, anyway, has brought a vast variety of divergent images together.

As an amassed collection of images, the statue in question comprises a winged 'horse of unhappiness,' children, youths, time, loss, bitter herbs, foliage, snatching nymphs, and two-faced dancers. Along with the Tempus dance on the horse statue's base is the inscription: '.D. AMBIG .D.D' surrounded by a relief of "bitter parsley mixed with the fennel-like leaves of sulphurwort."[55] The inscription '.D. AMBIG .D.D' Giovanni

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[54] Warburg, Aby. *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*, translated by David Britt (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999), 103.
[55] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* trans. Jocelyn Godwin, 33.

Pozzi has interpreted as 'Deo Ambiguae Dedicatum.'[56] Pozzi theorized that 'Deo Ambiguo Dedicatum' referred to Janus, who was understood not only as the god of time, but also of ambiguity because of his double-face. Alternatively, Maurizio Calvezi posited that, the abbreviation '.D. AMBIG .D. D' could be interpreted as *Deae Ambiguae Dedicatum* and therefore refer to Fortuna as 'the Ambiguous Goddess', rather than to Janus.[57] The historian Flavia De Nicola, whose work on the *Equus Infoelicitatis* is its most extensive iconographic treatment, sees the second interpretation as more likely.[58] So, while Pozzi interpreted the two-faced dancers as emblematic of Janus, and cited Macrobius's first book of the *Saturnalia* as the early medieval Neoplatonic source for such a Renaissance interpretation, Calvesi saw them as related to the two faces of Fortuna.[59] As argued by De Nicola, following Calvesi's interpretation, "the two-faced figures dancing in a circle embody, therefore, the two faces of fortune, one 'ridibonda,' favorable and bearer of prosperity, the other 'lachrymosa,' that is unfavorable and the cause of sadness."[60] On the other side of the base, the inscription 'EQUUS INFOELICITATIS'—or 'horse of unhappiness'— is likewise framed by foliage, this time a depiction of "a wreath of deadly aconite leaves."[61] The Tempus dance adorns one of the broad sides of the statue's base. Opposite the Tempus dance is a relief of young men gathering flowers while nymphs were "jokingly, pleasantly, and playfully snatching the flowers away," over the inscription 'AMISSIO'—or 'loss.'[62]

In her 2015 article on the statue and its inscriptions, De Nicola stressed the importance of the figures on the base of the statue for her own understanding of the horse statue in its entirety: "The consideration of the inscriptions on the pedestal of the polyphyletic sculptural group is therefore valuable in order to frame the concealed meaning

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[56] Pozzi, Giovanni and Lucia A. Ciapponi. *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. 2 vols. (Padova: Editrice Antenore, 1980).

[57] Calvesi, Maurizio. *La "pugna d'amore in sogno" di Francesco Colonna romano* (Rome: Lithos editrice, 1996).

[58] De Nicola, Flavia. "Equus Infoelicitatis: analisi iconografica di una xilografia dell'Hypnerotomachia Poliphili fra testo e immagine." *Bollettino Telematico dell'Arte*, n. 765, (4 April 2015): 12

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid. Translation by the author.

[61] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* trans. Jocelyn Godwin, 33

[62] Ibid. 34

in the image of the winged horse."[63] Though images bearing their own inscriptions, the Tempus dance, like the 'Amissio' scene of nymphs and youths gathering flowers, acts in turn as informative inscriptions for the horse which rises from the marble they bedeck. Like Donatello's equestrian statue *Gattamelata*—which featured the coat of arms of the rider Erasmo da Narni with two putti on one side, and angels clad in battle dress on the other – the reliefs on the base of the *Equus Infoelicitatis* likewise serve as a supporting re-articulation of the sculpture's fundamental identity.[64]

In her book on the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Lianne LeFaivre likewise expressed the sense of 'misfortune' present in the horse statue. She framed the statue as a "frustrating experience" for Poliphilo, and as a statue with an underlying "pessimism."[65] Of the horse she wrote that,

> Written across the horse's forehead are the letters GENEA, meaning "origin in Greek and, by extension, "first time." Poliphilo notes that the pedestal bearing the horse refers to the "stallion of unhappiness" (equus infoelicitatis). In fact, he is rearing in such panic that he has bucked all the little cupids who are trying to ride him into the entrance of the triumphal arch.[66]

With this introduction to the horse, LeFaivre reorients the misfortune and pessimism legible in the statue toward sexual inexperience. She constructs an argument that the multiple structures surrounding the equine statue are experienced sexually by virginal Poliphilo who, at this early point in the text, is too confused and overwhelmed to fully understand (and by metaphor, intellectually 'penetrate') where he is. While confused, Poliphilo seems to encounter a series of statuesque and architectural erections, each with its own "message of futility" symbolized through male-female relationships.[67] She further emphasizes the sexual terms of his confusion at this point, how he is in an "attempt to locate the appropriate orifice through which he can enter a building."[68] This argument fits

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[63] De Nicola, "Equus Infoelicitatis: analisi iconografica di una xilografia dell'Hypnerotomachia Poliphili fra testo e immagine," 14. Translated by the author, original reads: "la considerazione delle iscrizioni sul piedistallo del gruppo scultoreo polifilesco risultano dunque preziose al fine di inquadrare il significato occultato nell'immagine del cavallo alato."

[64] See: Russell, Peter. *Delphi Complete Works of Donatello* (Hastings: Delphi Classics, 2017).

[65] LeFaivre, *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, 240

[66] Ibid.

[67] LeFaivre, *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, 241

[68] Ibid., 243

with LeFaivre's larger conception of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* as primarily oriented toward the erotics that emerge from architecture's metaphorical connection to the human body. In this early moment in the book, Poliphilo is at his most inexperienced state, and is least capable of interpreting and understanding the architecture surrounding him. He is also sensually overwhelmed. Reflexively, the sculptural environment around him displays messages of his inexperience and impotence on its surfaces. Following these terms, LeFaivre points to the sexuality of the reliefs on the bottom of the horse statue as a message about the relations between the sexes,

> The right panel of the pedestal is sculpted with fourteen dancing figures, seven men and seven women. They are dancing in one big circle, one sex alternating with the other, but there is no contact between the sexes… The other panel of the pedestal hardly gives a happier picture of the relation between the sexes. It represents a number of young men plucking flowers in a field, surrounded by nymphs who appear nervous and agitated as if being robbed of something.[69]

The horse had been since antiquity a symbol of both lust and the mind-body split, had been employed throughout the middle ages as the companion of Fortuna, and had been connected through its expression in monumental bronze statues to the rising Renaissance interest in lifelike depictions of arrested movement. The image of the *bifrons* ((two-faced) dancers connects them both to ancient images of Janus, to the Muse of comedy (Thalia) and of tragedy (Melpomene), and to medieval images of Fortuna. Such connections continued to develop into the 16th century. Interestingly enough, the now famous unfinished work that was to be published by Jacques Kerver – the *Liber Fortuna*, coalesced the various expressions of *bifrons* connected with Janus and Fortuna through emblematic form.[70] The little children falling from the horse resonate as cherubs, correlate to the word 'Genea' inscribed on the horse's forehead and give rise to the association between Cupid and Venus, thus implying erotic love. The image of the nymphs snatching flowers from youths resonates with Macrobius's Saturnalia and Ovid's *Fasti*, both of which correlated Janus with the Horae, who anthropomorphized seasonal change. Their acts, such as

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[69] Ibid., 240-241.

[70] Subsequently published as: Cousin, Jehan. *The Book of Fortune: Two Hundred Unpublished Drawings*. (Paris: Librairie de l'art, 1883).

gathering flowers, symbolized the seasonal change. As suggested by Vincenzo Cartari in

Le Imagini de Gli Dei de Gli Antichi,

> Ovid says likewise in his Fasti that the Horae stand guard with Janus (Apollo) at the gates of Heaven; when he speaks later of Flora, beneath whose sway the flowering meadows lie, he says that the Horae come dressed in diaphanous, flowing veils to gather flowers for their beautiful garlands.[71]

The Horae who gather flowers from the fields for their own garlands thus bring the bounty of Spring and Summer to an end, and the 'loss' implied within the Amissio image can be understood as one brought on by time: the flowers of youth grow, are sexually harvested, and then lost with time.

The relationship between fortune, time, body, and sensuality apparent in the statue was not remarkable. In Italy, it had been perhaps most narrativized by Boccacio, who in writing of Fortuna brought her figure firmly into the framework of the love story.[72] Since the early medieval period, Fortuna had been like Janus been depicted with two faces. As described by Boccacio in *Amarosa Visione* (1342), for example, Fortuna is described as,

> Sometimes glad, sometimes sad. She turns a great wheel toward the left unceasingly. She is deaf, and hears no prayer. She has no law or compact, she says (I imagine her speech): 'Let every man who desires, be bold to mount, but when he falls let him not become angry with me. I never deny any the step. Let come who will.' One was sad; another glad.[73]

Here, Fortuna speaks of mounting, falling, and the alternately sad and joyous faces – her speech (imagined by Boccaccio's protagonist), draws together the images of the horse mounted by falling babies, and the *bifrons* faces of the dancers in its description of Fortuna's churning wheel of fortune.

Many images both sexualized Fortuna and placed her with her 'wheel of fortune,' thus anthropomorphizing fortune as a figure of sensuous, revolving circulation— much like the Tempus dance itself— churning out its 'feminine', fickle dissemination of good

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[71] Cartari, Vincenzo. *Le Imagini de Gli Dei de Gli Antichi*. As translated by David Britt in: Warburg, Aby. *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity* (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999), 103.

[72] Patch, Howard Rollin, "The Tradition of the Goddess Fortuna in Medieval Philosophy and Literature." *Smith College Stuides in Modern Languages*, Volume III no. 4 (July, 1922): 209.

[73] Quoted From: Patch, Howard Rollin, "The Tradition of the Goddess Fortuna in Medieval Philosophy and Literature." *Smith College Studies in Modern Languages*, Volume III no. 4, (July 1922): 212.

and bad luck over time.[74] This is furthermore supported by the projection of time through the Janus-like *bifrons* of the dancers who symbolically cast their opposing gazes into past and future as well as into joy and sadness. The polarities of time and emotion in the *bifrons* were further carried into its other symbolic uses. Fortuna, for her part, was often portrayed as having two different kinds of women in her two faces – one old, one young, or one ugly and one beautiful, and even one female and one male.[75] Likewise, the masks carried by the muses Thalia and Melpomene show a polarity of emotional states. Merged together, the dualism of the Janus/Fortuna *bifrons* points to the two emotional flip-sides fundamental to the love story of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*: Poliphilo's hapless longing for his unrequited love Polia, as opposed to the sentiment emphasized later in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* by Polia herself that erotic love is a luck of the young and the beautiful that should not be wasted. In fact, the opposition of Poliphilo in his unrequited passion and Polia in her lucky, lovable beauty (or in simpler terms, he with his object of love and she as the subjected to his love) later serves to resolve the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s narrative. In accepting the luck of her beauty and youth as simultaneously her sensuous obligation in life, Polia shifts from her rejection of Poliphilo and accepts him, and thus her realization of the purpose of her luck changs his own.

Perhaps the most important element of cohesion in the statue is the inscription '.D. AMBIG .D.D' which dedicates it to the god of ambiguity, as ambiguity runs as a through-line between the various images on the statue, and further professes the fundamental ambiguity the statue attains through the diversity of images, their possible interpretations, and the way in which each present figure evades definite identification with the antecedent to which it nonetheless seemingly refers. Through such ambiguity, the somatic experience of Poliphilo as interpretant, and the reader carried with him, gain centrality to the text—

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[74] The feminization of Fortuna and depiction of her as fickle was a widespread literary theme in the medieval and Renaissance periods. She was also, like the Tempus dancers, noted for the limits of her perception. Rather than be constrained to a certain partial vision of a situation, Fortuna was in fact blind. Moshe Barasch quotes a lovely passage on Fortuna by Alan of Lille in Anticlaudianus (1181-1184): "She is fickle, unreliable, changeable, uncertain, random, unstable, unsettled. When one thinks that she has taken a stand, she falls and with a counterfeit smile she feigns joy. She is rough in her gentleness, overcast in her light, rich and poor, tame and savae, sweet and bitter. She weeps as she smiles, roams around as she stands, is blind as she sees." See: Barasch, Moshe. *Blindness: The History of a Mental Image in Western Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 125.
[75] Patch, Howard Rollin. *The goddess Fortuna in Mediaeval Literature*. Boston: Harvard University Press, 1927.

there is no solution to the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s multifaceted iconographic lineage that supersedes the position of the person engaging with it.

2.2.4 The Monumental Horse Body

Figure 2-4. Donatello's Gattamelata (1453)

Padua, Italy. Photo from Wikimedia Commons.

The bronze body of the horse which rises from the stone base is further indicative of the fundamental ambiguity pronounced by the inscription on its base. Yet, the horse's body adds a twist: its references are clear and concise, and yet, through that concision it becomes apparent that the horse is alluding to multiple horse-statue antecedents. For mythological and iconographical tracings of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s images, historians have sought to show the book's architectural and sculptural works to be textual re-imaginings of actual places and things, inspired both by antiquity's ruins and Renaissance public works.[76] Yet, the bronze horse instead indicates that perhaps the sculptures and works of architecture in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* are intricate composites of various ancient works, and furthermore, are textually reflective of attempts amongst Renaissance sculptors and architects both to rekindle, magnify, and/or reinvent the previous glory of such works.[77] By so doing, the bronze horse places itself in between the Renaissance bronze horses that were contemporaneous with it, and horse statues of antiquity. In so doing, it used the reference points of the Renaissance and antiquity to fold Renaissance sculpture into its own internal form of Renaissance – and thus 'Renaissanced the Renaissance,' so to speak, by appropriating and re-imagining the equestrian statue of Donatello into a mix with a variety of horse statue antecedents from antiquity, and thus lending greater ambiguity to the form the statue takes inside the book.

Nonetheless, scholarship on the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* has most often fleetingly addressed the symbolism of the *Equus Infoelicitatis* before turning to those images from the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* habitually considered more pivotal both within the work and for its historical impact. As one of few researchers specifically to address the statue, Flavia De Nicola worked iconographically, picking apart each of its components and their possible antecedents, investigating along the way the previous

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[76] As suggested by Yvonne Elet, "The *Hypnerotomachia Polifili*, with its rich archeological and philological sourcebook and fantastical conflation of a dreamscape with real-world places (which scholars are still trying to distinguish), must have been a crucial spur to creative descriptions melding the actual and imagined." See: Elet, Yvonne. *Architectural Invention in Renaissance Rome: Artists, Humanists, and the Planning of Raphael's Villa Madama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 53.

[77] For example, translating De Nicola: "According to the interpretation of Del Lungo, monuments described in *Hypnerotomachia* would be inspired by works actually placed in the Roman urban fabric and the surrounding countryside. In particular, Poliphilo's horse sculpture placed in the arcaded square would be a derivation from the classic equestrian statue of Domitian, at that time no longer visible but whose memory passed down from medieval sources was still alive." See: De Nicola, "Equus Infoelicitatis: analisi iconografica di una xilografia dell'Hypnerotomachia Poliphili fra testo e immagine," 9.

analyses of other scholars. Her method yielded a plethora of possible veins of interpretation, which through her research point to somewhat resonant, yet undeniably distinct, commentaries. She cites theories which have framed the statue as a psychopomp, or guide for the passage of the dead, and as related to the Allegory of the Chariot from Plato's *Phaedrus*. Setting aside the former interpretation, De Nicola focuses more keenly on the latter, which was made well known amongst late-15th century scholars through Marsilio Ficino's translation of the *Platonis Opera Omnia* in 1484.[78] In Plato's allegory, a Chariot drawn by two winged horses provides a metaphor for the human's relationship to the contrary drives of body and soul. Certainly, the Chariot Allegory of *Phaedrus* resonates with the equus statue of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, but particularly it is Ficino's introduction to Phaedrus that cements the connection. There, Ficino describes the charioteer driving the winged horses as a two-headed man. As pointed out by Christophe Poncet, Ficino's introduction to the allegory generally emphasized the presence of doubling:

> The Florentine thus introduces the idea, yet absent from the *Phaedrus*, that the chariot has two wheels. He doubled the coachman's head, which the Athenian had merely mentioned. Finally, he described in minute detail an indissoluble union between the horses, whereas Plato had contented himself with indicating that the team was two beasts.[79]

Ficino's description of the coachman's doubled head fits with the *bifrons* of the dancers. In his description of it, Ficino wrote, "the charioteer's two heads are like two poles of a sphere."[80] Placed on opposing sides of a single sphere, the two-headed coachman through Ficino's description resembles more closely a *bifrons*.

The conception of mind and body in the Chariot Allegory of *Phaedrus* reinforces Lianne LeFaivre's analysis of the *Equus Infoelicitatis* as a sculpture which addresses the

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[78] Allen, Michael J. B. "Two Commentaries on the Phaedrus. Ficino's Indebtedness to Hermias." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 1980, 112.

[79] Poncet, Christophe. "The Image of the Chariot in Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on Plato's Phaedrus: The Vehicle of the Soul as an Instrument for the Return to God." *Revue Des Sciences Philosophiques Et Theologiques* vol. 94, no. 2 (2010): 250. Translated by the author from the French: "Il dé-double la tête du cocher, que l'athénien avait simplement mentionnée. Enfin, il décrit avec minutie une union indissoluble entre les chevaux, alors que Platon s'était contenté d'indiquer que l'attelage était à deux bêtes."

[80] Marsilio Ficino, Commentaries on Plato. Vol. 1. Phaedrus and Ion, ed. and transl. Michael J. B. Allen, (Cambridge, Mass: The I Tatti Renaissance Library, 2008), 71.

difficulty posed by the sensual.[81] The dark horse of the body wishes to pull the chariot toward the earth, while the white horse of the soul wishes to draw the chariot skyward. The human's position in relation to the horses of body and soul is that of 'reason,' and as such, the human driver attempts to steer the chariot while the forces of body and soul navigate in different directions. Plato's allegory further metaphorized the position of the charioteer by discussing what happens to him if he were to fall or remount his position, and systematically works through its concerns with the sensuous body, including how to deal with romantic love and subjugate lust. So too does the group of images composing the statue seemingly point in such directions. All the while, Poliphilo's few words on the matter vaguely reinforce these ideas.

Stemming from Plato's horse allegory as a logical antecedent, De Nicola then points out the work of various scholars who have made iconographic associations between the *Equus Infoelicitatis* and Renaissance horse symbology which resonate with the mind-body discourse present in Plato's *Phaedrus*. Particularly, the involvement of horses and cherubs in Renaissance images of Fortuna and Fate and the Taming of the Passions provide examples. To fulfill the iconographic comparisons, the children riding and falling from the horse are related to cherubs and thus to romantic and sexual love,

> The winged horse embodied opposing tendencies of the erotic impulse and the dissatisfaction of the senses and its opposition to the virtuous triumph of the spirit, while the cherubs/ cupids would be the intent to vainly fight Virtue or would be unhappy lovers because they are incapable of taming the senses due to Sapienza. In such a context, it also would fit with the image of horses driven by eroti from such paintings as the Allegory of Love from a panel of a chest dated from the last decade of the fifteenth century.[82]

Yet, by the time the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* was published in 1499, horse statue held importance as a symbol in Italy not only for its links to discourses on the mind-body split,

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[81] Notably, as the title of her book shows, LeFaivre focused much of the work on attempting to prove Alberti's authorship of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Interest in questions of the book's authorship are not considered relevant to this chapter, however, so I leave the issue alone.

[82] De Nicola, "Equus Infoelicitatis: analisi iconografica di una xilografia dell'Hypnerotomachia Poliphili fra testo e immagine," 4. Roughly translated from, "Il cavallo alato incarnerebbe opposte tendenze ossia l'impulso erotico e insoddisfazione dei sensi in contrapposizione con il virtuoso trionfo dello spirito, mentre i puttini sarebbero gli eroti intenti a contrastare vanamente la Virtù oppure gli amanti infelici perché incapaci di domare i sensi grazie alla Sapienza. In un simile contesto si inserirebbe anche l'immagine dei cavalli guidati da eroti, dipinti in una Allegoria dell'Amore su un pannello di cassone datato all'ultimo decennio del XV secolo."

but for its ability to express the power of the living body and the virtuosity of the artist's skill.

The importance of the monumental horse statue extends into the medieval period. In 1204 four horse statues forged in antiquity were brought to Venice from Constantinople after it was sacked and placed in a prominent position on the exterior of St. Mark's.[83] They are different from the other famous horse bronze of antiquity, the one depicting Marcus Aurelius now in Rome, in that they were made primarily of copper, while Aurelius was a single-pour bronze, and they were probably originally a part of a larger sculpture involving a racing chariot. Yet, during the whole of the 13th and 14th centuries, horse statues like these were a source of great marveling – the techniques that could create such monumental sculptures, done in single pours, with such incredible lifelike detail, and standing with one leg lifted, causing the whole weight of metal to rest upon only three thin horse-legs—such an art by the 13th century had been lost for more than a thousand years.[84] These secular sculptures, placed in such a prominent position on St. Mark's Basilica, must have seemed as if they were mocking sculptors with their unreproducible mastery until Donatello's successful bronze in the middle of the 15th century.

Such horses were a testament to the technological prowess that could create such lifelike, nimble, delicately expressed embodiment in such metallic, monumental power.[85] In the medieval Venetian Republic, they brought profound attention to the artistic rendering of the horse's body, alongside the human body, as indicative of the sculptural pursuit of grasping the suppleness of the body's *aura vitale* in the hardness of stone and bronze.[86] The arising preoccupation with the details of these horses' bodies can be expressed, for example, in Alberti's investigation of horses in his treatise on the proper proportions of horses titled *De Equo Animante* published in 1443. Almost ten years later, Donatello became the first sculptor to reproduce the single-pour horse statue in 1452, with his

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[83] Freeman, Charles. *The Horses of St. Mark's: A Story of Triumph in Byzantium, Paris, and* Venice (New York, NY: Overlook Press, 2004).

[84] Bergstein, Mary. "Donatello's Gattamelata and Its Humanist Audience." *Renaissance Quarterly* vol. 55, no. 3 (2002).

[85] Ramage, Nancy H. "The Reluctant Hero: The Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius, Artist unknown." *What Makes a Masterpiece*, ed. C. Dell (London: Thames and Hudson, 2010), 55.

[86] As written in the Hypnerotomachia Poliphilli, "Per la quale cosa le statue appareano dolorose & affaticate sencia la mento, il quale non sisentiva, per essere prive, perche il significo solamen te non gli pote l'aura vitale inspirare, tanto optimamente imitauano la veritate d'illa natura." Pgs. 42; 33.

Gattamelatta in Padua.[87] He replicated the poses of both the St. Mark's chariot horses and Marcus Aurelius's horse from antiquity, down to the positions of the ears (one forward, one back) to the lift of a front hoof, though he was forced to balance the hoof on a bronze cannonball as he could not figure out how to keep the horse standing with the foot raised free in the air.[88]

Figure 2-5. Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius (2nd century)

In the Capitoline Museums in Rome. Photo from Wikimedia Commons.

In the Renaissance, the 2nd-century Roman bronze equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius (fig. 2-5) standing "in front of one of the great basilicas in Rome, St. John

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[87] Ramage, "The Reluctant Hero: The Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius, Artist unknown," 55.
[88] Ibid.

Lateran" since the 10th century, was also a prominent reminder of the lost art of monumental bronze casting.[89] The renewal of equestrian bronzes not only showcased the regeneration of the art (after more than 1000 years) through technological development in the Renaissance, but further exemplified the expansion of Renaissance art beyond the veneration of saints, royals, and nobles. The regeneration of monumental bronze casting in the Renaissance resonates with Poliphilo's concern that the artistic virtuosity of antiquity had been lost, and the horse statues made with this re-birthed technology were put to the task of rekindling virtuosity itself—not only through their display of artistic skill, but through their subject matter and their expressivity of lifelike embodiment. The commemoration of military figures with such monumental works is furthermore one factor through which scholars point to the rising tide of humanism in the Renaissance. Through the production of such bronzes, the horse's body rose in prominence as well to become – alongside the human body – especially emblematic of artistic pursuits of the imitation of aliveness. There were thus two expressions of the living body exemplified in horse bronzes of the Renaissance: the powerful, virtuosic body of the artist was implied by the powerful determination of what aliveness looked like in monumental bronze. Artists such as Da Vinci and Donatello studied horse anatomy in their quests to produce a monumental bronze equestrian portraiture which could capture vividly alive, naturalistic figures while simultaneously outsizing nature itself, thus producing renderings of the flesh into enormities of hard, metallic bronze.[90] The already extant magnitude of the horse's body— the size, its power, and association with the military—certainly lent itself to the task.

Beyond its use in monumental bronze sculpture, the body of the horse carries with it a vast and longstanding symbolical cosmos. Ever central to the horse's symbolic resonance is its position as the vehicle body for the human being. The body of the horse is treated as a body for the human body; when paired, the human mounted upon the horse, reins in hand, becomes the brains atop the brawn of a horse body. In this way, discourses about the body and soul, the passions and intellect, have long been transposed metaphorically onto the image of rider and horse.

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[89] Ramage, Nancy H. "The Reluctant Hero: The Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius, Artist unknown." *What Makes a Masterpiece*, ed. C. Dell (New York, NY: Thames & Hudson, 2010), 52.
[90] See, for example: Baskett, John. *The Horse in Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

The problematics in such a transposition have served to further inform it. The vast discourses of the mind-body split that extend into antiquity have, in order to split the mind from the body, described the body as a thing with a mind of its own, and by consequence, the mind as a thing with a body of its own. For example, in Platonic thought, the body of the mind has been articulated as a 'soul,' and though stripped of base materiality, the mind as such maintains Plato's essential requirement for a body: it remains intact.[91] Likewise, the body, split from mind, nonetheless has been vastly articulated as a thing with its own desires, its own cravings, its own passions, and thus the mind-body split also gives the body a kind of base autonomy of mind. Horse and rider, as a metaphor for the mind-body split, restate that underlying complexity through its very metaphorical status.

A man who symbolizes mind riding a horse who symbolizes body nonetheless together compose two bodies, with two minds. They are composed together, into a unit of bodily ambulation, one directing, the other obeying, one somewhat at rest, the other in labor. Taken in the terms of their concert with one another, they are a composite body. But taken as two isolated individuals, they describe an agreement, a harmonious relationship achieved only through their mutual discipline. In all of this, the horse and rider describe the mind-body relationship as one defined by the necessity to move: the body is the vehicle for the mind, with its brawn, it carries the mind through space and time, expediting the mind in those tasks which need be accomplished. Essential to this metaphor is the idea that the human's mindfulness requires him to be a being riding upon materiality. The intellectually powerful human catches a mere ride upon the body, upon the materiality of himself, which is always therefore other to him.

The delicacy of the powerful horse body was also merged with the display of artist's skill in monumental bronze. Renaissance rejuvenation of horse bronzes was particularly

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[91] "When all the construction of the soul had become agreeable to the mind of her constructor, he proceeded to build within her all that was bodily in form, and he joined them with one another by bringing them together center to center; and once she had been woven in every direction from the center to the outermost heaven and had covered it in a circle from the outside as with a veil, she herself turned within herself and began a divine beginning of a life unceasing and thoughtful and for all time. And while heaven's body was born visible, soul herself was invisible and partook of calculation and attunement." Plato, *Timaeus*. Translated and edited by Peter Kalkavage (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2016) 21-22.

concerned with the ability to limit the number of hooves touching the ground.[92] For example, by 1482, Leonardo DaVinci was embroiled in an attempt to build the most massive equestrian sculpture ever made, balanced on two of its four feet. Due to French invasion, the bronze DaVinci planned was never finished, though he did build a 24-foot clay model of the horse on the property of its commissioner, the Duke of Sforza, which was subsequently destroyed by French soldiers. The earliest surviving Renaissance equestrian statue, the *Equestrian statue of Gattamelata* by Donatello (fig. 2-4), was finished in 1453, and was widely admired. Like the *Equus Infoelicitatis* in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Donatello's equestrian statue displayed one ear pointed forward and one ear pointed back.[93] Much like the nature of Poliphilo admired the horse sculpture in the book, Donatello's sculpture was similarly praised and discussed for its ability to bring the imitation of aliveness to the surface of bronze, just as if it were quivering under the surface of the horse's skin. According to the art historian Alissa Ardito, of most interest are:

> The muscles of the neck, which, through the slightest projection and recession, seem to move under skin, which ripples from the turning of the head. The popping veins in the neck are captured as are the bony protuberances, in particular the poll, the area between the ears, one of which flickers behind, attentive to the commands of its rider.[94]

Ardito's description of Donatello's statue holds a definite likeness to Poliphilo's emphasis on the horse's "bony, thin," head, and its "two small ears, one pointed forwards, the other back."[95] Both the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s horse, and Donatello's *Gattamelata*, further resemble the Roman statue of Marcus Aurelius's steed with one ear pointed forward and one pointed back. Donatello was the first to achieve the Renaissance passion for renewing technology that would allow for monumental bronze casting, with one stipulation: he was unable to balance the mass of bronze on three legs, as was the case

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[92] This proclivity of Renaissance monumental horse bronzes followed after the models for such bronzes from antiquity. See: Van Ackeren, Marcel. "The Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius." In *Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World* (Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 264-77.

[93] In the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, this fact about the ears is described: "Its head was free and unbridled, with two small ears, one pointed forwards, the other back." *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, trans. Godwin, 32.

[94] Ardito, Alissa. "Equestrian statue of Gattamelata at Padua." https://classicist.org/programs/collections/historic-plaster-cast/catalogue/european-renaissance/080-020-001/ Accessed July 11, 2017.

[95] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Jocelyn Godwin, trans., 32, 42.

in the Marcus Aurelius statue.[96] In the end, he had to balance the front hoof carefully on a small cannonball. Da Vinci's plans to outdo him with a substantially more massive bronze equus made of a single pour with two legs aloft only failed due to political circumstances. Da Vinci's intent nonetheless lays bare the underlying pursuits of Renaissance monumental bronze horse statues: to produce a massive work, brimming with life, balanced delicately, on the largest scale possible, in a single pour. Likewise, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* expressly describes the equus statue as likewise "made in one piece."[97]

In her essay on the *Gattamelata* statue, Mary Bergstein further related Donatello's horse to Alberti's writing on the best proportions of horses (titled *De Equo Animante*), even going so far as to state that "*De Equo Animante* (ca. 1444-47) and Donatello's *Gattamelata* appear to have been mutually influential."[98] Alberti's writing almost certainly informed the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, which at times directly quotes Alberti's ideas on architecture.

Likewise, Bergstein connects Alberti's writing on the proportions of a horse to his architectural ideas, as "he stated that a horse must be well blanketed and groomed, because even statues made of ivory or bronze would rot under accumulated grime."[99] Describing Alberti's proportions for the horses, Bergstein emphasizes the head, which should have "small flexible ears, flared nostrils, and a short abundant (almost curly, "subcrispa") mane that falls to the right of the horse's neck."[100] Within the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Poliphilo likewise emphasizes this aspect of the horse, and mentions the horse's "long, wavy mane falling down over the right-hand side of its neck."[101]

Through the details of its ears, its mane, and quivering lifelikeness, the equus statue of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* announces its relationship to artistic feats of the Renaissance which claimed the re-emergence of virtuosic monumentality achieved by the pioneering greatness of artists and expressive of the pioneering greatness of individuals.

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[96] Ramage, Nancy H. "The Reluctant Hero: The Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius, Artist unknown." *What Makes a Masterpiece*, ed. C. Dell (London 2010), 55.

[97] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* trans. Jocelyn Godwin, 33.

[98] Bergstein, Mary. "Donatello's Gattamelata and Its Humanist Audience." *Renaissance Quarterly* vol. 55, no. 3 (2002): 833.

[99] Bergstein, Mary, "Donatello's Gattamelata and Its Humanist Audience," 864.

[100] Ibid.

[101] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* trans. Jocelyn Godwin, 32. The image of the horse in the *Hypnerotomachia* shows the mane on the left – one of many inaccuracies reflective of the transformation of linguistic description to printed images in the book.

Yet, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s statue also maintained a difference: its rider was not a hero of conquest, but a group of hapless children. Through their presence, the statue ties the details which point to the history of monumental bronze horse statues to that which implicates horses in other iconological lineages. As discussed by De Nicola, horse images which were perhaps iconologically associated with the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* might include funerary art such as the child equestrian statue found in a tomb at Acilia (Rome) dating to the 3rd century AD, the fall of Phaethon from the Sun Chariot, or medieval imagery of Fortuna riding her horse.[102]

2.2.5 The Horse Body and Iconographies of Fortune

De Nicola points out how the scholars Giovanni Pozzi and Maurizio Calvesi saw the horse statue and the reliefs in a more general sense as a compound symbol of misfortune. Their analysis fits with the inscription on the base below the horse's head, which claimed the statue was a literal 'equus infoelicitatis,' or 'horse of unhappiness/unfruitfulness.'[103] Particularly citing Pozzi, De Nicola writes, "the horse is therefore an allegory of misfortune, through which it reminds us of the 'Seio horse, misfortune bearer' mentioned later in the text by Colonna himself."[104]

The Seio horse was first written about in the *Noctes Atticae* by Aulus Gellius in the 2nd century. Pozzi and Calvesi's analyses extend from Poliphilo's own words, who makes a comment that his "retentive memory brought to mind the unfortunate horse Sejanus" upon seeing the statue.[105] As written in the *Noctes Atticae*, the beautiful Seio horse was a descendent of the mythological mares of Argos won by Hercules in his 8th labor from the king Diomedes of Bistoni. The horse was prized for its beauty but was fabled as the cause

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[102] De Nicola, "Equus Infoelicitatis: analisi iconografica di una xilografia dell'Hypnerotomachia Poliphili fra testo e imagine."

[103] As written by J. Hart, "the word 'infoelicis' has a richness in Latin that English is hard pressed to approximate because it can mean unhappy, unfortunate, unlucky. Unproductive, and unfruitful" See: Hart, J. *Shakespeare: Poetry, History, and Culture*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 19.

[104] De Nicola, "Equus Infoelicitatis: analisi iconografica di una xilografia dell'Hypnerotomachia Poliphili fra testo e immagine," 13. Translated by the author, original reads "il cavallo è quindi un'allegoria della sfortuna, per la quale fa propendere il ricordo del 'cavallo di Seio, portatore di sfortuna' menzionato più tardi nel testo dallo stesso Colonna." Francesco Colonna is the most widely accepted possible author for the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili amongst scholars.

[105] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* trans. Jocelyn Godwin, p. 35

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of great misfortune for its first owner, Gnaeus Seio (and all subsequent owners).[106] Poliphilo's mention of Sejanus throws a bit of ambiguity into this interpretation, however: he doesn't call the horse by its usual Italian name as *cavallo Seio*, but instead as *cavallo Seiano*. For De Nicola, this ambiguity brings up yet another story of misfortune: that of the Roman equestrian Sejanus (in Italian Seiano) from the 1st century, who was put to death by Tiberius for his power-hunger and deceit.[107] As a member of the Equestrian class, Sejanus's rank was tied etymologically to the horse, and his misfortune arose from the fact that he sought to push past the restrictions usually connected to such a status.

2.2.6 The Ambiguity of Antecedents

The image of the horse statue in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* which so drives iconographic comparison is a contestable source for such interpretation. Produced by an unknown artist, the beautiful images that fill the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,* while ingeniously composed in relation to the layout of the text, are often imperfect representations of the text's descriptions.[108] While the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s print of the statue clearly shows cherub-like babies, Poliphilo's description calls the figures instead 'adolescentulia,' which appears to be a diminutive alteration (using the base -ul-) for the Latin term for youths, or 'adulescentia'. The closest definition would be 'little youths.' Poliphilo then uses a similar term for the relief of Nymphs grabbing flowers out of the hands of the young men picking them. This time, without the diminutive, he calls them 'adolescenti.' In so doing, he draws a connection between the horse statue and the reliefs on its base through words – he addresses the ambiguity of images with the associative powers of words. Contrary to descriptions arising in scholarly analysis of the

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[106] "Gnaeum Seium quempiam scribam fuisse eumque habuisse equum natum Argis on earth Graecia, de quo fame constans esset, tamquam de genere Equorum Progenitus foret, here Diomedis Thracis fuissent, quos Hercules Diomede occiso and Thrace Argos perduxissent." See: Gellius, Aulus. *The Attic Nights*, III, J.C. Rolfe, trans., (London: Heinemann, 1984), 312.

[107] De Nicola, Flavia. "Equus Infoelicitatis: analisi iconografica di una xilografia dell'Hypnerotomachia Poliphili fra testo e immagine." *Bollettino Telematico dell'Arte*, n. 765 (4 April 2015): 14

[108] The Tempus dance is a wonderful example of this, as multiple of the figures depicted in the image are visibly unhappy in their forward-facing, supposedly-happy faces. Notably, various changes in the images made in Kerver's French translation of the text attest to his attempt to more perfectly render the text into imagistic representation.

Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, Poliphilo does not use the terms that would directly point them out as 'putti.'[109] Various other cherub-like figures appear throughout the text, yet Poliphilo never identifies them as cherubs, even while directly naming many other mythological figures, including Cupid himself, who shows up later in the narrative to act as a boatswain.

It is important to note that the constellation of figures used for iconographic analysis of the statue is nonetheless absent from it. The statue does not present definite representations of Janus, Fortuna, Thalia and Melpomene, the Horae, Cupid, or Pegasus for that matter. Instead, the symbological references which correlate to such divine figures are carefully transposed to an imagistic group with unclear identities. The *bifrons* of Janus or Fortuna is affixed to the heads of otherwise anonymous dancing men and maidens, and the reference to flower-snatching Horae is generalized into unidentified nymphs teasing youths. The statue's association with Cupid is likewise obscured behind the text's insistence upon using 'adolescentulia,' to describe the babies clutching at the horse as it moves.

To address the underlying ambiguity of the *Equus Infoelicitatis* sculptural group, it is then necessary to turn back Poliphilo, upon whom the statue relies for its description in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. In his own way, the protagonist figure of Poliphilo acts as a pseudo-iconographer, interpreting symbological allusions from each work he encounters by tracing its relationship to stories and ideas from antiquity, bringing it to life by describing its 'afterlife' in his dream world. Yet, as a merely fictitious figure written into a Renaissance dream world of antiquity, Poliphilo follows the literary path laid out around him by his author. He follows his iconographic readings not to seek out an ultimate historical truth; instead his art-historical commentary serves narratively to move him toward the woman who inflames his passion. Along the way, he speaks what he learns from works of architecture and sculpture, and also from nymphs and goddesses who teach him the meaning of such works in order that they might point him toward the love he pursues. Though Poliphilo is a reliable narrator, he is an unreliable historian. His interpretations fit the aims of the work of fiction that contains him. Historians who have worked on the

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[109] The text seems to avoid using Latin or Italian terms for Cherubs or Cupids as a rule. Numerous sculptures in the text involve babies, and later narrative in the text involves a winged boy connected with Eros, but in no such cases does the *Hypnerotomachia* point directly to the idea of a Cherub or Cupid but uses other terminologies.

Hypnerotomachia Poliphili have often worked on the sculptures and works of architecture described in the text beyond the terms in which Poliphilo describes them, as if their reality as objects surpasses his realness as their interpreter. Yet, the challenge presented by this work of fiction is instead to consider the objects just as subjective as the subjective protagonist describing them. There is, in the end, a reason they are merely objects written into the first-person singular words of the protagonist.

2.3 The Somatic Protagonist

Despite his erudition, Poliphilo's interpretations are not authoritative. Poliphilo's interpretations are constantly tempered by his insecurity and confusion. If Poliphilo lacks certainty as a guide, scholarship on the Tempus dance and the *Equus Infoelicitatis* sculptural group are a testament to the fact that academic readers have 'gone over Poliphilo's head,' so to speak, to analyze the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili's* art works when he does not. In their iconographic fervor, such scholars fill in the gaps in Poliphilo's knowledge in order to extract from the statues and works of architecture in the book a clear sense of their antecedents. Implied by such research is the failure of Poliphilo as a guide, while the statues and architectural works he describes, quite contrastingly, are treated as masterpieces of Renaissance erudition. Such an approach to the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* reeks of a strange privileging of objects, though objects and characters in the book share the same fictional status and the book is written in Poliphilo's first-person voice. It may not be precisely for this reason that the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is compared to James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*, but considering how Joyce once quipped, "I've put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries arguing over what I meant," perhaps it should be.[110] Poliphilo's simple confusion, his guesses and inaccuracies, are not a hurdle to scholarly work on the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. They are instead information, and a reminder of the fundamental ambiguity that arises from interpretation itself. Foundational to Poliphilo's navigation in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is how he responds to the ambiguity all around him. Having no idea where to go

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[110] Ellmann, Richard. *James Joyce*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959).

or what signs to follow as he pursues the woman he loves, Poliphilo nonetheless responds to ambiguity with delight. His delight manifests as a somatic response to whatever he discovers around him, and it operates on his behalf, leading him toward what he seeks even as he doesn't realize it, even in the absence of his knowledge. The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* thus presents Poliphilo's soma as his honing device which directs him in his present state of ignorance so that he can later gain conscious awareness. Within the setting of the book – which resonates with Renaissance-era Neoplatonist humanism – Poliphilo is himself an expression of Lucretian Epicureanism.[111]

So, when Poliphilo discovers the sculptural group of images composing the base and bronze of the *Equus Infoelicitatis*, he at first provides only a few fleeting responses. As previously mentioned, he relates the statue to the Seiano horse. He further comments that the children falling from the horse's back seemed distressed, "one could not tell, in the end, whether this careless race-horse had satisfied any of his jockeys, but I doubted it, for the figures seemed sad and weary."[112] He twice mentions—for both the horse itself and the Tempus dancers— that the only absence from the sculpture was that of actually being alive. As with many other sculptures, he calls this "aura vitale"—essentially, 'life force' or 'breath of life.'[113] He calls the statue the better of the work of Hiram, who built David's palace in Jerusalem in the Old Testament, and Perillus (of whom Diodorus Siculus wrote in 44 B.C.), who designed a mechanical bronze bull used by the tyrant to punish his own people.[114] He conjectured that the horse was aiming toward the open portal of a vast pyramid nearby which he believes has been directly carved into a mountain. He finally relents that the statue is a rare survivor of time's ravages, finishing a description of the

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[111] The presence of Alberti's architectural principles in the Hypnerotomachia are not directly Neoplatonist, but as written by Charles H. Carman, Alberti "like the Florentine Neoplatonists, like Cusanus, and like humanists in general … shared notions of mankind's responsibility in earthly, specifically, civic, activity… Alberti can be shown to share much with both civic humanism and with Neoplatonists of the later century." See: Carman, Charles H. *Leon Battista Alberti and Nicholas Cusanus: Towards an Epistemology of Vision for Italian Renaissance Art and Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 9. For more on the Lucretian nature of Poliphilo, see: Dronke, Peter. "Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia* and its Sources of Inspiration," 218.

[112] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,* Godwin, trans., 33

[113] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Godwin, trans., 42. On page 33: "Per la quale cosa le statue appareano dolorose & affaticate sencia la mento, il quale non sisentiva, per essere prive, perche il significo solamen te non gli pote l'aura vitale inspirare, tanto optimamente imitauano la veritate d'illa natura."

[114] Avery, Charles. "'The Bull of Perillus': A Relief Attributed to Giovanni Caccini*." Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies,* Vol. 6, (1971): 23.

horse's head by veering off-topic to exclaim, "O ancient artificiers, our holy fathers, what meanness infected your great virtue, that, as our inheritance you took such riches with you to the tomb?"[115]

Though Poliphilo's words have been scoured for their encoded significance to the scholarly task of rending the *Equus Infoelicitatis* sculptural group into its iconographic particulates, it is Poliphilo's statements on the implied movement of bodies in sculpture that he is most vehement about. And he finds it not only in this particular statue, but in numerous works, and so he describes again and again the lifelikeness, the near aliveness, of what he sees. From his description of the 'adolescentulia' of the *Equus Infoelicitatis* his original Italo-Latin reads:

> Per la quale cosa le statue appareano dolorose, et affaticate sencia lamento, il quale non si sentiva per essere prive, perché il significo solamente non gli potè l'aura vitale inspirare, tanto optimamente imitavano la veritate dilla natura.[116]

His statement translates roughly as follows:

> The statues, therefore, seemed painful and tired, but one could not hear the lament; They were only deprived of the fact that the craftsman could not inspire the vital aura, even if they imitated the truth of nature in such a way.[117]

'Aura vitale' as expressed by Poliphilo can be traced back to Roman usage both through its presence in Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura*, and by consequence, Virgil's first book of the *Aeneid*. Virgil, who was greatly influenced by Lucretius's work, wrote the words, 'auras vitalis' coming from the mouth of Venus to Aeneas, to whom she says, "Quisquis es, haud, credo, invisus caelestibus auras vitalis carpis," meaning, "whoever you are I don't think you draw the breath of life while hated by the gods."[118] She uses the term used by Lucretius for his Epicurean poem *De Rerum Natura,* where it operates as a Latin translation of Epicurus's concept of *pneuma*. In his third book of *De Rerum Natura*, Lucretius argues

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[115] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* Godwin trans., 42

[116] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Venetiis : Mense decembri.M.ID. in aedibus Aldi Manutii, accuratissime), 35v.

[117] Ibid. As translated by Jocelyn Godwin, this reads instead: "The figures seemed sad and weary. If one heard no lament, it was only because they were not alive, for the imitation of nature was so perfect that they lacked only the breath of life."

[118] Virgil, Aeneid. 1: 387 - 388.

not for the distinction between mind, body, and soul, but that they are inexorably intertwined, codependent, existing in life together and ceasing together in death:

> When the body's wrappings are unwound,
> And when the vital breath is forced without,
> The soul, the senses of the mind dissolve, –
> Since for the twain the cause and ground of life
> Is in the fact of their conjoined estate.[119]

Rediscovered in 1417 by Poggio Bracciolini and considered highly anti-theist, Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura* caused an explosive response amongst 15th century scholars in what is now northern Italy. It was published in print by 1472 in Brescia. As a source-work for Poliphilo's approach to works of art, its clash with Neoplatonism's hierarchical approach which lowered the physical body in relation to the divinity of mind and ideas accounts for the difference between Poliphilo as a protagonist hungry for experience, and the often more heavily Neoplatonist position in the works of art he discovers. A work of art, lacking 'aura vitale,' can take the Neoplatonist position, dividing itself amongst its parts into a depictive expression of pathos that is, by its objective nature, detached from its own subject matter.

2.3.1 Poliphilo's 'aura vitale' and his reader Aby Warburg

The *Equus Infoelicitatis* statue and Poliphilo's descriptions of it drew the special attention of the art historian Aby Warburg from his earliest investigations of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* as a PhD student. Though he never published any detailed analysis of it, Warburg's long-term study of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* greatly influenced the direction his research would take during his lifetime.[120] Fascinated with images, Warburg was drawn to assessing those found in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, but it is noteworthy that he also focused acutely on Poliphilo's descriptions that were attentive to the movements of human figures and their fabrics. According to April Oettinger, Warburg was very interested in the Tempus dance and Amissio reliefs on the

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[119] The Latin Reads: "*Resoluto corporis omni tegmine et eiectis extra vitalibus auris dissolui sensus animi fateare necessest atque animam, quoniam coniunctast causa duobus.*"

[120] Oettinger, April. "Aby Warburg's Nymph and the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*: An Episode in the Afterlife of a Renaissance Romance," *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* Vol. 32, No. 2 (2006): 225–46.

base of the equine statue for their capturing of "drapery, movement, and nymphs."[121] Particularly for those reliefs on the base of the statue, Warburg took pains to transcribe Poliphilo's descriptions,

> Warburg not only noted the context for the reliefs in parentheses 'Breitseite des Postamentes für das Pferd' ('on the long side of the plinth for the horse'), but also underlined the words in the text having to do with movement.[122]

Warburg first unveiled the term *Pathosformeln* in the essay "Dürer and Italian Antiquity" that he presented for the Congress of German Philologists and Teachers in Hamburg.[123] Beginning with Dürer's drawing of the death of Orpheus from 1494, Warburg traced a Pathosformel from its "Renaissance style of depicting life in motion," to its antecedents in "true, antique formulas of intensified physical or psychic expression."[124] In his work on the death of Orpheus, Warburg studied dance as a kind of antecedent for images. Consequently, he perceived the Renaissance's renewal of antiquity as one which operated by shifting 'physical or psychic expression,' into 'depicting life in motion.' The power of the Renaissance for Warburg was thus not its ability to re-birth antiquity, but to transform its pathos into a depiction of such. This he expressed from the beginning of his first essay on Dürer and the death of Orpheus: he wrote on the transference of the Orpheus tale from dance-play to engraving, to its expression by Dürer. All this Warburg did as if he could trace the actual movement of dancer's bodies to their depiction in imagistic forms.

As a foundation for Warburg's larger work on 'Pathosformeln,' his work on the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* gave Warburg a protagonist whose interests in artworks much resembled Warburg's own. Warburg insisted that implied movement within static artworks was a central tenet of Renaissance aesthetics and Poliphilo just happened to agree, likewise stressing again and again the importance of movement to determining the value of a work. Warburg developed his iconographic methods to serve his desire to connect artworks across spans of time, and Poliphilo just happened to be in a dream world ambiguously

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[121] Oettinger, April. "Aby Warburg's Nymph and the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*: An Episode in the Afterlife of a Renaissance Romance," 225–46.

[122] Ibid., 234.

[123] Warburg, Abby. "Dürer and Italian Antiquity." *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity* translated by David Britt (Los Angeles: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999).

[124] Warburg. "Dürer and Italian Antiquity," 555.

suspended between the Renaissance and antiquity, where he read artworks as complex codifications whose imagistic symbology could be drawn from a deep, unconscious well of imagistic cultural memory. Most importantly, Warburg heavily used the Nymph as a navigational device, tracing her movements from poetry to artworks for his development of the concept of Pathosformeln through the study of their arrested states of body movement and fluttering drapery. In the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Poliphilo literally does the same: nymphs lead him through the dream-world as he copiously describes their bodies, movements, behaviors, and dress.

Warburg's attentiveness to Poliphilo adds depth to research which has explored how Warburg depended on Renaissance literary responses to the visual arts in order to develop his own ideas. Also, of particular importance to Warburg was the work of Alberti. As described by LeFaivre, "Alberti was the first to lay down a set of rules for representing movement" in his work *De pictura*.[125] In his monograph on Aby Warburg, Christopher Johnson further argued that Alberti's Renaissance thought influenced Warburg's thought on the Renaissance:

> If Alberti in the early fifteenth century reads Ovid to help him describe how images conveying great emotion should decorously function, then Warburg in the early twentieth century turns to Alberti and Ovid to help him map the metaphoric function of Pathosformeln—those dynamic recursive images, topoi, or forms that have from Homer to Mussolini helped humanity reconcile or alienate the forces of reason and unreason.[126]

As a protagonist, Poliphilo spoke to Warburg as a voice rooted in the Renaissance that, though fictional, carried within itself the elements that would be later fundamental to Warburg's concept of *pathosformeln*. In many ways, Poliphilo more deeply connects to Warburg's conception of the pathosformeln than Alberti: he not only discusses but further epitomizes Warburg's theory. As he journeys through the narrative of the book, Poliphilo expresses and experiences conflicting yet simultaneous states of being. In moments of erotic passion, Poliphilo often describes holding himself back from his drive toward impulsive lasciviousness. He struggles between the profound depth of experience offered

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[125] LeFaivre, *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, 135.

[126] Johnson, Christopher. *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 51.

to him by his senses and his own desire to control and thus balance his sensuous engagement with the context around him. Likewise, Warburg's concept of Pathosformeln was rooted in the multiplicity of being expressed within artworks, and he settled on the imitation of movement as the very core expression of that multiplicity. His thoughts on the matter turned to details of difference which produce expressions of movement; the simultaneous movement of bodies under wind-swept tunics provided his work one central example. In Renaissance works of art, thought Warburg, the aliveness of the body was not merely expressed by bodies, but in the difference between those bodies and their draperies, in the gap that can be felt between them though it is merely implied to the witness's gaze cast upon the surface of a painting.

Warburg turned to visual artworks as a key to his exploration of Pathosformeln for their ability to arrest the constant movement of life. He understood arrest itself as essential to the contemplative drives of human society. When Ernst Gombrich wrote on how Warburg was influenced by Kant's essay "What Does It Mean to Orient Oneself in Thought?" he described Kant's idea as to how "a human being constitutes an environment placing signs [Zeichenstezung] – if he is able to distance his "I" from this "not I."[127] Gombrich then related this distance between the first-person singular and the external world for how it influenced Warburg's conception of 'thought-space:'

> Warburg dubs "thought-space" this achieved distance from the environment [diese gewonnene Distanz zur Umwelt], and the creation of thought-space [Denkraumshöpfung] the constitutive act of every ontogenetic and philogenetic development.[128]

The Warburgian 'thought-space' Gombrich describes connects the distanced, thinking first-person singular to essential processes of biological development. Thus, the 'I' of the protagonist, like the 'I' of the historian is not isolated from ontogenetic and philogenetic development or treated merely as a mode of reflection or consideration of such processes from the exterior. The self-distancing first-person singular 'I' is instead articulated as a generative device which claims its distance in order to produce processes

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[127] Gombrich, *Geburtstagsatlas*. Quoted from Johnson, Christopher. *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images,* 27.

[128] Ibid.

which by their nature reintegrate it. Such ideas on the reification of the isolated individual resonate with the work of Raymund Ruyer, who in the mid- 20th century sought to redefine conceptions of how the body, the thinking individual and processes of generation interrelate. Ruyer defined the composition of a body as a thing determined by a viewer who would reify it and thus distance it and isolate it from himself. In terms of ontogeny, Ruyer found a problem in the metaphorical conceptions that put conscious thought at the source of such generative processes. Ruyer argued such metaphorical biologism by looking, for example, into its consequences for biologists in the mid-20th century. He wrote in *Neofinalism* that,

> It resides in the postulate accepted by all biologists, it seems: every invention presupposes a brain or a "cerebral" consciousness. So organic finality, if it exists, has to rest on something that resembles a human consciousness, on the understanding of an anthropomorphic God… It is a pure and simple statement of obvious facts, of one fact above all, which no one can contest: the organism forges its nervous systems before using it. The brain is thus an "organ of transport" of finalist activity; it is evidently not its "organ" tout court.[129]

If "thought-space," then, is to be an igniter of ontogenetic development, "thought" cannot itself be distanced from its vestment in the matter of bodies beyond or before cerebral consciousness. "Thought-space" as ontogenetic by necessity disrupts the mind-body split to a radical degree. As formulated by Ruyer,

> The problem posed by the duality of consciousness and the body, consciousness-organism and body-organism, is illusory for the excellent reason that there is no body. The "body" is the byproduct of the perception of a being by another being. The perceived being is perceived by definition as an object, in the etymological sense of the term. It appears as independent of the observer, and this leads him to substantialize it. This substantialized object is then called a 'body.'[130]

The "body" seen from the exterior is already objectified, is already perceived from the exterior as more lifelike than alive. With or without his acknowledgement of such, Warburg's work consistently implied this problem of the 'body' as an essential component

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[129] Ruyer, Raymond. *Neofinalism*, Alyosha Edlebi, trans. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 35 - 36.

[130] Ruyer, Raymond. *Neofinalism*, 77.

of artworks. He found power in the arrest of motion and pathos of bodies depicted within the objects of artworks precisely because such works likewise lent themselves to be substantialized. Warburg found a necessity in the seeming of artifice, the imitation of images, that confidently rendered the movement of life into their stillnessnesses. Artworks express this problem of exteriorization, but also, the power it affords to examine the fundamental depictiveness of exteriors. In their reiteration of exterior, they consequently imply what cannot be seen: the interior of living, the aliveness itself – the soma, pneuma, or aura vitale.

As noted by the historian Christopher Johnson, Warburg's conceptions of Pathosformeln were deeply resonant with Walter Benjamin's Passagen-Werke.[131] Johnson pointed out Benjamin's "oft-repeated maxim," that "history breaks down into images, not into stories, and how Benjamin expanded this conception back toward the necessity of arrest for thought.[132] As Benjamin wrote in *Illuminations*,

> Thinking involves not only the flow of thoughts, but their arrest as well.
> Where thinking suddenly stops in a constellation pregnant with tensions, it
> gives that constellation a shock, by which it crystallizes into a monad.[133]

In his own investigation of the image, Warburg turned to the implication of motion with its states of imagistic arrest as an ultimate expression of the simultaneity of the uncontrollable slippage of pathos and the human struggle to order it into sense (or as Johnson puts it, reason and unreason).[134] Warburg's point was not that the form of the image ultimately controls the chaos of movement it depicts. The objecthood of an image and the subjecthood of its depiction come together out of a duality. By depicting movement while stabilizing and balancing it into composition, an image could thus become the connective tissue for the otherwise unresolvable difference of interior soma and exterior body. History which breaks down into images and the arrest of thought pointed Warburg toward a conception of thinking itself as arising through the tension between the somatic

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[131] Johnson, *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images,* 16.

[132] Ibid, 17.

[133] Benjamin, Walter. *Illuminations*, Harry Zohn, trans. (New York: Shocken, 1988), 262 - 263.

[134] Johnson, *Memory, Metaphor, and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images*, p. 51.

experience of the world and the attempt to arrest that experience into imagistic form, into a body.

If such is the case, thinking arises through both its flow and its own depiction in arrest. It is not merely a response to duality, but arises in the gap (like that between the Nymph's legs and her garb) between the churning movement of the world and the human pursuit of its image or reification. The Equus statue group – with its Tempus dance, and Amissio relief – is an excellent example of this gap amongst the works of art in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Of the sculptures Poliphilo experiences in the book, he responds uniquely to the Equus statue in that, while admiring its lifelike beauty, he nonetheless interprets tension between its beauty and the pessimism of its subject matter. "I was quite amazed as I mused and gazed with delighted curiosity at this huge erection… every member shared impeccably in the noble harmony of the whole," says Poliphilo of the execution of the object.[135] Nonetheless, in his every description of its figures, he articulates the overflow of pathos, struggle, and misfortune from which it derives its balanced composition. The tension between the beautiful, intact objecthood of the statue and the composed, calculated balance of its figures on the one hand, and the overflowing movement of misfortune and struggle on the other, is a tension core to the Equus statue, just as it was core to Warburg's conception of Pathosformeln. Warburg described this tension expressed between bodies and objects as one that could drive to the surface of an artwork an external expression of implied inner experience, of the soma. His idea was thus fundamentally about the artistic pursuit to expose somatic interiority as the expression of thinking through artworks.

Warburg's analysis of movement and its arrest into depiction thus begins to answer the question near the beginning of this chapter as to why Poliphilo valued the depiction of movement in the Tempus dance relief while simultaneously sensing the futility of the dance and its arrest into endless choreographic circulation. As Poliphilo worked to gain control of his somatic experience of artworks, he depended upon their ability likewise to distance themselves from their subject matter. Their ability to introduce depictive seeming into their objective being allowed Poliphilo to go on his journey toward mastery of his sensual

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[135] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* Godwin, trans., 35

witnessing. The process Poliphilo undergoes over the course of the work clearly shows this: while at first, he is literally overwhelmed by his sensual experience of artworks, over the course of the book he gains greater power over himself, he gains the ability to hold back and wait. By the time he discovers Polia (though he does not immediately recognize her as his beloved), he is overtaken with desire but he is able to control his response and thus respect her virginity. The book concludes with a long series of rituals the lovers undergo to give order and ritualistic sense to their love. Before his physical consummation of his desire for Polia, Poliphilo maintains a delicate distance from her through these rituals, a distance from which he can experience the sensuality of his love consciously and thoughtfully by arresting her exteriorization from himself. His "thought-space" emerges as a form of waiting and describing. His consummation with Polia is withheld, and along the way he instead turns her into images through his words. His incomplete desire fuels his attentiveness, his attentiveness fuels his sensual engagement, and his sensual engagement fuels the presence of this thought. Prior to meeting with Polia in his dream, he has learned the lesson of "festina lente," as the time it takes to consummate love through artworks and the ideas on somatic experience that they've arrested into anthropomorphic forms. In this way, Poliphilo transfers the pause of artworks back into the flowing time of his life, and their depicted bodies into a way of going about sensual engagement. In other words, he has constructed his rational relation to his soma through observing its implied presence in the 'thought-space' of artworks themselves.

In all of this, the 'I' of the protagonist—whether he be the fictional Poliphilo or the art historian Warburg— emerges to use somatic experience as a reference point necessary to the discussion of art objects. In the end, Warburg's project of studying the passage of pathosformeln through time always demanded that he consider artworks through how their witnesses engaged with them. His conception of pathosformeln has greatly influenced the ways in which artworks relate to the passage of human history. Yet, what has been left out of discussions on Warburg is the profound way in which his work further challenged the objectification of art by showing how its consistent interrelations with its witnesses by consequence hold the power to express back to us the intricate expressions of aliveness in the world of exteriors to which our bodies and ourselves are uniquely subjected.

2.3.2 Poliphilo's Philosophy

The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* derives its sensuousness, in part, by entangling Neoplatonist conceptions of artfulness with the Lucretian vision of materiality. Poliphilo is very clearly Lucretian – his love is driven by his desire; in erotics he aligns himself with the nature of the world and thinks through his physical being toward spiritual transcendence through desire itself. Poliphilo is not surrounded by a dream environment that mirrors back to him his way of being, however. As written earlier in this chapter, the Tempus dance likely took its title from Macrobius's reference to time and the two-faced Janus. When the framework of 'Neoplatonism' was developed by 19th century historians, Macrobius was identified as an early medieval Neoplatonist, and his extant works were central texts in the revival of Neoplatonism in the Renaissance.

The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* has "generally been regarded as typical of the 'paganized' Neoplatonism of the fifteenth century."[136] Rebekah Smick has responded to general scholarly identification of the book as Neoplatonic by pointing out simply that "there is no Platonic abandonment of sensual knowledge" within the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*.[137] Against divergent scholarly work which, through the "amorous adventures of its main character," have otherwise framed the book as "medieval and derivative for reasons that stem largely from its repetition of well-used formulae from the courtly love tradition," Smick instead foregrounds the "specifically Aristotelian moral philosophy," present in the work, "most notably as expressed in the *Nicomachean Ethics*."[138] Smick frames Poliphilo's sensual touch and moral yearnings as Aristotelian. Perhaps, however, Poliphilo's touch and his yearnings are too erotic to fit neatly within the kind of tactility and pedagogical experientialism proposed in *Nicomachean Ethics*. Smick's perspective, however, serves to foreground the more general possibility that the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* does not align purely with a singular literary or philosophical tradition, but instead

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[136] Smick, Rebekah. "Touch in the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: The Sensual Ethics of Architecture." *Sensible Flesh*: *On Touch in Early Modern Culture*, Elizabeth D. Harvey, ed. From Smick's endnotes on her article, 296.

[137] Smick, Rebekah. "Touch in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*: The Sensual Ethics of Architecture." In *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture* edited by Elizabeth D. Harvey. Endnotes, 296.

[138] Smick, "Touch in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*: The Sensual Ethics of Architecture," 205-206.

allows various philosophical perspectives to flood into its pages, manifesting as a diversity of forms, spaces, experiences, and delights.

Scholars who have worked on the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* have not only identified the text with Aristotelian thought, Neoplatonism, and Epicurean philosophy through Lucretius, but further as a descendent of the idyllic pastoral, bucolic romanzo d'amore, as a form of architectural trattato, and as a descendent of dream literature extending back to Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, with the late-antique *Psychomachia* which influenced the emergence of such works as *Romance of the Rose*, *Everyman*, and *Piers Plowman*.[139] As is exemplified by the Equus statue and Poliphilo's engagement with it, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* seems to pack as much referential erudition into each described sculpture, building, and interaction as possible. It is interesting to note, however, that such 'literary traditions' were already enmeshed with each other prior to their clarification by historians. Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis,* for example, mutually influenced medieval dream literature as well as the works of Boethius and Macrobius, who are two authors identified by historians as seminal to the rise of early medieval Neoplatonism and its reemergence in the Renaissance, and both of whom have been identified as influences on the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Through all of this, Poliphilo only travels, seeming to attach himself completely to none of these, but partially, as well, to all. In other words, his Lucretianism allows him to indulge in perspectival variety, and to emerge from it materially moved but unchanged at his foundation and its origin in desire.

2.3.3 The sensual soma, the material environment, and the passage of time

The divide historians have identified between Aristotelian thought and Neoplatonism is instead expressed in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* more simply as the divide between the protagonist and his environment of artworks and architecture. The Tempus dance, for example, resonates with Neoplatonism as it has been directly related to

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[139] See: LeFaivre, *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, 8; Smick, "Touch in the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: The Sensual Ethics of Architecture," 207. See also: Hallengren, Anders. "The Cauldron of Concupiscence." *Pangs of Love and Longing: Configurations of Desire in Premodern Literature*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2013), 34.

the Platonic notion of the cosmic dance from Timaeus.[140] Within images of dance, the circle dance was of course the basic means metaphorically to express the cosmic dance of the spheres, and the Tempus dance is one of these. As with each and every component of the *Equus Infoelicitatis* statue, the Tempus dance uses the bodies to build a multifaceted commentary on the nature of forces beyond the mere sphere of the 'body' as such. The image of the Tempus dance through its relationship to the Platonic concept of the 'cosmic dance' already reaches past the dancing of human bodies, toward 'dance' as the organization of time through the choreographic movement of celestial bodies.[141] It is interesting then, that the Tempus dance was presented as a work of representational visual art, and not through the performance of a dance in an artistic fashion. The idea of performed dance is, in fact, included in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, but much later in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* as a performance of a game of chess in a larger banquet.[142] It is thus worth asking why the Tempus dance was rendered in text as a dance represented on stone.

There is, of course, the simple fact that the cosmic dance was not a dance performed, but a dance already in existence, as the time-based movement of nature itself. Such an idea of the cosmic dance resonates with the conception of Francis Edward Sparshott,

> On a Neoplatonic view, if the cosmic dance is really a dance, involving change, it must be dance on the level of 'nature,' the most general manifestation of Plotinus' third hypostasis, 'soul'—best understood as a sort of force of generalized vitality, productive of change and variety as such. But this level is one lower than that of the Ideas, which belong to the second (noetic) hypostasis. In imitating nature, the "sister arts" point toward that higher level of being, to which we aspire; but the cosmic dance is nature dancing (as it were) downward, and represents the level of being on which

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[140] Miller, James L. *Measures of Wisdom: The Cosmic Dance in Classical and Christian Antiquity.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986).

[141] Ibid.

[142] This dance has been carefully analyzed by the scholar Ulrike Zellmann. See: Zellmann, "Simulakren der Verführung. Irrwege der Initiation in der Hypnerotomachia Poliphili." *Ritual als provoziertes Risiko* (Würzburg: Königshausen u. Neumann, 2009),159-186 ; "Das töbliche Eis der Entsagung: Transformationen der Verneinung im Traum des Poliphilo." *Askese und Identität in Spätantike, Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 55-80.

we already are. So, dance has nothing of intellectual uplift in it and cannot so readily be dignified by Neoplatonic rhetoric.[143]

As eloquently as Sparshott makes this point, it is nonetheless untrue that the history of 'cosmic dance' resolutely isolated the 'dance of nature' from the dancing of human bodies. Theories of the dance of the cosmos, in their more than 1000 year history, variously articulated the cosmic dance in terms far exceeding the reified bodies of stars and their cosmic movements, and many such theories specifically discussed the cosmic dance in order to clarify the relationship of the human to natural systems and communication methods between human physical practice and divine forces. An example of historical writing on the cosmic dance that contradicts Sparshott's claim can be found in the extensive work of Philo on the cosmic dance. In those writings, Philo specifically discussed the cosmic dance as a means of ascent through which the contemplating human could mentally rise to the understanding of the Gods.[144] Sparshott, however, was not wrong to say that the cosmic dance is danced already, and does not need to be performed as a dance. Though James L. Miller's study of the history of theological and philosophical writings on the cosmic dance includes many examples of danced performance relating to the cosmic dance, the conception of the cosmic dance expands the concept of dancing to a performative relation between body and cosmos extending beyond the necessity for formal re-iterated in the performance of dance by human bodies.[145] The body is in the cosmic dance before it enacts any other dance as the cosmic dance is the relational choreography of bodies in time.

The circular dancing in the Tempus dance is an indicator of time's relation to cosmic rotations, but the art of the Tempus dance is in the sculptural relief that arrests it. In this way, the sculptural arrest also further clarifies the use of the particular word for time 'Tempus.' As a span of time within its endless cosmological revolution, Tempus emerges like a notching of the movement of time, it cuts its constant movement and arrests

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[143] Sparshott, Francis Edward. *Off the Ground: First Steps to a Philosophical Consideration of the Dance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 94.

[144] See: Miller, James L. "The Leap of the Corybant." *Measures of Wisdom: The Cosmic Dance in Classical and Christian Antiquity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 56-80.

[145] For example, Miller's description of dance in the Acts of John presents a meaningful expression of the extension of ideas of the cosmic dance into the actual performance of dance. See: Miller "Chorus and Charis," *Measures of Wisdom*, 81-139.

fragments or 'lengths' from the whole.[146] In other words, Tempus is a human imposition upon the endless time of the cosmos and its natural flow. It exists therefore amongst the higher, second hypostasis of intellect in Neoplatonic thought. In the case of the Tempus dance, the sculptural arrest to which the dance is subjected gives it just such a human imposition. The endlessness of cosmological time and the implication of human bodies in its system is re-articulated into stone which stabilizes the concept into the sense of an image. The art of sculpture thus imposes the higher intellectual hypostasis upon the nature of time. Poliphilo's response to the Tempus dance suits this explanation, as he almost forlornly expresses the monotonous constancy of turning in the Tempus dance just before praising the sculptural imitation of life expressed in the flowing garments and bodies carved into the arrest of stone.

If the Tempus dance shows a Neoplatonist conception of time through an image of the cosmic dance, however, Poliphilo yet shows no desire himself to follow a Neoplatonic rational purism in his pursuit of sensual engagement and romantic love. Following desire, Poliphilo is resolutely Lucretian. If considered within the philosophical framework of Lucretianism, Neoplatonic Tempus and its clarification of the construct of time gains much more power. As written in Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura*, "Tempus item per se non est," – 'Time also does not exist of itself'.[147] Lucretius continues,

> From things themselves there follows the sense of what has been done in
> the past, then what is present to us, and further what is to follow thereafter;
> nor should we admit that anyone has a sense of time in itself separated from
> the movement of things and their quiet calm.[148]

For Lucretius then, there is no flow of time beyond the material world, but instead, time is manifested through the material world.

The Tempus dance, if it produces from itself a way to perceive the construction of time, does so by anthropomorphizing constructed time into the form of human bodies. In so doing, the Tempus dance presents an image of time and cosmic cycles in a fashion typical to cosmological imagery of the period. The work of Warburg clearly shows this, by

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[146] See: Kennedy, Duncan F. *Antiquity and the Meanings of Time: A Philosophy of Ancient and Modern Literature* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013).

[147] Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, 1.459. Quoted from Kennedy, *Antiquity and the Meanings of Time: A Philosophy of Ancient and Modern Literature*, 160.

[148] Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, 1.459-63.

comparing Renaissance investigations into relations of cosmology, body, and time as expressed in imagistic form. Warburg created a meta-structure of related images on cosmological structure and its basis in the human body for the second (called Panel 'B') in a total series of 82 panels tracking Pathosformeln as a part of his final (and culminating) project in his lifetime, called the *Mnemosyne Atlas*. The project attempted to track how the subterranean formulas of Pathosformeln that moved ghost-like in human memory through the consistent passage of time would surface in particular images at various points in time's progression. As written by Spyros Papapetros, the examples of such surfaced images in Panel B expressed regression into archaic theories of Microcosm and Macrocosm on the basis of the human figure:

> An archaic cosmological belief system embodied in a singular icon: man in the cosmic circle. Here all linear networks, all movements, all relations between earthly and planetary bodies are centered on the fulcrum of the human figure which constantly negotiates its limits within the overwhelming forces of the universe.[149]

If considered as an image of the "cosmic dance," the Tempus dance becomes a multiplicit expression of the human body and its relation to the cosmos: while it relates human beings to the constructed nature of time, it at the same time it lifts up the human body as an expression of universal design. Neither expression of human embodiment, however, suits Poliphilo's aims. Filled with curiosity and amorous desire, Poliphilo is in a dualistic state of self-motivated learning and pursuit of love. He seeks to know what to do with his desire, how to do it right, and how to do it through sensual experience. As Smick notes, this expresses his Aristotelian leanings:

> Because of Aristotle's commitment to the essential unity of body and soul, moral behavior can never be the result of a mere act of understanding. It also requires a somatic enactment of reason's deliberations. Among Aristotelians, love is a critical component in achieving such activity because it is what makes us physically tend toward what is good for us. Love, in Aristotle's view, is an inclination toward the good that was natural to all creatures.[150]

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[149] Papapetros, Spyros. "Introduction to 'Panel B'", Cornell Library's Warburg Institute website *Mnemosyne: Meanderings through Aby Warburg's Atlas*. https://warburg.library.cornell.edu/image-group/panel-b-introduction-1-3?sequence=944

[150] Smick, "Touch in the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: The Sensual Ethics of Architecture", 215

Yet, Poliphilo's love is not a mere foundation for his inclination toward good, but is itself the material means by which his body is thrown into action, by which he comes into animation. Poliphilo's love extends into the Lucretian sense of love and desire as the force that moves materiality into its own existence through which, folding into itself, it produces from itself differentiation, and thus more to be desired. The roots of desire, in the Lucretian sense, are fundamental to the material world and all its inhabitants. Desire, as the root of all materiality, also means in the Lucretian conception that materiality is most fundamentally not form, but movement. As Thomas Nail observes in his work on Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura*, "for Lucretius, first philosophy begins not with the idealist contemplation of immutable truth, but with the material conditions of nature itself."[151] Lucretius began his *De Rerum Natura* with a dedication to Venus, who for Lucretius is "not only the external object of desire of the other gods and of men, but she is the desire itself. She is therefore both the process and the object of desire."[152] Through Venus, Lucretius thus goes about describing the basis of material conditions (and thus the philosopher) through desire,

> Venus is thus the creative desire that moves through and produces the subject and the object, and the desire/pleasure between them. The notion that desire is a lack or negativity is only a regional determination from the limited perspective of the divine or earthly subject, when in fact the desire of Venus is already the ontogenetic precondition for the production of the desiring subject in the first place. The subject and object of desire are therefore co-constituted in the same immanent material flow of desire. Here, Lucretius could not be farther away from the Platonic negativity of desire as a lack. Desire, here, lacks nothing. Desire desires itself in a purely positive feedback or fold.[153]

In its narrative movement, in the expressivity of its protagonist, in its rituals, and expressed ideas, in its sensual celebrations of materiality and erotic love, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is most deeply aligned with Lucretianism. Poliphilo philosophically blossoms over the course of the work by following his desire, which for him is the foundation of his love for Polia. His Lucretianism is self-affirmed mid-way through the book. When offered

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[151] Nail, Thomas. *Lucretius I: Ontology of Motion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 22

[152] Nail, *Lucretius I: Ontology of Motion*, 24.

[153] Nail, *Lucretius I: Ontology of Motion*, 25.

the company of three different troupes of women through three different doorways by two nymph guides – Logistica and Thelemia (whose names mean logic and desire, respectively) – Poliphilo pleases Thelemia by choosing the group of sensuous women behind the door labeled with the words 'mater amoris' and 'Erototrophos' – Venus, mother of love and of Eros.[154] Logistica, hearing his choice, threw her lyre to the ground, breaking it, and fled. Poliphilo's arrival into Lucretian philosophy is thus announced. He chooses the philosophical journey in which Venus is mother, and thus in which the material world (and knowledge of it) are driven by the coursing of desire:

> Lucretius derives his primary names for material nature: māteriēs (matters). Instead of using the Latin word atomus or the Greek word atomos, which have no etymological or theoretical resonances with the rest of the poem, we see instead that his choice of the word māteriēs is directly and immediately related to the primacy of the material mother-goddess who inspires the poet, Venus. But the resonance goes both ways. The concept of māteriēs both maternalises matter and materialises the mother at the same time.[155]

From its onset, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* gives us a dream littered with artworks and peopled with nymphs who restate and reinforce the flowing materiality of Venus. Alberto Pérez-Gómez comments, "human destiny is ultimately in the hands of Fortuna Primigenia, the mother goddess identified with nature, Venus physizoa or generatrix. Human artifacts must be devoted to good fortune, engaging Venus, who, in the words of Lucretius, 'alone gives life and governs the nature of things.'"[156] Thus the Fortuna Bifrons presented within the iconography of the Tempus dance further leads us back to Venus – and thus back to Lucretius as well.

2.3.4 Poliphilo's love and Ficino's commentaries

In 15th century Italy, critique of sensuous touch had become central to Neoplatonistic thought through the work of Ficino, whose widely-circulated commentaries

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[154] Dronke, "Francesco Colonna's Hypnerotomachia and its Sources of Inspiration," 217. See also: Hunt, John Dixon. "The plot of *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* and its afterlives," *Word & Image*, Volume 31, Issue 2 (2015): 131.

[155] Nail, *Lucretius I: Ontology of Motion*, 23

[156] Pérez Gómez, Alberto. *Built Upon Love: Architectural Longing After Ethics and Aesthetics* (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2006), 40.

on Plato's philosophy of love described touch as the exact form of sensual engagement most expressly critiqued. The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, as a love story saturated in Neoplatonic references, departs significantly from Ficino's important work, almost as if critiquing it directly.[157]

At the time of the publication of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Marcilio Ficino was the most important and popular Renaissance Neoplatonist. He was known for producing theological commentaries on Plato's oeuvre. He specifically focused on *Phaedrus* and the nature of love, and his ideas do in some ways resonate deeply with those expressed in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, which shares in the idea that love defines interiority through its extension every direction into exteriority. In his interpretation of Plato, Ficino describes love between man and God, and discusses the ultimately pure, simple source of God as the cause and final result of love. Through love, says Ficino, one returns to one's source in God. This is how the Neoplatonism of Ficino and the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* collide and depart from one another: in their definition of movement through love as emanation and return. Ficino defines the source of love as divine, while the source within the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* never escapes its identification with the single woman Polia, whose name means "many things." As Ficino wrote in his commentaries on Plato's Symposium,

> Who will deny that God is justly called the centre of everything? For within all things He is totally single, simple, and unmoving, all things brought forth from Him are manifold, composite, and in some way moving; and just as they come forth from Him, so, like lines or circumferences, do they go back to Him. This is the way Mind, Soul, Nature, and Matter, which come forth from God, seek to go back to Him and make every exertion to close in around Him from all directions.[158]

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[157] Exemplary of the tradition by which the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is linked with Neoplatonism, and specifically with Marsilio Ficino, is the recent of Tracey Eve Winton. As written by Alberto Pérez-Gómez notes: "Tracey Winton has argued convincingly that the central aim of the book is to demonstrate Ficinian Neoplatonism at work, with its overtones of theurgic magic: the narrative follows the philosophical ascent of the soul, pursuing pictures from the mind's eye, and therefore is less concerned with the exoteric problems of architecture." Pérez-Gómez, Alberto. Built upon Love: Architectural Longing after Ethics and Aesthetics (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), 39. See also: Winton, Tracey, *A Skeleton Key to Poliphil's Dream: The Architecture of the Imagination in the Hypnerotomachia* (Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 2001).

[158] Ficino, Marsilio. "Beauty is the splendour of divine goodness; God is the centre of four circles." *On the Nature of Love*: *Ficino on Plato's Symposium,* Arthur Farndell, trans*.,* (London: Shepheard-Walwyn Limited, 2016), 18.

Through his search for love in Polia, and thus in multitude, in non-centrality and non-oneness, Poliphilo remains instead deeply invested in love as a sensual endeavor that remains tangibly activiated within the world. He finds the means for his investment in his own dream not through an underlying reverence for the divine and divine love, but through his direct erotic adoration for all that he sees and experiences. Though he undergoes his emanation within a dreamscape of a lost world of antiquity, surrounded by various goddesses and nymphs who implicate him in their various rituals, for Poliphilo, the divine is right there for the taking. It is already embodied, present in the flesh, emanating from the surfaces of all he touches. Though the sensual directness of Poliphilo's dreamworld, the general adoration Poliphilo experiences is contingent upon his search for love in Polia who, like all else he finds is the book, is there for Poliphilo's touching.

In the writings she left to Gustave Thibon, the 20th century philosopher and mystic Simone Weil wrote, "love is a sign of our wretchedness. God can only love himself. We can only love something else."[159] Despite the piercing frankness of her sentiment, Weil's thought drew from the long debate in human history regarding the living status of 'god's creatures' who, despite all the faith they might have in the divine, are enveloped in the immediacy of the material world. That status Weil defined as intermediary: "supernatural love touches only creatures and goes only to God. It is only creatures which it loves (what else have we to love?), but it loves them as intermediaries."[160] Thus, the material world and the material state of bodies produces amongst living beings a comparable mediation – just as god loves creatures as intermediaries to his love for himself, creatures love each other as intermediaries – love might go only to god but that is not where it is necessarily being intended. Thus, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* skirts the conception posed by Neoplatonists like Ficino of the divine as an ultimate interior instead to explore a conception of embodiment. And to do so, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* formulates its very conceptions of the divine as an emanation from the tangibility of the erotic. Though identified by many scholars as a Neoplatonist text, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* makes its break from Neoplatonism on that basis. This is further evident in the difference between

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[159] Weil, Simone. *Gravity and Grace* (London: Routledge Classics, 2002), 62.
[160] Ibid.

Ficino's approach to the senses, and the profound sensuality of Poliphilo. As written by Ficino,

> Mind and sight and hearing are the means whereby we may enjoy this beauty, and since Love is the desire to enjoy beauty, Love is ever satisfied with Mind, eyes, and ears. What does it have to smell, to taste, to touch? For with these senses we appreciate nothing but fragrances, flavours, heat and coldness, softness and hardness, and such like. None of these things, therefore, being merely forms, is human beauty, since the beauty of the human body requires the harmony of its various parts, and Love is concerned with the enjoyment of beauty as its end. This beauty pertains only to Mind, sight, and hearing. Love, therefore, finds its end in these three things only; and the yearning that accompanies the other senses is not called Love but rather lust or madness.[161]

Rather than avoid the madness induced by the direct contact of smell, taste, and touch, Poliphilo indulges. He wishes to touch all that he sees, and avoids so doing only when it would be explicitly unwelcome (and even then, he struggles to maintain his corporeal distance).[162] It is a simple argument (and not a bad one) to say that the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is indicative of the outpouring of Renaissance passion for beauty that arose, in part, through Neoplatonist thought. Yet, the Neoplatonist value of self-control and medieval Christian self-denial of worldly pleasures were not used as a means toward depth of thought and awareness of divine grace in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Yet Poliphilo's aim to consummate, and his resultant pathway through his dream-within-a-dream do not resonate with Neoplatonist ideologies of the senses which differentiated the eyes and ears as those specific sensual means through which corporeal pleasure and its perception of beauty could be connected back to the divine. Within the work, a rift in thought on the senses within Renaissance Neoplatonism emerges as a narrative drive. Smell, taste, and touch are relished in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* for the access they provide to corporeality, in particular its interiority.

The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*'s presentation of sensual experience, eroticism, and love does relate to the Neoplatonist idea of mutual interring, with a twist. The work

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[161] Ficino, *On the Nature of Love*, 12

[162] As with the nymphs he meets at the fountain, of which he says, "I do not know what curb or bit restrained me from flinging myself upon them like a raving, hungry eagle swooping down on to a flock of partridges: the urge to rape was no less strong in me." *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Godwin, trans., 86

resonates with the Neoplatonist idea, as written by Ficino, that "something amazing happens when two love each other: A lives in B, and B lives in A."[163] To this idea of mutual possession, of living within and thus returning to oneself through one's beloved, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* gives the sensual. The visuality of Ficino's mutual interment is bestowed with physicality in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Within the work, through sensual exchange one becomes physically embodied. The expression of embodiment within the book is thus one of *incorporation*— one becomes corporeal through how one incorporates another through love, regardless as to whether that other is an object or a person. This sense of incorporation extends from the book and its central love narrative all the way to the reader incorporated in Poliphilo's 'I.'

And yet, while over the course of the narrative Poliphilo explores and discovers much, seeks out and marries Polia, but he in the end achieves nothing lasting. He merely wakes from his dream. His entire experience of the divine grace in all he saw, tasted, and touched in his dream disappears as if it had never happened. In the end, the very dream structure of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* posits the living body and its experiential investment in the world not only as an access point to truth, grace, beauty, and divinity, but also as a thing as fleeting and inconsequential as a dream. Nothing much comes of adoringly casting one's eyes across the edifice of a building. Nothing lasting arises from the lascivious gaze bestowed upon the body of another. The *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* leaves this part of itself unfinished, and in the end, wakes its audience from Poliphilo's dream with Poliphilo himself. The *Hypnerotomachia* openly acknowledges this fact; it describes itself in its beginning as a book "in which it is shown that all human things are but a dream, and many other things worthy of knowledge and memory."[164]

2.4 The dance and the interior of matter

In his dream-world of past time, the movement of the Poliphilo is like that of an audience member within some kind of grandiose interactive installation. What the Tempus dance means it means through its integration with what it shares in the vast installation of

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[163] Ficino, *On the Nature of Love*, 29.
[164] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Godwin, trans., 1.

objects, architecture, and ritual in the book. This is fundamental to the philosophical idea of erotics in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* – erotics is about entering into interiors, and the interior can only be explored by bringing different bodies (or objects) together and into intimate mingling.

Poliphilo's engagement with interiors through art is explicitly explored in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* through a series of pages which break apart Poliphilo's description of the *Equus Infoelicitatis* and the Tempus dance and Amissio reliefs. Just after Poliphilo is reminded of the Seiano horse, he becomes distracted by two other massive sculptures, which he explores before returning to the horse statue to express his final thoughts on it. The statues which have distracted him include a colossus of a middle-aged man, laid prone, and an elephant carrying an obelisk. Poliphilo is first drawn to the colossus because it seems to be emitting a humanly groan. He discovers that it has been constructed so the wind travels through its hollowed-out interior to emit the sound. By the time Poliphilo has used the hair of the colossus to pull himself into its statuesque body he is elated to discover that it is filled with a precise replication of the body's internal organs. "Oh what a marvelous idea!" Poliphilo exclaims, "I could see all the parts from the inside, as if in a transparent human body."[165] Even the organs had entrances that could be further explored, but Poliphilo is instead drawn to the heart of the colossus, "and when I came to the heart I could read about how sighs are generated from love, and could see the place where love gravely hurts it."[166] Poliphilo emits a deep, empathetic sigh from his own interior, as his heart is also wounded with love.

The interiority of the elephant sculpture is quite different. Made more accessible by a staircase, it is almost empty of objects, save two ornate tombs which by their presence transform the interior of the elephant's body into an exterior encasing the corpses of other bodies. One such tomb bears the statue of a naked man, while the other a statue of a naked woman. Of them Poliphilo says, "the novelty was worthy of a marvellous tale, but I was left in utter ignorance about it and its riddles."[167] His admission of ignorance is nonetheless immediately followed by his ardent admiration of the architectural feat. He excitedly

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[165] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Godwin, trans., 36
[166] *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, Godwin, trans., 36.
[167] Ibid., 40

wonders, "what kind of drill or other device could have been used to pierce such hard and resistant rock and to evacuate such a mass of unyielding material, so as to make the hollow interior correspond exactly with the exterior form?[168]

These two monolithic statues and their explorable interiors do not merely set the stage for further expressions of interiority in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. They instead exist as elements within a larger procession of variations on interiority as the entering of one body or form through intimacy with another. Yet the primary means by which the work extrapolates on the issue of the interior is through the central link it makes, which, as has been discussed most notably by Liane LeFaivre, is the link between the fleshly body and the work of architecture. As is said by Poliphilo quite early in the text,

> For just as in the human body, when one quality is discordant with another, illness ensues (because well-being consists only in the harmony of the compound, and when the parts are not distributed in their proper places, deformity follows) thus a building is no less dissonant and sickly when it lacks due harmony and proportionate order. The ignorant moderns confuse these things, knowing nothing about spatial arrangement. But our wise master likens a building to a human body with well-proportioned parts and decorously dressed.[169]

However a fundamental difference between buildings and bodies emerges from the fact that human beings can freely enter into the interiority of buildings. There, interiority is habitable space. The human body, on the other hand, is a different kind of interiority: we inhabit our bodies, we are our bodies, but there is something about the body's interior that is also always receding from we who inhabit it. To be a body in the world, to live and thus exist as a body, seems to provide the very means by which the interiority of the body disappears from sight. To address this problem, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* again and again offers its images of architecture as a means for the exploration of interiority and its many facets. Though this central aspect of the work has been theorized as a kind of anthropomorphism of buildings by their likening to bodies, so also does the formula of the book work in the opposite direction: within it, the human body also becomes architecturalized. Through such a tactic, the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* drags the receding internality of the body not only into sculptural expression, but into a larger, more diverse

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[168] Ibid.

[169] Ibid., 52

world of tangible surfaces. There, passion, love, longing, and eroticism can be rooted in a fundamental solidity that nonetheless (and only to a point) offers itself up to be entered. The remaining element impenetrable to Poliphilo in the text is thus the solidity of matter itself—regardless as to whether that matter is flesh, or—as in when he marveled at the Elephant sculpture's interior—the hard stuff of rock.

The Tempus dance, carved onto the surface of just such an impenetrability, becomes sensualized and fosters internality through the ways that Poliphilo brings it into relation to his wider sensual experience of what is all around him. The Tempus dance partakes in the creation of an embodied interior by becoming a part of Poliphilo's environment, the place he is inside, which contains his sensuous and intellectual experience. The Tempus dance, like the cosmic dance of time, is of course a dance Poliphilo is already inside, and already dancing. The Tempus dance becomes sensual and becomes embodied, however, in how Poliphilo turns his attention to it, and how Poliphilo brings it into contact with the material world through the pathway his attention traces through his environment and its material facts.

Chapter III.

The Author's Influence over the Dance under the Influence:

Paracelsus's writings on the St Vitus dance

This chapter reverses the traditional process whereby the St Vitus dance is historically probed through the writing of Paracelsus, to consider how Paracelsus's attempts to explain the phenomena of a dancing disease of dancing mania reflect upon the writer. This chapter thus follows Paracelsus's writings on the St Vitus Dance along the lines of their articulations, seeking not the truth of the dance so much as the underhanded, self-reflexive commentary dormant within Paracelsus's understanding of the dance that might express something of the man who wrote them. Herein, the concerns with authorship and influence at the heart of Paracelsus's textual work on the dance are thus turned back toward the author of the text. This chapter justifies its approach with the idea that, as Paracelsus was a writer of cosmology, he couldn't rightfully write his own activity out of the system he was expressing as universally operational. So, if Paracelsus used a bizarre story of a dance-disease to clarify his ideas on imagination and influence, a bizarre story of a dance-disease can likewise reflect back on the man who turned his cosmological attention upon it.

To do its work, this chapter will unfold the Paracelsian writings on the St Vitus Dance from their interior subject matter and toward that which *seems* exterior. The chapter thus travels from the themes of authorship, imagination, and influence *within* the subject of the Veitstanz in Paracelsian writings; then *outward* to the imaginative subjectivity of Paracelsus's authorship and his approach to his own influence; and then again toward the eventual exterior subjection of Paracelsian authority to reinterpretation by those subsequently influenced by it. In the simplest sense, the journey this chapter takes begins within the Paracelsian Veitstanz writings, and travels through the Paracelsian corpus, only to end back in Paris, in the hands of Jacques Gohory, who produced the first interpretation

of the Paracelsian cosmology in France – and who was also a colleague of Jacques Kerver, and the first translator of Kerver's French publication of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* in the printing house à l'enseigne de la Licorne. As the chapter meanders its way back toward the printing house that serves as the narrative gravity of this thesis, it will endeavor to express how the theories of imagination, authorship, and influence driving Paracelsus's pathologization of the St Vitus Dance and its diseased bodies might serve to elucidate, contextualize, or simply speak poetically to the permeability of authorship and influence undergone by the Paracelsian corpus in turn.

Throughout the process of this chapter, the central theme of the somatic that drives this thesis is put to work to explore the Paracelsian idea of inter-body influence – a conception within his wider corpus that described a cosmology devoid of any author beyond that of God. This Paracelsian cosmology was nonetheless filled by a materiality defined by movements of impetus, experience, change, freedom, and possibility – all of which gained vitality (and thus its basis for movement) through its tether to the divine. In *De sensu et instrumentis*, Paracelsus wrote, "if do you not want to see him directly from created nature, so look to the letters of his word. Bearing the same letter in your hearts, then you may also see God in the temple, and that is the human heart."[1] Paracelsus claimed to understand the human heart as bearing the compositional elements through which the enshrined God might be envisaged. He claimed it as mutually possible through both *natura creata* and *buchstaben*. Seeking to reach toward the heart of Paracelsus through his authorship, this chapter thus seeks to take up his theoretical, metaphysical, and authorial terms – to think of him by adopting (by adapting to) what he offered up as the key to thinking with him: his own writings.

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[1] Translation from the German by Lindsey Drury, ""oder wölt ir ihn recht sehen nit aus natura creata, so sehent an die buchstaben seines worts. tragent dieselbigen buchstaben in euere herzen, alsdann sehet ir auch gott im tempel, das ist das herz hominis." See: Paracelsus, "De Sensu et Instrumentis" *Sämtliche Werke. Zweite Abteilung: Theologische und Religionsphilosophische Schriften.* Kurt Goldammer, ed. (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1965), 88.

Paracelsus saw the physical expression of aliveness as powerfully armed in its sensuality and materiality. To describe the influence of sensuality and materiality, he wrote in 1529 of the material powers of imagination:

> Humans are subject to imagination, and imagination is unclear and intangible, nevertheless corporeality exists within substance – and through that substance – [it feels] as if (als sei) it were that substance.[2]

For Paracelsus, the *as if* or *als sei* of imagination was not mere illusion, but a formidable problematic with powerful influence over sensorial experience and embodied action. It is from this idea that Paracelsus constructed his understanding of imagination as a threshold between the tangible and the intangible, as an invisible force with visible consequences through which otherwise imperceptible aspects of the corporeal could be understood. It is on this basis that Paracelsus turned to writing on dance. Particularly, he focused on the Saint Vitus dance (which in 16th century German publications of his work was written as '*sanct Veits tanz*', '*Veitstantz*', or *Veitstanz*).[3] In *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* (1530 – 1531), Paracelsus wrote of the St Vitus Dance that,

> From this you should take note that every manner that is adopted and which one presents as the truth receives from that same presentation an equally firm belief with the result that it becomes true and is confirmed as such. That is how so many diseases have emerged, not only the dance but others that are too many to be enumerated.[4]

When Paracelsus wrote of the St Vitus dance in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, he proposed that the ceaseless dancing disease began with a trick – an acting out of divinely-

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[2]"Der mensch ist der imagination underworfen, und die imagination wiewol unsichtig, ungreiflich, noch so wirft sie corporaliter in ein substanz und durch die substanz, als sei sie die substanz." Translated by Joël Verwimp with Lindsey Drury. See: Theophrast von Hohenheim, called Paracelsus. *Sämtliche Werke.* 7th Volume. Ed. Karl Sudhoff (Munich and Berlin: Oldenbourg, 1923), 329.

[3] Paracelsus, *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*: "Von der kranckheit/ die mann nennet die Veitstantz." See: Theophrastus Paracelsus. *Bücher und Schrifften*. Vol. 1, Ed. Johannes Huser (Basel: Conrad Waldkirch, 1589), 263. See also, "Von sanct Veits tanz und die ime glichen." *Das siebente Buch in der Arznei: Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft berauben.* Theophrast von Hohenheim, called Paracelsus. *Sämtliche Werke.* 7th Volume. Ed. Karl Sudhoff. (Munich and Berlin: Oldenbourg, 1929), 407

[4] As expressed in Paracelsus's writing on the Saint Vitus Dance in *De Morborum Invisibilium. Paracelsus (Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, 1493–1541): Essential Theoretical Writings,* Andrew Weeks, trans (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008), 781. For the German original, see: Theophrastus Paracelsus. *Bücher und Schrifften,* vol. 1., Johannes Huser, ed. (Basel: Conrad Waldkirch, 1589), 264: "Darauff merckent/ ein jedlich angenomene weiß/ die einer oder eine fürgibt/ es sey ein warheit/ so gibt dasselbig fürgeben ein solchen starcken glauben/ das war wirdt/ vnnd bestetet sich. Dann also kommen vil kranckheiten/ nicht allein der dantz/ sondern auch viel anderley geschlecht/ die kein zahl haben,"

enforced penance and saintly intercession – of which the actors eventually became themselves convinced. Paracelsus thought the initial performer of the St Vitus dance could be knowingly deceitful, but through her deep imaginative experience and convincing theatricalization of a 'dancing mania,' the disease actually manifested. In other words, what began as an imagined disease became a real disease of the imagination. As a part of Paracelsus's larger work on 'invisible diseases,' his writing on the St Vitus dance linked the forgery of miracles with emergence of disease through imaginative enactment. Building upon these ideas, Paracelsus gave the only analysis of dance to grace the pages of his works.

Within his writings on St Vitus dance, Paracelsus pursued a pathological explanation of the dancing disease of 1518 that would substantiate his medical and religious cosmology by linking the imaginative impulse with communicability or contagiousness of imagination. Within Paracelsus's medico-religious cosmological theory, the human body and its expressivity in the St Vitus dance were therefore treated as a decipherable, visible symptom of an invisible yet material system of inter-body influence. Ultimately, Paracelsus sought to explicate that inter-body system by describing the symptomology of the dance.

Paracelsus's writings on the St Vitus dance by no means flawlessly adhere to historically convenient roles. They are neither material record nor medical observations of an attending physician of the St Vitus dance, despite their use by historians as if – *als sei* – they were such. Instead, Paracelsus used the St Vitus dance in the service of his cosmology as a highly-recognizable current event.[5] The St Vitus dance was an identifiable case study; Paracelsus's texts could benefit from assumed common knowledge of the dance, and thus focus on re-articulating the dance from how it was commonly understood and into Paracelsian terms. In other words, Paracelsus adopted a common trope and used it as a thinking-ground for his ideas on the materiality of imagination and inter-body influence. Amongst the other *Morborum Invisibilium* [invisible diseases], the St Vitus dance served toward Paracelsus's ultimate articulation of how inter-body influence is fostered through a process of faith built through physical practice.

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[5] This is evidenced, for example, by wider Reformation-era writings that referred to the Veitstanz in order to make other points.

If considered in relation to Paracelsus's wider corpus, his work on St Vitus dance critiques and pathologizes the altered state on its way toward proposing a fundamentally alternative status of human embodiment. With terms like 'der gestirnt leib,' 'inner himmels,' and 'das Astrum des Menschen,' and in writings drawing relation between the St Vitus dance and syphilis, pregnancy, and plague, Paracelsus argued that human imagination was a part of an astral schema that extended from one body to influence the bodies of others. The depth of non-metaphorical seriousness that Paracelsus ascribed to the idea of the human body as microcosm for the macrocosmic universe is eloquently exposed through his notion of the material influence of imagination, through which a microcosmic version of astral influence could be body-based, and enacted through inter-body forces generated in human faith. In that way, Paracelsus re-conceived the trope of cosmic dance from antiquity, reinventing it within a vision of human bodies whose power over the bodies of others is – like that of the stars – partially derived from the motions of bodies.

Though perhaps not in his lifetime, Paracelsus's textual conceptualization of the St Vitus dance eventually produced a number of consequences. First, (and perhaps accidentally) through the St Vitus dance, Paracelsus loosely tethered his work to the history of ideas on dance. Discourses on dance had since antiquity variously divided physical practices into ontological polarities of the orderly and the disorderly, the sane and the manic, the high and the low, the Apollonian and the Dionysian. To this, Paracelsus gave the St Vitus Dance the constructed control of a lie that, once carefully and willingly composed, took up residence in the body of its maker (and by consequence the world) with unwieldy physical powers of its own. The conception presented by Paracelsus thus did not follow the traditional divisions that continue powerfully to inform performance and dance historical approaches stretching from antiquity and into the early modern period. The pieces and parts that mobilize such polarity-based traditions of thought amongst historians are recognizably there in Paracelsus's ideas on the Veitstanz, certainly. Paracelsus just reworked the system of their relationships. By utilizing the dance as exemplary of a self-induced false miracle within his wider conception of 'invisible diseases' – all of which connected belief and (often spiritual) imagination to physical pathology – Paracelsus shifted longstanding (and polarized) ideas of ordered imitation and expressive disorder into each other's orbits. To do so, Paracelsus made the simple argument that a deception was

enacted through an 'imagined ceremony'. Paracelsus used the term 'fürgenommene weiß' to describe this. As clarified by Weeks, the term combines 'fürnehmen' – to imagine or conceive of with 'Weise', which is a modus, ritus, or ceremonia. As 'fürgenommene weiß', the St Vitus dance lent enough physical power to imagination to remake tangible reality into a form not reflective of God's truth.[6] Thus, Paracelsus's analysis of the St Vitus Dance provided a new means by which the divide between the theological and the medical could be bridged through a reconceptualization of the performed event, the spiritual/physical experience it induces, and the material factuality of that experience.

Second, Paracelsus's writings on the St Vitus Dance fastened together a network of ideas resonating through his wider corpus on the nature of authorship and its relation to his own authority. The Paracelsian cosmology was truly Paracelsian; the general notion of authorship (how one creates something) and influence (what happens with that creation) in the Paracelsian cosmos never completely othered itself from its author and his personal concerns. If boiled down to a simple idea rendered devoid of Paracelsian particulars; the writing on St Vitus Dance speaks to the uncontrollable nature of authorship and influence, and warns that what one conjures into the world through the power of imagination will slip the original intentions by which it was made to move and thus grow on its own accord. The dance, in other words, moves beyond the body that dances it, and thus beyond that body's control.

Third, though it would be convenient if Paracelsian thoughts on the St Vitus Dance clarified the terms of the dance's authorship, influence, and process of dissemination as wholly particular to the dance, what Paracelsus wrote on the St Vitus Dance not only fits into his wider cosmology, it strategically operates toward its explication. This function of disease in Paracelsian writings – as 'case study' toward a larger cosmology – produces the consequence that one cannot analyze any piece of the Paracelsian corpus without noticing that it is non-intact, and as such, is gesturing elsewhere, toward some exterior to itself to which it is connected. This is true of Paracelsus's conception of the St Vitus Dance, which points outside itself not only to various parts and pieces of the Paracelsian cosmology, but

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[6] Paracelsus, *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*. Weeks's footnote 2, 783: "See Grimm, fürnehmen (III.3): sich vorstellen, sich einbilden (imagine or conceive of); Weise (f., B2): modus, ritus, ceremonia." See also: Theophrastus Paracelsus. *Bücher und Schrifften,* vol. 1. Johannes Huser, ed. (Basel: Conrad Waldkirch, 1589), 265.

as well, back to Paracelsus himself. This makes sense – the St Vitus Dance serves to elucidate the Paracelsian conceptions of imagination, authorship, and influence. As one of the most prolific authors of the 16th century, Paracelsus sought to have great influence in medical, philosophical, and theological currents of thought through his authorship.[7]

Lastly – and this follows from the previous idea – Paracelsus's writing on the St Vitus Dance strategically aims to clarify how Paracelsus himself, his authorship, and his sought-after influence are oppositional to the pathological footing he theorized of the Veitstanz. This fact isn't merely implied by the position Paracelsus places himself in as the worthy pathologizer; he further underwrites the importance of the contrast in his authorial position from that of the Veitstanzer by using his analysis of the dance as a cautionary tale for other medical practitioners. He finishes a section on the Veitstanz in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* by warning against misdiagnosis through mistaken belief amongst doctors: "For [the same] medicine that serves health can also be used to bring about death. Accordingly, you should keep in mind that you need to understand belief in its works in the above sense."[8] With such concluding words, Paracelsus rhetorically underscored his ethical preeminence (against the vast critique aimed at him in his time), and further sought to use his own self-given authority as leverage by which he might chastise false belief amongst doctors and warn of the risks of misdiagnosis, mistreatment, and at worst, the death of the patient. So doing, Paracelsus opens the door to a wider interpretation of his writing on the St Vitus dance – one that manipulates its own pathology of a belief-based dancing disease toward the performative operation of false belief in the medical field itself.

Though, as an author, Paracelsus set himself up in critical opposition to the schismatic nature he described by means of the dance, though he mobilized the St Vitus dance as a cautionary tale, there is nonetheless something of the deceit, confusion, imagination, performativity, and unintended consequences he describes of the St Vitus Dance operational both within his own writings, and within their later influence.

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[7] Andrew Weeks claims, "Paracelsus (1493-1541), was one of the most original and prolific authors of sixteenth-century Europe." See: Weeks, Andrew. "Introduction," *Paracelsus (Theophrastus Bombastus Von Hohenheim, 1493-1541): Essential Theoretical Writings*. (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008), 1.

[8] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," In *Paracelsus (Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, 1493–1541): Essential Theoretical Writings*, Andrew Weeks, trans., 791, 793. See also: Paracelsus. *Bücher und Schrifften*, Johannes Huser, ed. 269. "Dann kan die Artzney/ die zur gesundheit dienet/ auch zum tod gebraucht werden: so wissen auch hiebey/ das jhr den Glauben in seinen wercken dermassen auch verstehen sollen."

Paracelsus's ideas were prone to and subjected to the uncontrollable expansiveness he described as consequential to the imaginative impetus of the St Vitus dance; his original intentions are lost in the sway of the very expansive nature of both his rambling cosmological textual corpus, and the mass of reinterpretation garnered by that corpus in subsequent centuries. Moreover, the imagination of Veitstanzers is mirrored in the imaginative description Paracelsus gives of the Veitstanz despite the fact that he almost certainly never witnessed the dance or medically treated any of its afflicted. Paracelsus's challenges to the experiential truth of the Veitstanz begs the question as to what Paracelsus – so known for his dedication to the idea that medical knowledge must be gained through experience – maintained as the experiential basis he had for writing on the dance.[9] If the St Vitus dancers 'were making it up,' so was Paracelsus. This fact raises the question as to what, exactly, Paracelsus conceived of as truthful experience and whether his pursuit of that truth through his own chosen modes of engagement achieved what he hoped. Did he, for example, obtain the 'priest-physician' ideal, as described by Ficino, that he seemingly so longed to obtain? It seems such an idea required of Paracelsus a profound distance between the patient and the medical practitioner – a distance based not merely on simple divisions between illness and wellness or medical ignorance and medical knowledge – but further between the unethical and the ethical, the lie and the truth.

As a participant in the literary transmission of knowledge, Paracelsus's writing functions as an invisible disease. Conjured into being through belief, performed into self-confirmation, Paracelsus's writings infected early modern medical and religious discourses with a form of influence resonant with the inter-body movement of influence critiqued within its pages. Like the wider class of invisible diseases Paracelsus related to the St Vitus dance, his writings are also of profoundly varying natures, but ultimately related to each other through a shared underlying operation. In this way, Paracelsus's writings are infected with his own sense of how embodiment relates to influence, and how influence relates to

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[9] Works arguing the empirical rigor of Paracelsus against the scholarly tradition of 'book based' medicine are so plentiful as to render the idea the central trope of 20th century historical scholarship on Paracelsus. Important English-language proponents of such a perspective on Paracelsus include Walter Pagel, whose 1962 work *Paracelsus: An Introduction to Philosophical Medicine in the Era of the Renaissance* has informed decades of English-language Paracelsus scholarship and motivated more recent scholarship to render a less stylistically one-dimensional portrait of the Paracelsian figure.

action. His writings are thus an extension of Paracelsus's own body into something that can become other than himself.

3.1 Troffean authorship

Nuhn nam sie sich der weise an zum tantzen/ vnnd gab für/ sie könnte nicht ohn getantzet sein: Dann den Mann verdruß nichts mehr dann das tantzen: Vnnd damit sie dem handel gnug thete/ vnnd bestettete ein gleichnuß einer kranckheit/ so hupfft sie vnnd sprang auff/ sang vnnd lälet/ vnd was dem Manne am vbelsten gefiel: Vnnd nach außgang des tantz/ so fiel sie nieder/ dem Manne zuleidt/ zablet eine weil/ vnnd schlieff darnach. Solchs zeigt sie für eine kranckheit an/ vnnd verschwieg/ das sie den Mann also närret.[10]

She adopted the manner of dancing and pretended that she could not stop dancing. For her husband disliked nothing more than dancing. In order to make sure that her actions had their full effect and had the likeness of a disease, she hopped and jumped high, sang and lulled, and did whatever it was that her husband hated worst of all. She jerked a while, and after that went to sleep. She claimed that all of this had been a disease attack and said no more than this in order to make a fool of her husband.[11]

"This is how it came about," wrote Paracelsus of the Saint Vitus Dance in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* (1531), "the lady Troffea was the first person with the disease… she instructed herself to act as if she were ill and invented a disease that was convenient for her at that time."[12] Paracelsus imagined a domestic disagreement of some kind as the particular motivation that induced Troffea's invented disease, though the various printed editions of *De Causis. Morborum Invisibilium* describe the nature of the dispute somewhat differently. Paracelsus presents Frau Troffea as the mythical originator, a ruse-maker who responded to her husband by tricking him and presenting a theatrical *malade imaginaire*.

Troffea is erected by Paracelsus like many mythical originators before her – she is the proxy personage for the historical precedent that must be left out. If the unprecedented Paracelsian explanation is to emerge unscathed by how the dance had been previously

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[10] Paracelsus, *Bücher und Schrifften,* vol. 1, Johannes Huser, ed. (Basel: Conrad Waldkirch, 1589), 263.

[11] Weeks, Andrew (trans.) *Paracelsus (Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, 1493–1541): Essential Theoretical Writings.* Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008, 779.

[12] "Vnnd seindt also herkommen… Die Fraw Troffea ist die erste gsein in der kranckheit… so nam sie sich einer weise an/ sie wer kranck/ vnnd erdichtet ein kranckheit die jhr auff dißmal gelegen was." See: Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium", *Bücher und Schrifften,* vol. 1, Huser, ed., 263.

rationalized, she provides the dance's origination, as Paracelsus's *patsy*. Whether a play on words or an archetype for Paracelsus dancers, Troffea was invoked by Paracelsus as a part of his effort to rewrite the basic medieval framework through which illness was conceptualized. [13]

By positioning the origination of the St Vitus Dance in the theatrics of one 'Fraw Troffea,' Paracelsus gave the dance its origin in the figure of the unhappy and deceitful wife. It wasn't the only time Paracelsus was to relate his argument to an archetypical female character – he mentioned *Frau von Weißenburg*, a betraying woman from German folk song, in the *Paragranum* (1530), written around the same time.[14] Through the spurious influence of Troffea, "it came about that many entered into this belief, and it was confirmed to be a disease. And the belief descended onto those who were pleased with this dancing and, attached to it, the disease, so that it maintained itself together with the belief on and on."[15]

Paracelsus's analysis particularly describes the contagious expansion of the disease as a shared *descent* of belief – "denen wol mit dantzen war/ auff die *fiel* der Glaub" – belief *descended* onto those who were pleased with this dancing [emphasis added].[16] The verb – *fallen* in its present infinitive – describes a disease that rains down upon the people and infects them, though it is created from the imagination emanating originally from the singular body of Troffea. Thus, the power Troffea wields as the inventor of disease is that of interfering with how the people of Strasbourg are called to live, worship, and thus truthfully partake in the material and divine cosmology. Paracelsus does not argue that the Troffean figure influences others away from the ascendency of adhering to God's plan. As

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[13] The framing of the St Vitus dance as an 'illness concept' comes from Rohmann. See: Rohmann "Dancing on the Threshold: A Cultural Concept for Conditions of Being Far from Salvation," 48.

[14] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," In: *Essential Theoretical Writings,* Weeks, trans., Weeks, footnote a, 178 and footnote 6, 179. Weeks notes a thank you: "Dr. Waltraud Linder-Beroud of the Deutsches Volksliedarchiv (Freiburg) for confirming that this song was known in a manuscript of Valentin Holl (Augsburg) as early as 1524-25," 181.
See also: Schnezler, August (ed.). *Badisches Sagen-Buch I* (Karlsruhe: Creuzbauer and Kasper, 1846), 124-126.

[15] "Kahm darnach dahin/ das menniglichen in solchen glauben kahm/ vnd ward also bestetet zu einer kranckheit: Vnd auff die/ denen wol mit dantzen war/ auff die fiel der Glaub/ vnd behaftet dieselbig kranckheit/ da sie also bleib neben dem glauben für vnnd für." Huser, *Bücher und Schrifften*, volume 1, 264. Translation by Lindsey Drury, based on Weeks's translation in: Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," *Essential Theoretical Writings,* Weeks, trans., 781.

[16] Huser, *Bücher und Schrifften*, vol. 1, 264.

Paracelsus sees it – the basis of Troffea's imagination and its power arises from the fact that it is its own astral sphere and is independently fostered in the human being: As Paracelsus wrote it in the third book of *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, such human astral power was driven by desire, uniquely formed through human development. In it, the imagination replaced stellar bodies:

> You should be aware that all of this stems from the earthy desire and that by way of the astrum of the human being, it is formed in the child without the addition of things that are outside the human being; [for] the imagination is the star itself. [17]

Paracelsus then positions women as the strongest of astral players amongst all humans. Writing that "the imagination of women directs itself," Paracelsus framed the feminine imagination as uniquely independent, a fact which he connected to female menstruation:

> This is why menstruum is the material of the work for which only women are responsible, [and] out of which the incisive glances obtain their body. You should be aware of the following case. Women's imagination is so great that they have [been capable of] imagining a menstruum of that sort, [projecting it] into the intermediate heavens. Through the power of their imagining, they have formed out of it the object which they had seen painted or sketched in front of their eyes. [18]

The menstrual projection that Paracelsus above discusses expands the very conception of menstruation away from monthly bleeding, and toward a larger conception of female generative power. Menstruation, in such a case, is an expression of female control over creation. Paracelsus sees such control as fundamentally dubious, and furthermore, as intrinsically linked with disease:

> In consequence of this, those same forms and figures then descended again onto the human beings through the power of this kind of imagination, [causing something to happen which was] supersensible [and] miraculous, which could have happened for no other reason than that the imagination generated its corpus menstruale to this purpose, so that, in the same manner that it could have descended upon the child within, it descended [instead] onto [other] people. Although a diabolical superstition was forced into

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[17] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," In: *Essential Theoretical Writings,* Weeks, trans., 819. "So wisset/ das dieses alles kompt auß dem Irdischen lust/ vnd durch das Astrum des Menschen eingebildet dem Kindt/ ohn alle zuthuung deren dingen/ die außerhalb dem Menschen seindt/ vnd die jmagination ist das gestirn selbst." From Huser, *Bücher und Schrifften*, volume 1, 280.

[18] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," In: *Essential Theoretical Writings,* Weeks, trans., 821.

service to the effect that it is the devil who executes, paints, and colors such things, this is entirely contrary to the truth.[19]

For Paracelsus, the woman's powers form a complex of imagination and creation. The woman imagines, and then menstrually projects her imagination as if she could spray it skyward. This menstruated imagination then descends like rain upon the bodies of others, infecting them with her influence. When Paracelsus speaks of a woman's menstruum in such a way – when he discusses a menstruum that projects into 'the intermediate heavens' – he is relating the power of a woman's imagination not only to his theory of human imagination as a body-based, microcosmic astral power, but to his larger theory of materiality as a massive *archeus* – or digestive system. In that system, Paracelsus identified waste, or *stercus*, as the most important element – as the foundation and end result of all transmutation of matter. Defining *menstruum* in his work *On the Matrix*, produced within a few years of *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, Paracelsus wrote that "the *menstruum* is an excrement of the things incurred by the matrix." Paracelsus saw menstrual fluid as particularly toxic, describing it as "the excrements which they call menstruum, which no poison on earth can equal in being harmful and severe."[20] The creative power of the female body thus was for Paracelsus defined by its toxicity. In other words, there was by nature something diseased in the female creative power of procreation.

Paracelsus's work toward a definition of cosmology framed female powers of reproduction in problematic terms, returning again and again to the dangers of female reproduction and its problematic entwinement with the dangerous powers of female imagination – rooting both of those dangers in a larger description of the materialities of the feminine and its connection with creation. He only failed to express such condemnation of the female in his work on the Virgin Mary, whom Paracelsus venerated and considered so profoundly unlike all other women so as actually not to share their material circumstances of embodiment.[21]

It is in such a wider framing of Troffea that she must be considered as a representative of women, of St Vitus dancers, and of processes Paracelsus saw as inherent

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[19] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," In: *Essential Theoretical Writings,* Weeks, trans., 821.
[20] Ibid., 657.
[21] For further analysis of this, see: Eisen Cislo, Amy. *Paracelsus's Theory of Embodiment: Conception and Gestation in Early Modern Europe* (London: Pickering & Chatto), 2014.

to invisible diseases. The dancing disease she produced with her imagination was a consequence of her body-based 'inner astral' imaginative power and its especially strong presence in women which could influence the bodies of others through menstrual projection. Her poisonous menstrual power could materially exert itself heavenward and descend upon and thus influence and infect others. As quoted above: "onto those who were pleased with this dancing, *descended" – failt –* "the belief and, attached to it, the disease."[22]

3.1.1 The name of Troffea: a turning, psychotropic, changing, trophy trope

There is a certain delight amongst historians in considering the literary play perhaps insinuated in the naming of Troffea. To begin his essay for the 2018 catalogue published as a part of the Strasbourg exhibition on the St Vitus dance for its 500th anniversary, Georges Bischoff wrote, "Frau Troffea n'a jamais existé... son patronyme est une invention pédante de Paracelse (1493 – 1541), à partir du substantive grec tropaia (Τρόπαια), dont le sens est 'qui fait tourner': c'est un proche parent du mot 'psychotrope'" -- Frau Troffea never existed ... her surname is a pedantic invention of Paracelsus, from the Greek substantive tropaia, whose meaning is 'she who turns'; it is a close relative of the word 'psychotropic'.[23] Within the same catalogue, medical historian Roberto Poma further describes Troffea an "histoire imaginaire," likewise noting that her name "was probably invented based on an ancient Greek verb," thereafter clarifying the relevance of the Paracelsian invention of such a Troffean Veitstanz originator as relevant to the history of imagination.[24]

The identification of Troffea with Greek etymology in the writings of Bischoff and Poma in the 2018 catalogue of the Strasbourg exhibition *La Fièvre de la Danse* is predated

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[22] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," In: *Essential Theoretical Writings,* Weeks, trans., 781

[23] Bischoff, Georges. "Vérités Historiques," 1518: *La Fièvre de la Danse*. (Wasselonne: les presses d'Ott Imprimeurs. Éditions des Musées de Strasbourg et les auteurs, 2018), 65.

[24] Poma, Roberto. "Paracelse et la Danse de Saint-Guy." 1518: *La Fièvre de la Danse*. Wasselonne: les presses d'Ott mprimeurs. Pour la présente edition: Éditions des Musées de Strasbourg, 2018 et les auteurs, 2018, pgs. 107-108. Poma further wrote that, "L'étude des maladies corporelles provoquées par l'imagination le conduit à présenter l'histoire imaginaire de Frau Troffea. Cettes expérience de pensée, liée peut-être à une légende populaire, considérée à tort par certains comme une histoire vraie, lui permet d'expliquer l'origine de la danse de Saint-Guy." – The study of bodily diseases provoked by the imagination leads him [Paracelsus] to present the imaginary history of Frau Troffea. This thought experiment, perhaps linked to a popular legend, wrongly regarded by some as a true story, allows him to explain the origin of St Vitus dance.

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by the similar analysis of Andrew Weeks in his 2008 translation of *De Morborum Invisibilium*. Amongst other detailed footnotes on Paracelsus's use of language therein, Weeks commented how Paracelsus's conception of Troffea was somewhat strange. He wrote, "this oddly specific personal reference remains in need of clarification. It may be a personification based on Latin tropaeus, tropaea, adj.: 'turning around,' 'changing' … or derived from German 'troffieren,' to flirt or run around, from Italian 'truffare,' to deceive (Grimm)."[25]

Possible interpretations of the name Paracelsus gave to the Veitstanz's author only grow more interesting if one investigates recorded German-language use of the term Troffea in the 16th century. Albrecht Dürer, for example, produced a series of drawings in precisely the same year as the Veitstanz's occurrence – 1518. Dürer titled each of the drawings Troffea – meaning trophy – and depicted knights holding empty suits of armor on sticks. The drawings were drafts toward the realization of the Triumphal Procession of Emperor Maximilian I. Commissioned by the emperor, thse large-scale processional image remained incomplete at his death in 1519. The trophies depicted in Dürer's drawings speak to 16th century tournament practices wherein winning knights claimed the armor of their opponents and displayed the suit on a stick. Emptied of the warrior who was within, such armor became the symbolic spoils from tournament combat. If Paracelsus's Troffea derives from a Greek root term for 'turning', the use of Troffea for trophies would then be from the same root source. The use of the term Troffea for trophies likewise derives from the Greek root trepein (τρέπειν) – meaning (like tropaia) 'to turn'. Trepein and tropaia were first adopted to compose terms used for trophies in antiquity, as the action of 'turning' was connected to the retreat of the foe. Then, if Paracelsus used the term Troffea to refer to the turning motions of a 1518 dancing disease in Strasbourg, he did so when the term Troffea was being used in the German speaking world to describe a trophy by the turn of events in battle that would lead to its acquisition. Perhaps Paracelsus was picking up on a 16th century insult or wordplay using the image of the foe's empty coat of armor – the traditional trophy since antiquity – to describe not only symbolic humiliation, but as the signification of a defeated person who, like the hollow helmet and breastplate, is neither real nor has

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[25] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," In: *Essential Theoretical Writings,* Weeks, trans., footnote 2, 779.

depth or substance. Such a term would be similar to the modern-day conception of the 'straw man'.

Figure 3-1. Four Troffea by Albrecht Dürer, (1518).

In the two top images, both the term 'Troffea' and the date (1518) are written in Dürer's hand. Bohemian Troffea (top left), Italian Troffea (top right), Hungarian Huser Troffea (bottom left), French Troffea (bottom right). The images depict members of Maximillian I's procession flaunting the empty armor of defeated foes (from the Swiss war [Tyrol, 1490, Basel 1499], Italian war [1494 - 1559]), reconquering of Hungarian territory [1490], defeat of the French in the Battle of the Spurs [1513]. Images from Wikimedia Commons.

Regardless as to whether this etymological play within Troffea holds any merit, the Troffean author presents herself within *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* as a particular kind of author—as a *choreographer* of an invented dance-based disease, summoned by name into Paracelsus's writing and its apparent overturning of historical antecedents.[26] Her choreographic position, as articulated in the Paracelsian pathology of the St Vitus dance, stepped into a place vacated by the Rhineland saints cult around the 14 Holy Helpers – amongst whom Saint Vitus was included.[27]

3.1.2 Troffea as the upending of Vitus

The Paracelsian Troffea became a choreographer of the St Vitus dance, in part, by existing in a text that directly challenged the saint-based origin of her dance's title. Supplanting Saint Vitus with Troffea, Paracelsus re-articulated the means by which Saint Vitus was connected to the dance, labeling the relationship of the saint to the dance as idolatrous: "St. Vitus became the belief-spirit, and it then turned into an idol and thereupon received the name of the St. Vitus' dance."[28] Paracelsus analyses the St. Vitus' dance in his work *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* as a disease organized within a larger typology of diseases named after saints. In the work, Paracelsus claims the disease (1) as expressive of the fact that faith-based and physical sicknesses are interrelated; and (2) as a method developed by women to theatrically act out divine intervention until they could become convinced of their own acting (and thus experience the sensation – but not the reality – of

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[26] For an extensive historical treatment on this, see: Rohmann, Gregor. *Tanzwut: Kosmos, Kirche und Mensch in der Bedeutungsgeschichte eines mittelalterlichen Krankheitskonzepts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht), 2013.

[27] Dünninger, J. "Fourteen Holy Helpers," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Gale Research, 2002).
See also: Rohmann, Gregor. "Dancing on the Threshold: A Cultural Concept for Conditions of Being Far from Salvation." *Contributions to the History of Concepts.* Volume 10, Issue 2, (Winter 2015): 63: "Both saints [Saint John the Baptist and Saint Vitus] were integrated into the emerging discourse of 'dancing mania' only in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. From that time on they fertilize dancing mania with plenty of narrative motifs and thus transform it form a merely product of savant cosmology into a genuine expression of religious practice. Vitus and John themselves, as figures of Christian myth, were products of the argument between theology and non-Christian mythology. As such they kept their cosmologic connotations even in the Middle Ages. This is why they could be associated with the platonic idea of involuntary dancing."

[28] Paracelsus, *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, trans. Weeks (2008), 781. Huser, *Bücher und Schrifften* volume 1, 264: "do ward Sanct Veit der Glaubengeist/ vnnd must also hie zu eim Abgott werden/ vnnd empfieng den namen darauff Sanct Veits Tantz."

a kind self-inflicted of semi-divine intervention by consequence). In so doing, Paracelsus's argument connected idolatry with sickness.[29]

In connecting idolatry with sickness, Paracelsus began to make a delicate point that related idolatry not with cult images and their sinful worship, but with the sin of attributing false intervention to the saints or to God. Core to Paracelsus's argument was the idea of self-deceiving practices that incorrectly attributed the material powers of one's own imagination and embodiment to divine force. Paracelsus took part in a larger reorientation of Reformation-era concepts of idolatry toward the practices related to objects rather than to objects themselves. Such logic derives, in part, from the biblical story of Moses and the Golden Calf – a well-used narrative in the Reformation that foregrounded the self-deception of the worshippers as the issue central to the definition of idolatry.[30]

By clarifying the St Vitus dance as idolatrous, and further connecting idolatry to disease, Paracelsus was both pathologizing and theologically critiquing those who suffered from the dance he described. Accounts from 1518 in Strasbourg, however, did not hold Paracelsus's cynicism. In some such accounts, the dance is instead vaguely associated with divine or demonic motivation.[31] Those afflicted were identified as truly unable to cease dancing until they were gathered and sent on pilgrimages to a St Vitus shrine in nearby Saverne.[32] The dance received the name 'Vitus' through its association with the shrine,

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[29] Paracelsus translated by Andrew Weeks. 781. "St. Vitus became the belief-spirit, and it then turned into an idol and thereupon received the name of the St. Vitus' dance." / "Sanct Veit der Glaubengeist/ vnnd must also hie zu eim Abgott werden/ vnnd empfieng den namen darauff Sanct Veits Tantz."

[30] It is interesting to note that Moses's iconoclastic destruction of the Golden Calf seems to refocus the problem of idolatry on objects. However, objects are expendable whereas worshippers are not. The destroyed Golden Calf was already powerless in the moment it was classified as idolatrous; Moses's destruction of it can instead be seen as a modeling of correct behavior amongst the faithful.

[31] Various chronicles of Strasbourg discuss the dance as a disease, and that it could not be stopped without organizing pilgrimages to the Saint Vitus shrine in Saverne. The research of Cécile Dupeux of the musée de l'Oeuvre Notre-Dame has produced the follow list of sources from 1518 chronicling the event:
Archives de la Ville et de l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg:
AMS III 200/15, édité en Presque totalité en annexe de Johann Schilter, Die Alteste Teutsche so wohl Allgemeine als insonderheit Elsassische und Strassburgische Chronicke von Jacob von Königshoven, Strassburg, Staedel, 1698, p. 1088-1089.; AMS IMR 3f° 72r, 1518 VIII 2. ; AMS 6R n°38a, f° II r-v. ; AMS III 200/15, 1518 ; AMS III 200/15, 1518 (éd. par Martin, Geschichte der Tanzkrankheit, p. 121) ; AMS III 200/15. (Sur le f° de gauche :) Tantzende arme personen, so zu sanct Vit zum Holenstein geschickt.
Archives départementales du Bas-Rhin: ADBR 12J 1495, 1518 VII 25.

[32] AMS III 200/15, 1518 VII 23 (éd. dans Schilter, Königshoven [voir n° 3], p. 1088): "Instruction der armen dantzen personen, so zu sant Vit geschickt, veneris post Magdalene [anno] etc. 18. Gedencken angfenglich, die armen menschen in den dryen huffen, wie sy dan geredt [gerodt] worden, zu behalten. Und das die knecht, so uff die armen lut bescheiden, der selbigen warten und by in bliben. Unnd so sy gon

which cemented common ideas that related dancing to the Saint Vitus, who had previously been connected with other movement-based diseases such as epilepsy.[33]

3.1.3 Paracelsian St Vitus pathologization before Troffea

Regardless of the fact that Paracelsus wrote of Troffea as the St Vitus dance's originator, he had also written a previous text on the dance where she is not mentioned. This pre-Troffea St Vitus dance text was also perhaps written before Paracelsus arrived in Strasbourg eight years after the 1518 Veitstanz that transpired there. Thus, scholars tend to believe he wrote his analyses of the dance both before and after his actual presence in the city – the pre-Strasbourg text was also the pre-Troffean one.[34] This text is *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft Berauben*. Its completion can be estimated as occurring between 1526 - 1527, whereas *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*'s estimated completion date is 1531.[35] *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft Berauben*, without mentioning Troffea, was also more conservative than the latter. It defined the St Vitus dance more straightforwardly as a disease of reason rather than as an invisible disease and sought to classify variations of the disease and methods of cure.

Zabern nohen, der ein zu Zabern in ryten, und do dry oder vier priester mit rat des dechans zu Zabern bestellen, die do ider rotten insonders nocheinander gesungen empter halten. "

[33] Owsei Temkin. *The Falling Sickness: A History of Epilepsy from the Greeks to the Beginnings of Modern Neurology*. 2nd revised edition (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971).

[34] These dates are based on the work of Paracelsus scholars Karl Sudhoff and Andrew Weeks. In the late 19th century, Sudhoff began painstaking work on dating Paracelsus's corpus. In the 1990s, Andrew Weeks began problematizing a number of Sudhoff's conjectures about the dates of original manuscripts. Interestingly, Weeks argued that the barrages of insults written into Paracelsus's texts – though so long ignored by scholars – was one of the best tools toward dating them, as such insults were usually pointed at a person or experience recently encountered by Paracelsus. Whereas 1526 is Sudhoff's dating of *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft Berauben,* 1531 is Week's dating of *De Morborum Invisibilium,* for which no original manuscript has been found.

[35] Paracelsus is listed as purchasing citizenship in Strasbourg on Wednesday, December 5th, 1526 in the *Livre de bourgeoisie*, held at the Archives de Strasbourg, I, 582: "Item Theophrastus von Hohenheim der artzney doctor hatt das burgrecht kaufft und dient zur Lutzernen. Actum Mittwoch nach Andree appostoli." Paracelsus wrote a chapter on the St Vitus Dance in his work *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft Berauben.* Though scholars have tended to date it around 1525 – 1526, it is unlikely the text emerged before Paracelsus ventured to Strasbourg. The section on the Veitstantz in *De Morborum Invisibilium* was written after Paracelsus was in Basel (1528), most likely in St Gall. *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft Berauben* is certainly a predecessor of *De Morborum Invisibilium* – ideas on the St Vitus dance that are just taking shape within *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft Berauben* are much more thoroughly explored in *De Morborum Invisibilium*, and the earlier conception of the Sanct Veits tanz is more confidently rendered as Veitstantz in Paracelsus's later and more mature world-view.

As was the case with *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium, Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft Berauben* would appear within the selection of texts composing the first major wave of post-mortem publication of the Paracelsian manuscripts after his death.[36] None of Paracelsus's writings that mention the St Vitus dance appeared in print for more than 20 years after his death in 1541. As argued by Karl Sudhoff in his *Bibliographia Paracelsica*, beginning in 1560, "Hohenheim's [Paracelsus's] manuscript estate, in numerous special editions of Bodenstein, Dorn, Toxites and others," was finally put into publication between 1560 - 1588.[37] Such publications variously compiled and often erroneously edited the fragmental manuscripts of Paracelsian writings that were scattered amongst his friends, benefactors, and others who had by choice or happenstance collected his writings. In 1565, the 'Erben Arnoldi Byrckmanni' printed an abridged *De Morbis Invisibilibvs* with a rather stunted version of Paracelsus's 1531 writing on the Veitstanz in *Theophrasti Paracelsi Lib. II. De Cavsa Et Origine Morborvm* out of Cologne.[38] In 1567, Petrus Perna published the first printed edition of *Schreyben von den Kranckheyten, so die Vernunfft berauben* out of Basel, with the 1526/27 section on the dance and its treatment, as edited by Adam von Bodenstein.[39] The earliest Paracelsian mention of the St Vitus dance was printed as a comment on Syphilis, in the *Opus Chyrurgicum* edited by Bodenstein and printed in Strasbourg in 1564.[40]

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[36] The St Vitus dance also makes a brief appearance in a discussion of imagination and astral influence in *Von Ursprung und Herkommen der Franzosen samt der Recepten Heilung, acht Bücher* (completed 1529, but rejected from publication in Nuremberg). The work shows the development of Paracelsus's ideas on imagination.

[37] Sudhoff, Karl. *Bibliographia Paracelsica: Besprechung Der Unter Theophrast Von Hohenheim's Namen 1527–1893 Erschienenen Druckschriften*. Originally Published 1894 ; *Im Original Erschienen* 1894 ed. (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 1894), 60: "Die Zeit der Herausgabe des handschriftlichen Nachlasses Hohenheim's in zahlreichen Sonderausgaben von Bodenstein, Dorn, Toxites und Andern."

[38] Sudhoff, 111. The copy consulted for this research as follows: *Paracelse, and Héritiers d'Arnold Birckmann. Theophrasti Paracelsi Lib. II. De Cavsa Et Origine Morborvm. Das ist: Von vrsachen vnd herkomen der krankheite[n]. De Morbis Invisibilibvs. Das ist: Von den vnsichtbaren kranckheiten, Jetzt newlich an tag kommen*. 1566

[39] Paracelsus, *Dess hocherfahrnesten Medici Aureoli Theophrasti Paracelsi Schreyben von den Kranckheyten, so die Vernunfft berauben, als da sein S. Veyts Thantz hinfallender Siechtage, Melancholia und Unsinnigkeit etc. sampt ihrn warhafften Curen: darzu auss gemeldts Authoris Büchern gethan sein etliche lustige und nutzbare Process Administrationes und Würckungen dess Vitriols und Erdenhartzes*. Adam von Bodenstein, ed., Basel: Petrus Perna. 1567.

[40] Sudhoff, *Medizinische, naturwissenschaftliche und philosophische Schriften,* vol. 2, 95. See also: Paracelsus, and Adam von Bodenstein. *Opus Chyrurgicum, Warhaffte Vnd vollkomne Wundartznei, Des Hocherfarnen der ... Medicin, Doctoris Aureoli Theophrasti Paracelsi ...: Darinn begriffen wie die*

Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft Berauben and *De Morborum Invisibilium* seem to behave as conflicting witnesses of the St Vitus dance, the simplest evidence for this being the change in classification. However, the central conflicts that arise between the two texts are those of emphasis and methodology. The earlier work not only emphasizes danced motion (chorea) as both conducive to and symptomatic of loss of reason (Vernunft), it further takes pains to stipulate various somewhat unclear genres of the dance. Within the text, classifications take a central role: *chorea lasciva* seems to be the term for the version connected with voluptuous imagination, *levitas animi* is a chorea drawing from recklessness of mind, *chorea coeca* has a purely natural cause in the tickling sensation of 'lachende Adern' [laughing veins], and *choreae estuationis* or *imaginationis,* is more related to swearing or rage.[41] Conversely, the later work *De Morborum Invisibilium* presents the Veitstanz without such delineations. Here, Troffea as sole originator also meets with the unification of all possible causes for the dance in a complex analysis of 'invisibility,' as contagious disease derived of the material motions of imagination and false belief between bodies.

However, the formulation of his later work on invisible disease built upon the earlier work by more clearly defining a Paracelsian sense for what *Vernunft* (reason) might be. This shift is important. Paracelsus understood clarity of thought as dependent on correct religious faith and spiritual practice, and thus only possible if aligned with God's truth. [42]

Wunden, offnen Schäden, Gewächs, Gebresten, Frantzosen, Blatern, Beulen ... mit natürlicher ordnung Curiert werden sollend (Strassburg: Paul Messerschmidt, 1564).

[41] "On the Diseases that Deprive Man of His Reason." Translated into English by: Zilboorg, Gregory. *Four Treatises of Theophrastus Von Hohenheim, Called Paracelsus: Translated from the Original German, with Introductory Essays*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1941, p. 181. From the Latin translation published by Adam von Bodenstein, 1567. See: *Das 7. Buch in der Arznei. Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft berauben*. In: Sudhoff, *Medizinische, naturwissenschaftliche und philosophische Schriften,* volume 2.

[42] Paracelsus writes of 'vernunft' throughout his corpus, but quite significantly within *De Sensu et Instrumentis*. See: Paracelsus, "De Sensu et Instrumentis" *Sämtliche Werke.* Zweite Abteilung: Theologische und Religionsphilosophische Schriften. Kurt Goldammer, ed. (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1965). Therein he defines reason (vernunft) in at least two different ways, thus: "Unser vernunft ist der geist. der geist ist der, der wieder zum herren gehet. drumb bleiben die sensus eins mit der obrigkeit, so werden sie mit der obrigkeit selig; wo nit, so weicht die obrigkeit, und die sensus komben in die exteriores tenebras cum toto corpore, das ist infernum," 87.
"Die vernunft ist ein obrigkeit von gott, dann sie ist spiritus domini. dem muss an statt gottes gehorsam bewisen werden, und sie ist volkomben in irem tun, nit mit gedanken, sodern mit wissen guts und böses. und ist in allen menschen ein einige vernunft nit ein iedere mit besondern gesetzen, landscbräuchen, landfreiheiten etc., wie in den populis, das vil zusamben sitzen in ein rat und dennocht nichts oft erraten. sie fragt niemandt umb rat, dann sie weisst alles. durch sie müessen wir in vitam aeternam," 87 – 88.

This important factor of his thought took time to be fully worked out in Paracelsus's writings, and his medico-religious / material-spiritual synthesis of this idea is most lucidly achieved in his later works.[43] It is clearly expressed, for example, in *De Sensu et Instrumentis*, a Paracelsian theological text, where he writes, "unser vernunft ist der geist," *our reason is spirit*, clarifying that the *vernunft* that is *der geist* returns to *der obrigkeit* – the higher power.[44]

In a way, the changes Paracelsus made in his analysis of the St Vitus dance can be understood as part of a process of re-drafting.[45] His later work was edited to leave some earlier stipulations – namely, the subclasses of St Vitus dance – out of the later formulation in order instead to foreground correct faith as foundational to reason. In the later work, Paracelsus's writing had quite simply shifted in emphasis, away from medical taxonomy and recipes for remedies, toward uniting religion and medicine in the theoretical holism of his reformist vision. The shifting of Paracelsus's ideas toward greater theoretical depth and alignment with the Reformation era's fervor has been further proposed by Andrew Weeks as consequent of Paracelsus's life experience. Particularly, Weeks identified Paracelsus's recourse to theory as emergent from the humiliation and disappointment Paracelsus experienced when cast out of the only authoritative position he held in his life in Basel as a lecturer at the university and as an official physician to the city in 1527 - 1528:

> Radicalized by his rejection and isolated in the climate of retrenching orthodoxy, his overt struggle for reform and personal recognition becomes sublimated in an increasingly elaborate exposition of theory. Paracelsian theory serves as the weapon of last resort, wielded to undercut the conceptual-metaphysical foundations of his opponents.*[46]*

Certainly, the increasing flagrancy of insults in later Paracelsian writings points to Paracelsus's increasing desperation and frustration. However, the development of

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Such definitions of human reason define its contours within the authority of God, and clarify, as well, reason's limited capacities and preclusions.

[43] As Weeks points out, "by combining medical with religious issues in each of its books, *On the Invisible Diseases* offers a medical-spiritual diagnosis of the religious troubles of a critical phase of the Reformation." Weeks, *Paracelsus: Essential Theoretical Writings*, 22.

[44] Paracelsus, "De Sensu et Instrumentis," *Sämtliche Werke,* 87.

[45] This insight on Paracelsus's corpus was first proposed to the author by Didier Kahn in conversation with Lindsey Drury.

[46] Weeks, Andrew. *Paracelsus: Speculative Theory and the Crisis of the Early Reformation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 3

Paracelsus's theoretics also points to the idea that Paracelsus was increasingly able to comprehend and articulate the profoundly theological foundations behind his medical ideas. Furthermore, Paracelsus's later writings on the St Vitus dance are predisposed not only toward greater theoretical complexity, they further elucidate the St Vitus dance through a greater emphasis on likening it to other religious concerns in the rising Reformation. Amongst these are Paracelsus's analysis of the Anabaptists – who arise as a central comparative example in Paracelsus's discussion of the St Vitus dance in his work on invisible diseases. Most likely this is because of the Anabaptist's heavy condemnation by both Catholic and Reformation authorities, and their activity where Paracelsus was residing at the time of his writing in Sankt Gallen (St Gall). According to Andrew Weeks, "Swingli, Luther, Roma, and the Holy Roman Empire had all condemned the Anabaptists who were suffering harsh persecution. St. Gall knew its share of scandals and persecutions of Anabaptists."[47]

The one consistency between Paracelsus's two texts on St Vitus dance – that the St Vitus dance had neither its true source nor its true cure in saintly intervention – is also in both texts the basis by which Paracelsus argues that the St Vitus dance connects to imagination. However, in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* Paracelsus's perception of the St Vitus dance as imaginary disease shifts toward its later identification as a disease of imagination. Even manifested by imagined states of being, St Vitus dance therein becomes a physical force propelled by the amassing of faithful bodies. It is thus with a greater appreciation for the powers of signification that Paracelsus tackles the signification of imagination in the theoretics of his later writings. Therein, Paracelsus takes the imaginative powers of St Vitus dancers seriously in precisely the writings wherein his own imaginative cosmology is finally finding the fullness of its own articulation.

3.1.4 Troffea, body-cosmology and the workings of sensorial experience

Paracelsus's interpretation of the St Vitus dance expresses an understanding of sensual experience as mediated by faith and reason. This Paracelsus took to extremes by

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[47] Weeks, Andrew. "On the Invisible Diseases & Cosmic Reformation." *Mental Health, Spirituality, and Religion in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age*, Classen, Albrecht, ed. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 512

claiming that imagination could produce material consequences through sheer force of human willful faith. Nonetheless, Paracelsus still identified the St Vitus dance as a practice mired in sensorial deception in that the dance pushed aside truth by conjuring a sensorial experience that could ultimately render a forgery disease/miracle into material form. To begin the process leading to shared sensorial deception, only one instigator was necessary. Within *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, Troffea was just that – the St Vitus dancer needed to initially conjure the act with her independent initiative. All others following her lead could begin to take part by first being influenced and then imitating the acts of others. Through the St Vitus dance, Paracelsus consequently presented an idea of constructed social reality, and thus the idea that what is believed of reality is shaped, in part, by the enactments people experience of each other. Paracelsus described this as a form of danced incantation, which he qualified by claiming that it was, "not that they have been bewitched by other people. Instead, they have worked themselves up into a belief so that it is by its power and not because of the truth itself that they give themselves over to the fire."[48] In Paracelsus's interpretation, the dancers were not helplessly bewitched; they were responsible for themselves.

Further formulating a feedback loop between the willfully performed act and sensorial experience in the St Vitus dance, Paracelsus further provided what amounts to a basic definition for the modern concept of confirmation bias. He describing the dance as, "an adopted manner which by way of belief comes to that end and is thus confirmed."[49] In such a framing of the dance as both willful incantation and re-confirmation of reality through performance, Paracelsus also gave an answer for why the St Vitus dance relentlessly continued: the moment the dance stopped would be the moment the self-induced conjuring of the dance-disease reality would cease.

Though Paracelsus identified responsibility for the dance within its performers, though this would seem to mean Paracelsus was proposing perhaps greater powers of self-determination than were typically argued in his time, Paracelsus nonetheless only argued for the great powers of human will while clarifying those powers as often uncontrollable. The willful maintenance of a disease-state like St Vitus dance was for Paracelsus an out-

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[48] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium." In: *Essential Theoretical Writings*, Weeks, trans., 785.

[49] Ibid. "Ein angenommene weiß/ die durch den glauben dahin bestett wirt."

of-control consequence of "obstinate, inflated minds," which produce "nothing less than *praesumptio* in which they get themselves into a belief."[50] In Paracelsus's calculation, it was the in the nature of obstinateness and presumption themselves to exert will – with minds so unyielding to truth, the dancers willfully fell into a dance disease by almost ironically having too little control over their own predilection to bend truth to suit their belief. In other words, their disease emerged as much from the subjection of each dancer to his or her own obstinacy as from the subjection of each to the influence of others. Paracelsus articulated such subjection as *a weakness* that turns on its possessor, "the strength of faith discharges like a musket backfiring against us" ultimately defining such self-directed delusion as a *temptation of faith*.[51] There is in the end perhaps no means by which such a concept could be translated into a modern conception of belief. For Paracelsus, obstinacy was a material circumstance of human beings given us by our embodied condition and only refuted through correct faith in God, rather than through a modern conception of logic.

In a way, even in more theologically-oriented writings such as *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, Paracelsus always displayed his alchemy by seeking to explain the material processes of transmutation by which human expressions of will, force of belief, and imagination gained their powers of influence – and further – explicated the Paracelsian idea that influence was itself a material process. Even within his earlier writing on the St Vitus dance in *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft berauben* [On the Diseases that Deprive Man of his Reason]*, Paracelsus had begun describing the physicality of influence as 'impressio,' or the impression of an image (*Bildtnuß/Bildnuß/Bildniß*).[52] Ultimately, Paracelsus defines 'impressio' as the unmediated nature by which God's imprint forms the

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[50] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," Weeks trans., 783 & 789. "eigenrichtigen plastigen köpffen," Huser, *Bücher und Schrifften,* volume 1, 265; "das nichts anders ist/ dann praesumptio/ darinnen sie sich selbst in einen glauben füren," Huser, *Bücher und Schrifften,* volume 1, 268.

[51] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," trans. Weeks, 781, 783. The term/phrase Paracelsus uses here are: weakness, "die schweche," and a falling into temptation with our faith as, "fielendt mit dem glauben … in ein versuchung."

[52] In his various works on image and imagination, Paracelsus uses *Bildnuß* and *Bildniß* interchangeably. As explained by Andrew Weeks, however, Paracelsus related the concepts of 'interiorization' and 'imagination', expressing them as 'inbildnuß' and 'inbildniß'. As explained by Weeks, "In the first instance, the word signifies the product (as the interiorized formation), in the second the producer (as the informing imagination)." Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," *Essential Theoretical Writings*, Weeks, trans., footnote 1, 805.

human into his image. Paracelsus wrote in the *Paramirum*, for example, that "what we call 'impressio' is supposed to come from the heavens. But this isn't the case. For the heavens aren't impressing anything upon us. We have made the image [*Bildtnuß*] through/from the hand of God upon ourselves."[53] Within the course of the passage he substitutes his term 'impressio' with his chosen synonym for it: 'eintrucken,' [to print] which incidentally was a word used quite often the 16th century in relation to the printing of books. His point is ultimately that 'impressio' refers to an image from the hand of God that we nonetheless impress upon ourselves.

In part, it is through his conceptions of 'impressio' and 'Bildtnuß' that Paracelsus describes both the limits of God's predetermination and the extent of human will. What is given through divine grace is an image, or *Bild*, yet we ourselves are responsible for the act of engaging with it. In part, through the same formulation Paracelsus framed the heavens as a somewhat *laissez-faire* system, a parent system of heavens modeling above what humans are doing below. Human materiality is extracted from the heavens, and the heavens provide a readable surface, exterior to our selves, that can be used by humans as a model in the way that a child looks to the parent as such. By no means, however, does Paracelsus see the astral movements as overwhelmingly controlling or orchestrating the events of human life.[54] Reducing the astral bodies to model-system and material parentage was imperative to Paracelsus's assertion of non-mediation in the image-reflection between God and human, and it is on this basis that Paracelsus argues the human *Bildtnuß* as made by God in God's own image. By relegating the heavens to non-influential parentage and legibility as a macrocosmic model of the human microcosm, Paracelsus maintained a biblical theological perspective on the creation of man.

Relative to this argument, Paracelsus contextualizes the further operations of impression that saturate the human body in the sensual world. Just as the initial impression

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[53] From the Huser, *Bücher und Schrifften,* volume 1, 136: "Impressio soll vom Himmel kommen/ das ist nicht: Dann der Himmel truckt vns nichts ein: Die Bildtnuß haben wir auß der handt Gottes gemacht an vns." Translated by the author with Joël Verwimp.

[54] This conception holds for Paracelsus, even for birth, which had been especially related to astrological influence in his time: "The human being inherits nothing from the ascendant. He inherits it instead from the limbus, for he has been made by the hand of God," Paracelsus writes in the *Paramirum*. See: Paracelsus, "Paramirum," *Paracelsus (Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, 1493–1541): Essential Theoretical Writings,* trans. Weeks, 493.

of the human being by God was at once an act of God's supreme influence and an act of creation, just as the human body was manifested through the imprinting of God's image upon the special brew of limbic materiality from which the human body was formed, so too is human sensual experience manifested by a similar method of imprinting by the material world upon human sensorial faculties. In Paracelsus's cosmology, one gains an impression by being imprinted, one becomes influenced when one is impressed; the danger is quite simply that no *impressio* but that of God could be perfect, all instead have their problems, and thus all sensual experience must be informed by true knowledge of one's relationship to God to gain empirical truth.

Paracelsus extended this formulation, as well, to his definition of a human being's process of interiorization in relation to imagination. Paracelsus's writing connected the two by naming interiorization as 'inbildnuß' and the imagination was 'inbildniß'.[55] "Als dann sowirts am selbigen orth von der inbildnus gemacht/ wie es die inbildniß gefaßt hatt," wrote Paracelsus in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* – 'the interiorization (inbildnuß) takes place at that particular site, precisely as the imagination (inbildniß) has conceived it.'[56]

In his earlier writing on the St Vitus dance in *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft berauben* (1526)*,* Paracelsus explains sensorial impression by turning to his own apparent love of hearing others whistle, and the strong joy he feels upon hearing such a tune,

> If I hear someone whistling, something I like by nature, I feel joy in my heart. This joy is twofold: I have a feeling of pleasure as is my natural disposition, and, besides, I have the image in my senses as if I see the person whistling before me. And while I am pressing that whistling into my thoughts it gives me pleasure, and joy prevails in my heart; as it stands before me it impresses itself upon me while all other qualities, blood, and dispositions are driven from me, so that they are suppressed and have no further effect. This is followed by the deprivation of senses, but not of reason. If my power of reason is taken from me and, due to my imagination, I act in the same way as I would if I had noticed or watched the whistling, my lack of will is the cause of my disease.[57]

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[55] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilum", Weeks trans., 804-805.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Paracelsus, "On the Diseases that Deprive Man of His Reason." Translated into English by: Zilboorg, Gregory. *Four Treatises of Theophrastus Von Hohenheim, Called Paracelsus: Translated from the Original German, with Introductory Essays*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1941, pgs. 159 – 160. From the Latin translation published by Adam von Bodenstein, 1567. See: *Das 7. Buch in der Arznei. Von den*

Paracelsus's description turns toward the as if nature of imagination – 'I act in the same way as I would if'—the statement as he gives it is: "wird mir genomen der gewalt der vernunft und nach meiner imaginaz wie ichs betracht hab oder vor mir gesehen, tun ich dem selbigen gleich ; dan mein verwilligung ist ursach der krankheit."[58] Relating the loss of reason and the descent of joyful experience into disease, Paracelsus shows his perspective here: it is not merely the bending of sensorial pleasure into a hyper-imaginative experience that Paracelsus defines as diseased; once one acts upon the *as if* in some way, then and only then does Paracelsus define the onset of illness. Paracelsus articulates the process as beginning in the fullness of an impression that drives away reason and sensorial truth, which is next manifested as a full transference of the sound of whistling into a fully visual experience, and finally somehow responded to in action. The disease arises if the listener behaves as if the whistler stands fully visible in front of him.

Paracelsus then relates this personal anecdote on whistling to the risks of joyful dancing, pathologizing the joyful dance amongst other subclasses of St Vitus dance; as Paracelsus expresses it, this "dance may result from stimulation which originates from vision and hearing, in this way: joy in man comes from the heart; vision and hearing are things that go to the heart."[59] Such a dance, it seems, was one Paracelsus imagined to erupt from the pure elation experienced in something heard or seen. By the time Paracelsus re-worked his idea of the St Vitus dance for the later *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, however, all his thoughts on joy had vanished or been subsumed by a more extensive critique of the dance not as spontaneous eruption, but as a false ritual connected with the (by then problematized) medieval conception of the intercession of the saints. Nonetheless, even as Paracelsus altered his framework of examples, his conceptions of and critiques of sensorial experience remained functional within his work.

Krankheiten, die der Vernunft berauben. In: Sudhoff, *Medizinische, naturwissenschaftliche und philosophische Schriften,* vol. 2 (Munich and Berlin: Oldenbourg, 1923-1933).

[58] Paracelsus, *Das 7. Buch in der Arznei*: *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft berauben.* In: Sudhoff *Medizinische, naturwissenschaftliche und philosophische Schriften,* vol. 2, 410.

[59] Paracelsus, "On the Diseases that Deprive Man of His Reason." Translated into English by: Zilboorg, Gregory. *Four Treatises of Theophrastus Von Hohenheim, Called Paracelsus: Translated from the Original German, with Introductory Essays*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1941, p. 159. From the Latin translation published by Adam von Bodenstein, 1567. See: *Das 7. Buch in der Arznei. Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft berauben.* In Sudhoff, *Medizinische, naturwissenschaftliche und philosophische Schriften,* vol. 2.

3.1.5 Troffea's false ceremony: the paganism of ritual dancing and Paracelsian cosmology

Paracelsus's writing on the St Vitus dance speaks in multiple ways, on a variety of levels layered between grand-scale, long-term cosmological debates and the localization of events and debates to which he was privy. Reformation-era debates on ritual efficacy, mania and religious ecstasy, saintly intercession and the consequences of the veneration of saints, the influence of the stars, the means of interaction between God and the created world – all these resonate with Paracelsus's writing on the St Vitus dance. Perhaps the easiest well-known reformation-era discourse to pin down in Paracelsus's writings on the St Vitus dance is that of *cultus divorum* (intercession of the saints). A notable critic of *cultus divorum* was of course Erasmus, with whom Paracelsus met and corresponded pursuant to Erasmus's request for medical advice from Paracelsus.[60]

Despite his critiques of *cultus divorum*, however, Paracelsus adopted the link between illness and faith forged in the saints-based diseases as a first step toward shifting the very terms by which faith was to be perceived in relationship to illness. On the one hand, Paracelsus's pathologization of faith displaced the St Vitus dance into the novel Paracelsian idea of 'invisible diseases'; on the other, his pathologization uniquely returned to the earliest theme appearing in Christian narratives of ceaseless dances – that of the false pagan ritual.

Through the commonality of ceaseless ritual dancing, Paracelsus's texts on the invisible diseases can be connected to early medieval treatises on the conversion of pagans. Because of this fact, Paracelsus's writing on the St Vitus dance operatively adheres to Erasmus's critique of saintly intercession as a transformation of the saints into "successors of the pagan gods."[61] Paracelsus makes the connection between narratives of pagan ritualistic 'raving' and his critique of saintly intercession by miring his analysis of the St Vitus dancing illness in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* in medieval language used to admonish pagan practice. Such language is exemplified in one of the oldest accounts of

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[60] Bietenholz, Peter G., and Thomas B. Deutscher, eds. *Contemporaries of Erasmus: A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1995), 50.

[61] Eire, Carlos M. N. *War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 38.

ceaseless dancing in the medieval period – that of Audoin of Rouen in his *Vita Eligii*, originally written in the 7th century. In the account, the prayer of Eligius, who was later canonized as a saint, fated a group of around 50 people to ceaselessly 'rave' for a year (in the style of their pagan rituals of games, leaping, and dancing). In the story presented by Audoin, Eligius preached to the diocese of the town of Noyon for the celebration of the birth of Peter the Apostle. Audoin notes that, as was usual for Eligius, the speech focused on "denouncing all demonic games and wicked leapings and all remnants of inane superstitions as things to be thoroughly abominated."[62] The people cried out in anger, threatening to kill Eligius, as "nor can any man forbid us our ancient and gratifying games."[63] Eligius prayed that the people "be given an example of such ferocity and terror that they shall know whose work they are," and suddenly the people were possessed by demonic spirits, and with this "they began to rave."[64] The Latin term used in the 8th century manuscript is 'debacchari,' raving, from 'debacchor', meaning to rave, rage without control, or revel wildly.[65] Notably, the word alludes to *Bacchantes* (followers of Bacchus).[66] A year passed before Eligius called those sentenced to rave back to himself in order to exorcise them.

A friend of St Eligius, Audoin described Eligius's work as focused on the conversion of Germanic tribes in Flanders.[67] Thus, the *Vita S. Eligii* is purportedly a story of saintly conversion. However, as written by the historian Yitzhak Hen, "it seems that

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[62] *Vita S. Eligius*, ed. Levison, MGH SS Mer. 4, 669-742. Translated with notes by Jo Ann McNamara as a part of Fordham University's Internet Medieval Source Book.
https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/eligius.asp. Also abridged in print in: *Medieval Hagiography: A Sourcebook*, ed. Thomas Head (New York: Garland, 1999), Retrieved Nov 10, 2018.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid. "Debacchare, points to somewhat euphoric rites, drinking and dancing." Graf, Fritz. *Roman Festival in the Greek East: From the Early Empire to the Middle Byzantine Era.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 216.

[65] *Vita Eligii* (BHL Vita Eligii, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SRM 4 (Hanover, 1902), 634–42 (BHL 2474–2476). (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers).

[66] Bullions, P. *A copious and critical Latin-English dictionary: abridged and re-arranged from Riddle's Latin-English lexicon; with a brief comparison and illustration of the most important Latin synonyms* ; also, *English-Latin dictionary adapted from the English-Latin dictionary of Dr. Kaltschmidt* (New York: Sheldon, 1866) 119.
See also: Jordan, Mark. D. *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 14: "The verb debacchor is rare. Not just the allusion, but the archaizing word used to make it put the reader in mind of poetic learning, of expertise in pagan mythography,"

[67] McNamara, Jo Ann. "Dado of Rouen, Life of St. Eligius of Noyon," *Medieval Hagiography: A Sourcebook*, ed. Thomas F. Head. New York: Garland, 1999, 152.

Eligius met fewer pagans in actuality than his *vita* would like us to believe."[68] Instead, Audoin's *vita* sampled heavily from previous works on converting pagans – most notably Martin of Braga's *De correctione rusticorum* (which in turn sampled from Augustine's *De catechizandis rudibus)*, from 572 and 403 respectively.[69] As explained by Hen, through a system of sampling, works like that of Martin of Braga "were influenced by the traditional and canonical literature on paganism and superstitions, rather than being an accurate reflection" of actual non-Christian activity.[70] Such works not only set up the medieval language around idolatrous practice, they further shifted ideas on idolatry toward the admonishmental rhetoric of evangelism. In such rhetoric, sinners and unbelievers were not in the end condemned, but saved by learning from the punishing intercession of the living saint.

Sources from Strasbourg show evidence that the dance was understood in relation to pagan ritual. Otto Brunfels, in his *Onomasikon, seu lexikon medicinae simplicis*, printed in Strasbourg in 1543, observed:

> Corybantes are those who dance like mad. This is what the Galician priests [Phrygians] of the Mother of the Gods used to do. In their ceremonies, they rolled their heads ... That's where the name Cybele comes from, the verb κυβισω, which means to roll the head ... It seems to me that the disease that afflicted them was the one that today we call the St Vitus dance. Because, what are they other than Corybantes, since they have rage and dance without stopping? Although some believe that it is not a disease, but a simulation, since the frenzy is easily stopped. In our time, many ills have been committed under the pretext of this disease.[71]

As Paracelsus he speaks of incantation, superstition, false ceremony, incorrectly interpreted signs, and presumptuous belief in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium,* he adopts the tone by which cultus divorum were connected to images of an out-of-control paganism

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[68] Hen, Yitzhak. "Martin of Braga's *De Correctione Rusticorum* and its Uses in Frankish Gaul." Medieval Transformations: Texts Power, and Gifts in Context, Leiden: Brill, 2001, p. 39

[69] Ibid., 35.

[70] Ibid., 36.

[71] "Corybantes dicuntur, quasi furibundi saltantes. Huiusmodi erant olim Galli sacerdotes matris Deorum. Illi enim in sacris suis caput rotabant ... Unde et Cybele dicta, a verbo   , quod in caput rotari significat ... Mihi videtur morbus fuisse, quo perciti fuerunt, quem hodie vocant S. Viti, S. Veits dantz. Quid enim illi aliud sunt quam Corybantes ? dum furiose choreas perpetuas agunt. Quanquam sint qui non morbum esse velint, sed imposturam – quae verberibus et flagellis facile emendatur. Multa nostra aetate sub eius praetextu morbi patrata sunt mala." See: Brunfels, Otto. *Onomasikon, seu lexikon medicinae simplicis* (Strasbourg: J. Schott, 1543). Translated by Lindsey Drury.

from antiquity resurfacing in Christian faith. Paracelsus's desire to extract Christian faith from the throes of ritually-performed false faith almost lead him to subscribe to the austerity recommended by Reformists such as Calvin. By the fifth book of *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium,* for example, Paracelsus was writing that "to conclude this discussion of the ceremonies, you should be aware that they should not exist. For if we desire something from God, he examines our hearts and not the ceremonies."[72] Within a page, he backs down from his moratorium on ceremonies, however, describing the problem instead as one of misuse: "*ceremoniae* have had their bad effect on everything and ruined the authority that one should possess oneself. Moreover, this has also ruined the art [which is] *magica*. I am writing about this [art] now because it does not want to do without ceremonies."[73]

Like Paracelsus, Saint Eligius seemingly argued in the *Vita Eligii* for a Christianity devoid of all ritualistic behavior, but likewise only argued against ritual in those cases when he considered its ceremony as informed by false faith. Eligius is quoted by Audoin as preaching that "no Christian believes impurity or sits in incantation," and that "no influence attaches to the first work of the day or the [phase of the] moon," and finally, that "diabolical games and dancing or chants of the gentiles will be forbidden, no Christian will do them because he thus makes himself pagan."[74] Audoin further portrays Eligius as critiquing pagan ritual for holding the natural world at its center:

> See how foolish man is, to offer honor to insensible, dead trees and despise the precepts of God almighty. Do not believe that the sky or the stars or the earth or any creature should be adored beyond God for he created and disposes of them all. Heaven is high indeed, and the earth vast, and the sea immense and the stars beautiful but more immense and more beautiful by necessity is he who created them.[75]

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[72] Paracelsus, "De Causis Morborum Invisibilium," trans. Weeks, 921.

[73] Paracelsus, trans. Weeks (2008), 923. "Also wie eingerissen sind Ceremoniaea in alle ding/ vnd verderbt den eigenen gewalt: solches hatt auch verderbt die kunst Magica: das ist daruon ich jetzund schreib/ ist dahin kommen/ daß ohn die Ceremonien nit sollen will." See: Huser, *Bücher und Schrifften,* volume 1, 322

[74] *Vita S. Eligius*, ed. Levison, MGH SS Mer. 4, 669-742. Translated with notes by Jo Ann McNamara as a part of Fordham University's Internet Medieval Source Book. https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/eligius.asp. Also abridged in print in: *Medieval Hagiography: A Sourcebook*, ed. Thomas Head. New York: Garland, 1999.

[75] *Vita S. Eligius,* translated with notes by Jo Ann McNamara.

On such a point, Paracelsus differs. As a materialist who sees the natural world as an inscription of divine will legible to those who learn to read it, Paracelsus presents a profoundly Christian theological cosmology, but does so by emphasizing materiality as the foundation of legibility – a legibility, however, not perceivable in reified forms so much as in the movements, changes, and alteration of forms dissolving, deteriorating, and rebuilding – one into the other. Toward the end of *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, he wrote of invisibility as the movement ensuing in the non-reification of embodiment, "the body can also send its powers abroad while remaining in its place like the sun that shines through glass without passing through it," he wrote. From this conception, Paracelsus presented the idea that a body is to be understood not from its form but from its performativity: "this is why nothing should be attributed to the body in itself but only to the powers that proceed from it." For Paracelsus, formulated stasis could be not read, but nonetheless, all bodies could be read as none were dependably fixed in a state of being. As microcosm, the body was a microcosm for that same fact in the world itself – a world likewise legible for its movements. "For where else would you find the reed, but where the wind could sway it?" wrote Paracelsus in the "Vorred zum Leser" of *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*'s fifth book.[76] Through such a cosmology, Paracelsus argued that observation is not turned toward the subject of its attention assuming that what is to be discerned there rests upon the surface. Paracelsus gave invisibility central importance – not only as a class of diseases, but as a foundation for true perception. Paracelsus presented invisibility as the cause by which true perception could be undermined or achieved. He wrote, for example, in the *Paragranum* that, "a physician should be able to look through a human being, just as transparently as if seeing through to a distilled dew in which not even the least little spark could be hidden so that it would remain unseen." Further, the *Paragranum* identified invisibility as the core addendum manifesting philosophy from nature, "what is philosophy other than the invisible nature?" and yet, conversely "the visible yields the truth; the invisible [yields] nothing." In *Astronomia*, "what we see [visibly], then, is not medicine, but rather the corpus within which it resides. For the arcana of the elements are invisible and so are those of the human being. What is visible is the external, which is not essential."

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[76] Paracelus, Essential Theoretical Writings, Weeks, trans., 885.

Ultimately, Paracelsus identified invisibility as related to the nature of God, whose foundational position as the source of all the visible world nonetheless cannot be seen, writing that, "'if all this is so, as we see, and we cannot comprehend them at any point, what should we think of those heavenly things which we cannot see? What of that artisan at whose nod all this was created and at whose will all is governed?"[77]

Such a statement clearly prescribes a doctrine shaped by the incapacity to know. The problem is that Paracelsus only does so to further serve as an argument within a larger cosmology; a cosmology Paracelsus considered himself the only authority capable of representing. Within that cosmology, Paracelsus only wrote on dance as a part of a larger effort to re-describe a cosmological basis by which the enactment of beliefs Paracelsus did not share could be framed definitively as ceremonial farces. For Paracelsus the St Vitus dancers were members of a diverse assemblage of people who sought means for communication with God but were ever thwarted by the nature of their methods. Conversely, the theological (and thus cosmological) truth of Paracelsus's methods was supposed to be proven in medical acts of healing. In the end, perhaps *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* was a part of Paracelsus's larger justification for both his failures and the successes of others. Paracelsus failed to cure syphilis and plague – two experiences that shaped his writing of *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* – while the St Vitus dance was a testimony of kind of success that didn't fit with Paracelsus's beliefs, as it was healed by a trip to the saint's shrine.

Most significantly, Paracelsus's writing on the St Vitus dance seeks to reformulate the long-standing conception of the cosmic dance by reconceiving of the relationship between moving bodies and orbiting constellations. Paracelsus made his intervention into a discourse on cosmic dance pivotal to cosmological theories since Pythagoras.[78] Pythagorean influence maintained its supremacy in antiquity; Plato's *Timaeus* may have

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[77] As translated from: Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. *Paracelsus: Essential Readings* (Western Esoteric Masters) (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1999).

[78] Conceptions of the cosmic dance in Pythagorean cosmology appear, for example, in the work of Philolaus, as passed down by Stobaeus in the 5th century AD. See also: Rohmann, Gregor. "Dancing on the Threshold: A cultural concept for conditions of being far from salvation." *Contributions to the History of Concepts.* Volume 10, Issue 2, (Winter 2015): 56. As Rohmann describes, "the Christian discourse on heavenly harmony and on the round-dance as mimesis of the spheres developed out of Pythagorean cosmology and late antique controversies on the legitimacy of dance as a means of religious communication."

shifted the cosmic dance into the Platonic corpus, but only did so, as eloquently expressed by Eric Csapo, by putting its words "in the mouth of the Pythagorean Timaeus."[79] Ideas of the cosmic dance were variously re-envisioned into medieval Christian cosmology by early Neoplatonists.[80]

Euripides's *Bacchae* of the 4th century BC also provides a significant model for the idea of involuntary dancing and its relation to divine powers. It is a story of divine intercession as well; in it Dionysus punishes the women of Thebes for failing to recognize him as a god by forcing them to dance ceaselessly on Mount Cithaeron. Yet, before Dionysus defines the terms of involuntary dancing as such, Euripides's *Bacchae* presents a different relationship the (in)voluntary and the dance: the dance as an obligation, as a way to quench Dionysus's need to be glorified. The opposite of Dionysian madness, as aptly argued by the character Teiresias, is not sanity; the opposite of Dionysian madness is the madness of irreverence. As spoken by Teiresias to Pentheus,

> Cadmus and I, whom you ridicule, will crown / our heads with ivy and join the / dances of the god – / an ancient foolish pair perhaps, but dance / we must. / Nothing you have said would make me / change my mind or flout the will of / heaven. / You are mad, grievously mad, beyond the power / of any drugs to cure, / for you are drugged / with madness.[81]

Between Pythagorean notions of the cosmic dance and the questions of the obligatory practice of dance for the gods in Euripides's *Bacchae*, the question at hand is that of the relationship between cosmic dance and human ritual practice, and thus of how the relationship between humanity and the divine might be understood in terms of cosmic balance. Cosmic balance extends beyond merely pleasing the gods; in Teiresias's framing, it is about ritual as alignment of self with "the will of heaven." Such an idea further relates what the historian Gregor Rohmann, for example, addresses in his work on the history of the *Tanzwut* in the Middle Ages. Rohmann explicates 3rd-4th century discourses for and against "re-enacting the sympathetic powers of the cosmos" in ritual practice and whether

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[79] Csapo, Eric. "Star Choruses." *Performance, Iconography, Reception: Studies in Honour of Oliver Taplin*. Martin Revermann, Peter Wilson (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 265.

[80] Rohmann, "Dancing on the Threshold: A Cultural Concept for Conditions of Being Far from Salvation," 56. See also: Miller, James. *Measures of Wisdom: The Cosmic Dance in Classical and Christian Antiquity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986).

[81] Euripides, *The Bacchae*. Translated into English by William Arrowsmith (New Haven: Yalue University Press, 1967), Lines 322 – 328.

such acts had actual influence on cosmic balance.[82] Rohmann then positions the medieval response: "Christian Neoplatonism inherited this controversy, and therewith adopted a basic ambivalence facing the potential of ritual communication between this world and the other."[83] Rohmann argues that such discourses on danced ritual and cosmic balance were brought into further discourse with the ideas of "mania and enthusiasmos" in Plato's *Timaeus* by early medieval Church fathers:

> For Plato mania simultaneously denotes illness (that is, spiritual disharmony) and therapy (that is, reproducing harmony). In a Christian understanding, mania as demonic possession becomes a sign of being far from God. As the cosmos was a round-dance of the spheres perfectly ordered by God, disorder physically realized was a performance of hopelessness.[84]

As argued by Rohmann, dance in the Middle Ages continued to be understood as reproducing "the cosmic movements of the spheres," and as an extension to this, that "being bound in a disharmonic, endless dance was a sign of disturbances in the relationship between microcosm an macrocosm."[85] Rohmann uses of the story of the Kölbigk dancers of the 11th century toward explication of those wider themes as paradigmatic to later dancing manias.[86] If Rohmann's analysis of the 11th century Kölbigk dance is compared with Paracelsus's thoughts, it serves further to show how Paracelsus, in his writing, is focused on reshaping theological conceptions of cosmology. This makes sense, as these same cosmological conceptions were used later to frame involuntary dance as disease in the Rhineland region near the end of the 14th century. As Rohmann describes it, the Kölbigk dance sits on the precipice, as "the one moment within our semantic movement when platonic mania was charged by theological thinking with all those aspects that, later on, should be activated in the physically real illness concept called 'dancing mania.'"[87]

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[82] Rohmann "Dancing on the Threshold," 56.

[83] Ibid., 56 – 57.

[84] Ibid., 57.

[85] Ibid., 48.

[86] Rohmann "Dancing on the Threshold," 61.
See also: Rohmann, "Von der Kirche als Reigen zum blasphemischen Tanz: Die Kölbigker Legende als Paradigma." *Tanzwut: Kosmos, Kirche und Mensch in der Bedeutungsgeschichte eines mittelalterlichen Krankheitskonzepts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 363 - 494.

[87] Rohmann, "Dancing on the Threshold," 63.

A certain ambiguity of infection characterizes the St Vitus dance of 1518. Sources from Strasbourg do not show clear adherence to the idea that the dance was connected to saintly intercession, but instead associate the dancing disease with astral influences and the summer heat. As described in a document from the Magistrate of Strasbourg,

> It started with a woman and then with other people who started to dance. We kept these people for a few days and consulted with the doctors, who told us that it was a natural disease due to an astral conjunction and the heat of the moment. Nevertheless, it is coming to an end.[88]

Paracelsus's writing on the St Vitus dance falls in line with this particular archival document from Strasbourg describing a single woman as instigating the dance, and that medical practitioners sought to connect the dance to astral influence. Nonetheless, Paracelsus, a dependable reinventor of wheels, shifts both the narrative of the single woman who began the dance toward his vision of Frau Troffea, and shows his knowledge of the cosmological theories informing ideas on the St Vitus dance by remodeling them.

To reconceive the connections between female imagination and disease, cosmic forces, mania, and the ritual of ceaseless dancing, Paracelsus repositioned the very power of the astral sphere, redefined mania, re-envisioned the material basis of female imaginative/creative power, and re-articulated the nature of false-ritual. He bestowed an inner astral being upon the human being, and thus transformed the very place of the cosmic into the microcosm. Cosmic dancing could thus emerge as a system wherein humans collectively influence each other, ultimately dependent upon no greater power in the process. He further distanced the dance from mania in the book *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft berauben.* Therein, mania is a "transformation of reason and not of the senses," wherein "perception is forced upon the senses, and there is no judgment at all."[89] With such a conception of mania as non-sensorial, perceptual stripping of judgement, Paracelsus defined mania out of the St Vitus dance, and into a class of 'diseases of reason,'

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[88] "sich hat anfenglich mit einer frowen person, und nachmals mit etlichen andern personen by uns ein dantzen erhebt, welche personen wir etlich tag verwaren, und by den ärtzen erfragen lossen, die uns anzeigen, solichs ein naturlich kranckheit sin, die besunders uß influß jars constellation und hitziger zit sich erreugt, und mit stilhalten und zutuschen doch langsam ende etc." See: "25 July 1518, Correspondence between the Magistrate of Strasbourg and Bishop Wilhelm on the subject of the dancing people." Departmental Archives of Bas-Rhin, ADBR 12J 1495. Translated by Lindsey Drury.

[89] Paracelsus, "On the Diseases that Deprive Man of His Reason." Translated into English by: Zilboorg, Gregory. *Four Treatises of Theophrastus Von Hohenheim, Called Paracelsus: Translated from the Original German, with Introductory Essays* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1941).

alongside it. He did follow some precedents, relating mania to moon cycles and thus to temporary yet recurrent loss of reason relating to cosmic movements. This he mentioned not only within his text on diseases of reason, but within his work *Liber de Lunaticis*. To ritual, Paracelsus gave the conception of self-deception that by being enacted becomes true. Rohmann describes the Kölbigk dance as "the inescapable round-dance of being far from salvation."[90] To this, Paracelsus added the addendum that any ritual enacted far from salvation is, by being ritual, attempting to manufacture divine presence. Such a claim aligns with the theatrical conception of *deus ex machina*, manufacturing the miracle where it is not.

In relation to this, Rohmann describes how throughout the medieval period, dance remained both liminal within Christian thought, and representative of human liminality in Christian cosmology. Dance was framed neither as entirely negative nor positive, neither as entirely distant from correct spiritual practice nor as entirely accordant with correct ritual practice. As Rohmann and many others have noted, the expression of dance's ceaselessness and unfitting connection to Christian ritual, as expressed in the Kölbigk narrative, was not novel in its time.[91] Perhaps the expression of platonic mania within Christian faith arose early in the Middle Ages –*Timaeus* was the only Platonic work available in the early medieval period. Medieval 'dancing manias' of the Rhineland were both posed as mythical and as actually performed as a reorganization of the relations between platonic mania and the Christian faith, mediated through the interactions allying calendrical (and thus, astronomical and lunar) concepts from antiquity with the saints-based belief structures of commoners. Saints, like the stars, were understood as bodies of influence holding to a calendrical system, furnished as an example for scholarly debates on the remaining influence of antiquity. Rohmann points out that the Kölbigk dancers performed at

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[90] Rohmann, "Dancing on the Threshold," 62.

[91] As noted in E. Louis Backman's *Religious Dances in the Christian Church and in Popular Medicine* (1952), an account of parishioners cursed to continue dancing for a year exists in Andoenus of Rouen's 7th century work on the life of St Eligius, and an account of people unable to case dancing in J. Bern Krier's 19th century work on the 8th century saint Willibrord, who sent the dancers to the monastery at Echtermach to be healed.
See: Backman, E. Louis. *Religious Dances in the Christian Church and in Popular Medicine* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1952), 171 – 172.
Krier, J. Bern. *Die Springprozession und die Wallfahrt zum Grabe des heiligen Willibrord in Echternach.* (Luxemburg: Brück, 1870).

Christmas (the winter solstice), and that later acts of dancing mania "became associated especially with the summer solstice, which was named after the usual patron saints of the date – in the Julian calendar the Baptist (24 June), astronomically since the fourteenth century, Vitus (15 June)."[92] So, calendrical relations between medieval Christian saints-based ritual and practices remained connected to the conception of the cosmic dance throughout the medieval period.

3.1.6 Troffea's Relatives: Anabaptists, syphilitics, and epileptics

Across his medical writings, Paracelsus displayed a selective skepticism. The writing on St Vitus dance is particularly indicative of this. Within his short section on the St. Vitus' dance in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, Paracelsus described the comparable closeness of the St. Vitus' dancers to people with waking and dream visions ("for in itself what else is a dream other than the flighty nature of belief?"); Anabaptists ("for baptizing twice is not a saintly fruit,"); sufferers of syphilis ("the same thing happened with the French disease"); epileptics ("notably the case with St. Valentine's disease, that ultimately [those who pretended] came down with it"); possession ("for some people have pretended to be possessed, and ultimately they have experienced in their pretense that it became true") and alchemists ("with respect to their belief, it is as with someone who is an alchemist.").[93] Each case of disease mentioned by Paracelsus as originating through imagination is somewhere in his corpus further analyzed for how imagination manifests as illness or deformation. For example, while St Vitus' dance is "caught" by witnessing or performing the dance until one becomes convinced it is caused by divine forces, syphilis is contracted from one's private lascivious thoughts, and mothers with unwieldy imaginations pass various mental and physical illnesses to their unborn children that are then expressed in childhood. This is further how Paracelsus explained the congenital syphilis—as a passing of imagination from mother to child.

Such Paracelsus ideations of imagination-based disease throw into question the tradition of Paracelsus scholarship that has labeled him as particularly empirical for his

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[92] Rohmann, "Dancing on the Threshold," 65.

[93] Weeks, Andrew (trans.) "On the Disease that is Called St. Vitus' Dance." *Paracelsus: Essential Theoretical Writings*, 779 – 793.

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time, or at least more empirical than his predecessors. If one considers Paracelsus's faith in incubi, succubae, nymphae, sylphs, pygmaei, and gigantes, it becomes even more difficult to frame his skepticism of the St Vitus dance on the basis that he had 'empirical leanings.' Andrew Weeks provides one way to consider Paracelsus's skeptical response to the St Vitus dance. Describing Paracelsus's theorization of the material consequences of false belief, Weeks argued that such responses provided "a catch-all excuse for blaming the failure of the therapy on the patient rather than the therapist."[94] In his section on St. Vitus' dance within *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, Paracelsus pointed to cases of epilepsy, syphilis, and even the plague as manifestations of self-induced, imagination-based disease.[95] His own failings to cure syphilis and plague are documented. However, his description of plague in his section on St Vitus dance does more than just excuse the doctor's failure; Paracelsus saw the plague as powerful enough in its faithful self-delusion to reverse the normal current of influence from heavens to bodies. "With respect to pestilence," Paracelsus wrote of those with the plague, "they become so forceful in their belief that they actually poison the heavens."[96] His explanation of the plague – here quoted from within his section on the St Vitus dance in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* – is evidence of his desire to re-frame the astral as something not only heavenly, but held within the microcosm of body. Thus, Paracelsus's catch-all excuse wasn't just a cover-up for his medical failures. It was a wielding of his medical failures toward re-conceptualization of a cosmology in which the microcosm was not only receptive to influence, but productive of it. In other words, Paracelsus put his failures to theoretical use.

The 'catch-all' consequence of Paracelsus's writing exemplifies how Paracelsus addressed positioning himself as an authority through the written word. Paracelsus faced the problem, of course, that he had an imperfect ability to heal. The written word was the means by which the imperfection of his healing ability could serve as a basis toward explaining the workings of the world. If Paracelsus's observations were absurd, they were nonetheless practical. Paracelsus experienced the failure of certain amongst his treatments and wished to deduce the reason. Finding it impossible that the fault was with himself or

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[94] Weeks, Andrew. *Paracelsus: Speculative Theory and the Crisis of the Early Reformation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 166.
[95] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 781.
[96] Ibid.

his treatments, he concluded that the problem must instead be with his patients. Finding a problem with his patients, he then looked for a way to treat that problem as a solution for his cosmological theories. Thus, that authority he could not have through his work as a doctor, he created for himself as a writer. That which he could not heal, he could elucidate.

Paracelsus composed his elucidation of 'invisible diseases' by relating the diseases therein to examples that he did not consider forms of disease. His examples can be mapped along the course of his journeys. It seems he turned his judgement toward what came into his path. His critique of the Anabaptists is a particularly relevant example. As noted by Weeks, Paracelsus was in St. Gall probably around 1530 - 1531, around the time he was writing his works on St. Vitus' dance and invisible diseases more generally. Similar to how he had arrived in Strasbourg seven years after the St Vitus dance of 1518, he arrived in St. Gall five years after Anabaptist activity there had reached its apex. As reported by Erich Bryner in *A Companion to the Swiss Reformation*, "in the first months of 1525 something of a mass hysteria buoyed the Anabaptist movement." Following a mass public baptism, Bryner writes of how,

> The turmoil surrounding the Anabaptists increased, reaching a dramatic climax in the winter of 1525/26. The resulting excesses were many and varied and included fanatical ideas of God's kingdom and the rejection of labor, possessions, and the social and hierarchical order. Some took literally Jesus' words, 'If you do not repent and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven' (Mathew 18:3) and began to behave, dress, and play like children.[97]

C. Arnold Snyder locates St. Gall as a center for Anabaptism in the spring of 1525, when "Anabaptism took on the character of a mass movement in the political space that St. Gall provided."[98] Though there was still Anabaptist activity in the region when Paracelsus arrived, it is more likely that Paracelsus drew connections between Anabaptism and the St Vitus dance based on the similarities of their apexes, which in both cases he only experienced through local hearsay, and after the fact. Thus, Anabaptism and the St Vitus dance not only shared in their "abuse of their mad faith," but also in the circumstances under which Paracelsus came to turn his attention to them.

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[97] Bryner, Erich. "The Reformation in St. Gallen and Appenzell." In *A companion to the Swiss Reformation*, Amy Nelson Burnett and Emidio Campi, ed.s (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 245-46.
[98] Snyder, C. Arnold. "Swiss Anabaptism: The Beginnings." *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521*-1700, John Roth and James Stayer, eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 75.

By connecting St Vitus dance to Anabaptists, Paracelsus further drew a connection between the two by identifying the acts associated with them (dancing and baptism) as imagined ceremonies. He termed such ceremonies "fürgenommene weiß."[99] Despite drawing Anabaptist ceremony toward the St. Vitus' dance by identifying a shared false ritualistic performativity between the two, Paracelsus defined the St. Vitus' dance as a disease while not doing the same for the Anabaptist rituals. Quite simply, this is because the dance was first identified as disease by its adherents, and it is the particular quality of the St Vitus dance that it is derived from the adherent's belief in its existence. In other words, Paracelsus uses his writing on the St Vitus dance in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* to create a systematic explanation for the social invention of disease. Along the way, the treatise pathologizes diseases imagined into being by relating such diseases to a wider net of belief-based behavior Paracelsus considers problematic. In this way, *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* addresses how disease concepts were socially derived and expressed outside the medical field, and related that to the group dynamics core to radical religious sects of the period.[100] The relation is considered on the basis of performed ceremony, which provides a means by which imagination can gain material power.

Paracelsus further compares the St Vitus dance to Anabaptist ritual by arguing that a second baptism can be "expressed by the word *incantatio* in its proper understanding."[101] As noted by Andrew Weeks in his translation of Paracelsus's text, "*incantare*, means to repeat over and over. By strict legal definition, an Anabaptist is guilty of repeating the ceremony of baptism."[102] Through continued, dedicated, repetitious physical action, St. Vitus Dancers, like Anabaptists, "have worked themselves up to a belief," and through repetitious physical action, wrongly turn "faith into a work."[103] This statement – faith as a work – is one of many that contextualizes Paracelsus's work into relation with protestant thought of the Reformation, and with protestant critiques, for example, of 'going through

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[99] This term has been noted by Weeks – in consultation of the Grimm *Deutsches Wörterbuch* – as a term translating into 'imagined ceremony. See: *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 783.

[100] In the *Paragranum*, Paracelsus wrote of the necessity to maintain medical authority over the definition of diseases, saying that "if medicine is going to sprout forth from the human being [as its] ground, then the diseases must be [known] in accordance with the ground of their physician and his understanding." Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 121.

[101] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 785.

[102] Weeks, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, (footnote), 785.

[103] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 785.

the motions' of Christian ritual. Yet, what he wrote in his famous text *Paragranum* concerning works, invisibility, and the lessons to be learned therein reads (at first) as an idea directly conflicting with his text on St. Vitus Dance from *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*. He writes in the *Paragranum*,

> For that which is grasped concealed yields faith alone; the issue and completion are yielded by the works. Works are visible. Therefore, visible and invisible in a unity rather than as two: the entire complete reassuring knowledge in which salvation resides; and all good effort, teaching, and instruction proceed.[104]

Though Paracelsus critiqued the St. Vitus dancers on the basis that they fabricated visible works through bodily expression, he also saw the manifestation of visible works through faith as fundamental to his alchemical medicine, which he understood as the rendering of invisible faith into a visible work through healing. The question remains how a visible work attains its truth.

The question can be addressed in Paracelsus's writings through how he concludes his writing on the St Vitus dance in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*. In short, he concludes his thoughts on the St Vitus dance with advice for alchemists and medical doctors. Critiquing his fellow alchemists, Paracelsus describes their acts of trying and trying again and failing - like the St. Vitus' dancers – dancing and dancing without solace or end. In his advice to alchemists and medical doctors at the summation of the section on St Vitus dance, Paracelsus exposes his underlying concern with the degree to which his own fields of inquiry, and perhaps thus his own endeavors, share with the self-delusion he points out in other groups. Paracelsus used St. Vitus dance particularly to represent the dark side of the process of movement from invisible faith to visible works. In a word, that dark side is failure. It is a particular kind of failure, one whose contours fit the great attempts and relentless striving of the ignorant. Paracelsus completed his text on St. Vitus' dance by commenting on the struggles shared by dancers with alchemists due to their ignorant pursuits, writing that "with respect to their belief, it is [for St. Vitus Dancers] as with someone who is an alchemist: He does not know anything and keeps trying and trying. If he is successful once, he fails again. So it is also in the matters of belief."[105]

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[104] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 785.
[105] Ibid., 791.

As such a passage shows, Paracelsus contends that it is not only performers of the St. Vitus dance, but also alchemists, who are blinded by faith enough to keep doggedly attempting. Paracelsus then uses his text on St. Vitus Dance as a lesson to alchemists, switching to the second person voice to speak to his peers, he writes that, "you believe in whatever it is that you do not know; and because you do not know it, neither does your belief know it."[106] In connecting the St. Vitus' dance with alchemy just at the end of his section on the dance, Paracelsus moves into a contemplation of belief, attempt, and manifestation which includes a foundational element to his own work. Alchemy was, for Paracelsus, one of the four pillars of medicine. As described by the scholar and translator of his works Andrew Weeks, "alchemy, with its sense of the particularity and multiple transformability of substances, might be regarded as the nominalism of the Paracelsian medicine."[107] In Paracelsus's few lines of thought that relate alchemy to the St. Vitus dance, however, Paracelsus considers how belief becomes a problem through its practice, which pushes belief into physical expression regardless of whether it is true or false. In so doing, Paracelsus opens the door to a conversation on how performativity – whether that of a manic dance, an alchemist, or a physician – is driven by the networking of belief and manifestation.

3.2 Paracelsian Authorship

> What is the artfulness of a physician? The answer is that he knows what is good for the insensate things, and what is bad for them … What is above nature? What is above the natural? What is above life? What is the visible and what is the invisible? What causes the sweet and what causes the bitter? What is it that tastes? What is death? What is useful to the fisherman, to the leather worker, to the tanner, to the dyer, to the smith of metals? What does the smith need to know of wood? What belongs in the kitchen, what in the cellar, what in the garden, and what belongs to time? What does a hunter know, what a miner? What is the business of a traveler and what of someone who is stationary? What is required for the affairs of war, what for making peace, what gives cause to the spiritual estate and what to the worldly estate? What pertains to each and every estate, what is an estate, and what is the origin of each of them? What is God, what is Satan? What is poison and what works against it? What is in women and what is in men, and what

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[106] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 791.
[107] Weeks, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, 13.

is the difference between women and maidens, between the yellow and the pale, between the white and the black, or the red and the pale yellow in all things? Why does one color appear there and another elsewhere? Why short, why long? Why hit, why miss?—and everything that has to do with the adept arts in these matters.[108]

When Paracelsus addressed the St Vitus dance in writing, he did so as a discerning critic of action itself who was also in the midst of a deep struggle with the nature of his own action. As a man who wrote of medical and alchemical practices as arts, as a man who drew his concepts from the work of artisans, folk healers, and metallurgical laborers, Paracelsus turned his mind toward dance with an impetus to differentiate, quite simply, the bad embodied practice from the good. Further, he sought to show how a good embodied practice – namely that of the knowledgeable healer he thought himself to be – might not only stand in opposition to bad embodied practice but might further be one of few means of healing it.

There is an imperfect resonance with homeopathic ideology in Paracelsus's prescription of medicine following his conception of signatures, often expressed as the way a medicament signals its usefulness in healing a certain disease through some form of likeness.[109] The Paracelsian conception of like-to-like tended toward a de-polarization of sickness and healing and brought illness and its cure into conversation as expressions of interrelated processes. Yet in his approach to issues of practice, Paracelsus habitually made sweeping divisions clarifying healthy from sick, right from wrong, truthful from deceptive, failure from success. His writings on dance problematized it as a practice, thus clarifying dancing mania as deceptive, wrong, and thereby sick. These Paracelsus gave specific status in medical terms, but he did not thus clearly pathologize dance in the modern sense.

The critical approach to practice informing Paracelsus's pathologization of the St Vitus dance extended, as well, to how Paracelsus treated the act of writing itself. At the end of his preface to the *Paragranum*, perhaps his most complete and important medical work, Paracelsus wrote,

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[108] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 283.

[109] Wood, Matthew. Vitalism: *The History of Herbalism, Homeopathy, and Flower Essences*. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books. See also: Danciger, Elizabeth. *Homeopathy: From Alchemy to Medicine* (Rochester, Vermont: Innter Traditions – Bear & Company, 1989); Kuzniar, Alice Ann. *The Birth of Homeopathy out of the Spirit of Romanticism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Pres, 2017), 47.

> Not only in these matters but in others as well, I want to admonish you, [my] auditores and readers: do not take this preface pridefully, nor in an aggressive spirit, but let like meet with like; and let us conclude on the matters at hand that indeed [such] things cannot be based on the sort of foundation upon which medicine has previously been thoughtlessly built.[110]

Completed in St Gall around the same time as *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, the preface to the *Paragranum* expressed medicine as an art at present in an infantile state, and the author of the book as its sole revolutionary.

To his credit, Paracelsus allows his theorization to extend beyond the simplicity and convenience of describing it in others whose practices he authoritatively deems as problematic and thus worthy of his medical attention. Paracelsus pursues his claims into a wider realm of physical practice in order to articulate a unifying conception of belief and its relationship to physical reality. Because of this, Paracelsus's works that address the issue of belief are often as metaphysical and spiritual as they are medical. However, most Paracelsian treatises have been broken apart by scholars into bracketed fields that isolate his 'medical' from his 'theological' writings. There is, however, both a very medical quality with which Paracelsus thinks religiously, and a very religious quality through which he thinks medically. And, additionally, there is further a very metaphysical way to how he thinks through both medicine and theology. Consequentially, one cannot conclude through reading his writings the exact nature of the authority he relies upon in himself as he moves through his analysis. He does not habitually appeal to any standard sense of authority—not necessarily to the academy, nor his learning, nor his experience, nor his successes as a healer, nor really even to God. It seems instead that what Paracelsus holds as authoritative in his writings is, quite simply, himself, and the cohesion of himself through all the variation of his thoughts as well as the making of his being by God. As an author, he has to give himself immunity. His ideas required it from him.

Paracelsus's interpretation of the St Vitus dance is an early adherent to a trend in how medical writing has historically responded to the event of 1518 in Strasbourg. The St Vitus dance has been fed into wider discourses extending over centuries that link to networks of medical, sociological, and psychological thought – rooted in historical

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[110] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 105.

speculation – on collective madness and social contagion.[111] Historical references to the dance have continued along lines of thinking that can at the very least be considered resonant with that of Paracelsus, most notably in 19th and 20th century scholarly works that sought to draw tenuous connections between (for example) medical questions of madness and movement-based diseases (most notably, epilepsy) with political conceptions of ochlocracy or the mobile vulgus [the fickle crowd] that had since antiquity served to profess the socio-pathological nature of mobs as a socio-political concern.[112]

Perhaps the psychiatric tradition that linked non-normativity with mental illness, and mental illness with moral error was most famously identified, analyzed, and deconstructed in the 1961 work of Michel Foucault, *History of Madness*.[113] Foucault's *History of Madness*, however, falls in line with the scholarly tradition it critiques by appropriating its means. Casting a wide net of theory to account for a vast stretch of intellectual history, Foucault's *History of Madness* is a history of ideas of a history of ideas. As such, Foucault critiques the operation of generalization by making generalizations; he not only critiqued the misuse of resemblance in the history of science, he also utilized resemblance to make his own claims. Foucault replaces the grand narratives of 18th and 19th century thought with his notion of seismic shifts between historical epochs, shifts produced, in Foucault's argumentation, only by the fact that each epoch is itself manifested by some collective systemization of its thought as a form of political power. Within Foucault's writing (like Paracelsus's), the St Vitus dance appears as a few passing mentions that facilitate Foucault's wider, sweeping narrative of madness within each epoch, and the shifts in its meanings in the transformation of one epoch to the other.

Less virtuosically and breathtakingly, works like J.F.C Hecker's pioneering work of medical history on *The Black Death and The Dancing Mania* of the late 19th century

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[111] For a wide-ranging discussion of 'dancing manias,' see: Gotman, Kélina. *Choreomania : Dance and Disorder* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018). For a deeper analysis of medieval dancing diseases, see: Rohmann, Gregor. *Tanzwut: Kosmos, Kirche und Mensch in der Bedeutungsgeschichte eines mittelalterlichen Krankheitskonzepts.* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013).

[112] For a discussion of the theory of ochlocracy in antiquity, see: Champion, Craige. *Cultural Politics in Polybius's Histories*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

[113] See, for example, the chapter titled "The Madman in the Garden of Species." Foucault, Michel. *History of Madness.* Khalfa, Jean (ed., translator), and Jonathan Murphy (London and NY: Routledge, 2006), 175 – 207, esp. 193. First published in French as *Folie et Déraison: Histoire de la folie à l'âge Classique,* Librarie Plon, (Paris: Librarie Plon, 1961); Routledge edition is a translation of *Histoire de la Folie à l'âge Classique,* (New York: Routledge, 1972).

and E. Louis Backman's mid-20th century *Religious Dances in Christian Church and in Popular Medicine* mentioned the St Vitus dance as they inevitably sought historically to clarify each author's unifying theory that, like Foucault's later poststructuralist work, extended over multiple centuries.[114] In their way, the writings of Paracelsus are a trendsetter of such a writing tradition that mobilized the St Vitus dance toward various ends. Paracelsus analyzed the dance for the purpose of loosening it from its social signification and repositioning it within the bounds of his wider theoretical project. Purporting to be an independent voice, Paracelsus's theoretical standpoint was nonetheless steeped in his cultural and social context. In Paracelsus's case, the project at hand was to build a complete cosmology reflecting the medical-alchemical erudition and experience of its author. It stood against inherited medical traditions of Galen, Avicenna, and Hippocrates, and flouted Catholic authority, intermingling in Protestant thought while never completely adhering to the perspective of any of the Reformation's core thinkers. All the while, Paracelsus's work was derivative of precisely the traditions it cast aside. Not only were Paracelsus's ideas built upon what he rhetorically rebuked, his basic perspectives on disease were often more aligned with the context of German-language medical publishing than he was willing to admit.[115] In the undefined space between Paracelsus's derivativeness and his claim to exceptionality, and likewise between his polemics and his dependencies, Paracelsus struggled to position his own authority. The success of his particular narrative of microcosmic and macrocosmic correlation further depended on his reputation, but in his lifetime, Paracelsus stood resolutely alone in maintaining his defense. Allies came and went; he was not popular. Shielding himself from derision was necessary to securing the survival of his larger cosmological descriptions, but on the other hand, securing the survival of his larger cosmological descriptions was necessary to shielding himself. Thus, his opinion of himself was always interwoven with the cosmology he took responsibility for articulating to the world:

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[114] Popular reference works for the St Vitus Dance include Charcot and Richer's *Les démoniaques dans l'art*, J.F.C. Hecker's *The Black Death and The Dancing Mania,* E. Louis Backman's *Religious Dances in Christian Church and in Popular Medicine,* and others.

[115] A good example of this is Reformation-era German-language medical writings on plague, many of which shared with Paracelsian writings the desire to extricate medical ideas from saintly intercession. See: Henrichs, Erik A. *Plague, Print, and the Reformation: The German Reform of Healing, 1473-1573.* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018).

I am Theophrastus, and more than those to whom you compare me. I am the one. Moreover, I am Monarcha Medicorum; and I can prove what you cannot. I will let Luther answer for his thing and I will take care of my own. I will surpass many to whom you liken me: the arcana will raise me up to that. Who is it that is against Luther? That same crowd hates me. And just as you in turn feel about them, that is what you have in mind for me too: the fire. There is no need for the acid treatment. The heavens did not make me a physician: God made me one. The heavens do not make physicians. It is an art that comes from God and not from the heavens.[116]

In his efforts to bombastically legitimize his authorship within his own book –a literary element almost stereotypical to Paracelsian works produced after he was cast out of Basel and humiliated by the scholarly elites of medicine – Paracelsus managed to mention a conception central to his thinking. Specifically, he clarified a difference between God's creative force and the influence of the heavens. His proclamation of being a doctor not made by the heavens but by God resonates deeply with his larger concept, laid out eloquently in the *Paramirum*, as to how bodies are made and what their creation means for processes of sickness and healing. The idea further speaks to his re-organization of cosmological influence. The gestation of a human being was perhaps the most pivotal ground upon which Paracelsus sought to root his cosmological ideas, as it was in the human being's gestation that Paracelsus saw God, astral influence, and human imagination co-mingle in the most fundamental creative process of the human being – that of the human being carrying and birthing another human being. Following gestation and the centrality Paracelsus gave it in his cosmology, the author clarified his own authority by the supremacy of the means by which he was made a physician, that is, by the hand of God himself.[117]

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[116] Weeks (2008), p. 91. "Ich bin THEOPHRASTVS, vnd mehr als die/ den jhr mich vergleichent: Ich bin derselbig/ vnd bin Monarcha Medicorum darzu/ vnd darff euch beweisen/ das jhr nit beweisen mögent: Ich wirde den LVTHER sein ding lassen verantworten/ vnd ich wirde das mein auch eben machen/ vnnd wird meniglich/ die jhr mir zuleget/ vbertreffen/ darzu werden mich die arcana erheben. Wer ist dem Luther feind? Ein solche Rott ist mir auch gehaß: Vnd wie jhr auff ewer seitten jhnen meynent/ also meynet jhr mich auch/ dz ist/ dem Fewr zu/ du darffest auff die laugen nicht warten. Mich hat nicht der Himmel zu einem Artzt gemacht/ Gott hat mich gemacht/ der Himmel hat nit Artzet zu machen/ es ist ein kunst auß Gott/ nicht auß den Himmeln." From the preface to Paracelsus's *Paragranum*. From the Huser (ed.) *Bücher und Schrifften*, volume 2, 16.

[117] There are many passages supporting this idea; here is one from *On the Matrix*: "The physician should act in accordance with this. For God has made him." See: Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 647, 649.

Paracelsus's work on birth and generation also brought his project of redefining the internality of embodiment into the heart of his cosmological ideation. His writings on invisible diseases (especially the St Vitus dance amongst them) are constructed in dialogue with his thoughts on pregnancy. For example, in his 1529 *Von Ursprung und Herkommen der Franzosen samt der Recepten Heilung, acht Bücher*, Paracelsus wrote,

> How the wonder of birth enacts on the motherly body is in parallels—meaning the mother looks forward to the wonder of birth and meets giving birth not as a single act but as parallel to the transformation of her body. Within this parallel, imagination also becomes multiple, changing the sanity of the birthed child, and changing the health of the birthed child, [which manifests as] sickness, therefore also sickness is a state of health. Therefore, the senselessness and dance crazes that people call Saint Vitus Dance, that comes from another source, what is it other than fear as imagination and similar things?[118]

Paracelsus was a great proponent of the idea that a mother would impress her experiences onto the fetus carried in her womb. In the above quote, drawn from a writing focused on syphilis, Paracelsus theorized that pregnancy enacts itself on the mother through pregnancy and the birthing process as a kind of experience of parallels of transformation between the emotional experience of expectation, and the physical experience of birthing that experientially impact both mother and child. Paracelsus understood these parallels of emotion, experience, and relationship between mother and child as a determining factor in the mental and physical status of the child. Through such an argument, Paracelsus reached toward defining the most stereotypical space of the internal body – the space of the womb – as a space in which transformation is cultivated through imagination. He then used that example over and over again to justify and exemplify what he meant by internality, its relation to imagination, and its enactment at various levels within the larger cosmological system. The notion of mother, matrix, and the movements of influence in gestation (and thus creation more generally) became a trope within Paracelsus's works fostered by the

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[118] Paracelsus, *Von Ursprung und Herkommen der Franzosen samt der Recepten Heilung, acht Bücher,* volume 7. Sudhof, ed., 185. "…zu gleichterweise wie die begirde wunderbarlich an den weibern handelt, also das wunderbarlich geburt von inen ersehen werden, und begegnet solches nicht allein in partu sonder auch in der verenderung eigens leibs, also das im leibe solche imagination vilfaltig wirst, enderet die geborne vernunft, endert die geborne gesundheit in ein frankheit, also auch krankheit in ein gesundheit. aus dem folgt nun, das unsinnigheit und die danzetsucht, die ir nennet sanct Veits danz und ander mer entspringent. was ist nun exschreden anderst als imaginatio und dergleichen?" Translation by Lindsey Drury and Joël Verwimp.

cross-applicability of 'mutter,' 'matrix,' and 'imaginatio,' between various cosmological levels and zones. Paracelsus connected the process by which a mother's imagination impresses upon the fetus to the astral sphere in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, where (as elsewhere quoted in this chapter) he called the imagination the "astrum of the human being" and "the star itself".[119]

3.2.1 *Das Bild* and its mediation: imaginationes, incantantiones, impressiones

Woven through Paracelsus's conception of the St Vitus dance and the wider network of related invisible diseases are his thoughts on *imaginationes, incantantiones, impressiones*—all words that in various ways cross and interact with one another throughout Paracelsus's writings on the dualistically dubious and wondrous nature of human creative power and the relation of such power to various practices. Definitions for *imaginationes, incantantiones,* and *impressiones* emerge through his writings on ceremony, and idolatry, 'Franzosen' (Syphilis), maternal influence in utero, astronomy and the internal astral of the microcosm, his theological writings on free will, the impression of God's hand on the human being, and sensorial 'impressions' of the world, in his thoughts on the digestive *archeus* of the world in his work on miner's sickness and elsewhere, and finally his wider writing on processes of change as both visible and invisible, and the consequent definition of human psychic life (and its diseases of reason and imagination) as material and thereby indicative of the wider cosmological operation.

Paracelsus's conception of creative power was the strong force by which he navigated his narration of St Vitus dance through his wider thoughts on gestation, craftsmanship, body internality, belief, magic, and transformation. Such networks variously connect, as well, with his ruminations on his own creative power, and thus the material basis of his authorial position. Perhaps the heaviest weight-bearing conception in the network of Paracelsian writings on creative power, imagination, and cosmology is that

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[119] "All of this stems from the earthy desire and that by way of the astrum of the human being, it is formed in the child without the addition of things that are outside the human being; [for] the imagination is the star itself." Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 819. "Wie vormals angezeigt ist/ dz die Frawen möchten jmaginieren dz ding/ das in jhren lust kompt/ mit Form/ Farben vnd Figuren/ einem andern an seinem leib/ zu gleicher weiß wie jhrem eigenen Kindt." From Huser, *Bücher und Schrifften,* volume 1, 280.

of the *Bild*, or image. In its ultimate form, it is given by the hand of God, and is the basis by which human beings are made in the likeness of God by God himself. Yet, Paracelsus expresses the power to impress *Bild* as also a power of the heavens, and a given power by which humans further impress into themselves, into each other, and in relation to the world. The giving of *Bild* to humans by God, astral influence, and human powers of influence, are described by Paracelsus as the impressing of an image into the otherwise soft and unshaped fleshiness of human corporeal existence.

The *Bild* itself is not so important as the impressing action through which it is given. God's power and grace were within the Paracelsian corpus defined in relation to the act of impressing the *Bild* to humans. The problem of the material mediation of the *Bild* given by God begins with humans, who in taking up and holding the *Bild* given us, alter its nature by the fact of our engagement with it. It is thus on the basis of practice and action that Paracelsus argued the human problems of sensorial and rational truth, ultimately tying such problems to his astoundingly wide conception of idolatry. Writing of biblical descriptions of idolatry, Paracelsus defined idolatry in his work *Liber de imaginibus idolatriae* [1525 – 1528?] by basing it not in images, but in practice and intentionality.[120] He even did so in a rather rambling refutation of the bible:

> In neither the Old nor the New Testament, should images be worshipped, but only God. Now in the New Testament a big error occurred that only - they are of the opinion – it [the idol] is the wooden images, which is not true. Then, finally to the woodwork, in which form God was not so troubled. Then, there is no human being who will create a god out of a piece of wood, for if he would do that he must be a fool. And if he is a fool and an unexperienced person, he will not cause God to forbid him to do so; as God takes no argument from fools, but from the wise and understood. If through the wood a betrayal occurred, if this is true, then the same betrayal is nothing but the occurrence itself: meaning that such a man, who would do something like that, would do that full-heartedly.[121]

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[120] Gause, Ute. *Paracelsus (1493-1541): Genese und Entfaltung seiner frühen Theologie*. (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1993), 144.

[121] "Demnach und das alt testament innen helt und in dem neuen dergleichen, dass die bilder nit sollen angebettet werden, sonder allein gott, nun begegnet unter denen im neuen testament ein grosse irrung, also das sie meinen, es sein die hölzien bilder, welches fürwahr nit ist. dann endlich auf das holzwerk, in der gestalt hett sie gott nit so schwer bekümbert. dann kein mensch ist, das ihm ein holz für ein gott erschaffe. und ob es doch beschickt, so muss dasselbige mensch ein narr sein. und so es ein narr und unerfahrner ist, so ursacht er gott nit zu einem gebott, dasselbig zu verbieten; dann gott nehmt ihm kein argument von den narren, allein von den weisen und verständigen. wiewol nun aber das ist, dass durch das holz villeucht

Here, Paracelsus repositions the act of idolatry not only by clarifying it as an act only powerfully done by the wise, but he reframes the betrayal of an idolatrous act away from objects and toward intentions. He emphasizes the full-heartedness of the enactor as the source of the betrayal, and points out that if is the occurrence of the wooden figure that is a betrayal of God, intentionality is as much a part of the occurrence as the resultant wooden figure, and further, that the problem of idolatry is in the state of being one is in when engaging in an act.

Idolatry is thus within Paracelsus's conception an extension of the fundamental problems of misinterpretation plaguing human experience of the *Bild* in the visual world. Misinterpretation seems to begin from the first moment humans perceive the *Bild* in themselves. Thus, the pausation of reified things in their *Bilder* states, and the way things take their forms, are rendered but appearances through the imperfections and shortcomings of humans who are ultimately not literate in the truth God has written into the imagistic contours of nature itself. Paracelsus's method for overcoming this problem is to seek the selfhood of matter instead in its transformation, in its action in becoming other, of moving toward reconvening in an elsewhere from its previous shape. In his decision to turn away from the appearance of things and toward their modes of appearing as such, Paracelsus further began to describe a wider alchemical vision of material transmutation as the path to being literate in the book of nature.

Paracelsus's process-based reading of the world, though created to escape the problem of human misinterpretations of reading, nonetheless brought Paracelsus back toward thinking about the human imagination. He expresses his vision of creation, the imaginative process, and its relations to invisibility and internality thus:

> Hence, I am implying that the carpenter builds a house because in the creation his body has been provided with what it takes to do this. But now consider a second and contrasting example: [Imagine] that a pregnant woman were to look at this same house and fix her imagination so potently upon it that the action of her will would be comparable to the fully realized determination of the carpenter to build the house. Now consider how her imagination would build the house internally, through [the power of] the invisible body, in accordance with the character of the house she has

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betrug geschehen mügen, als dann nun gewiss ist, so wer derselbig betrug nit anderst, dann nach dem er geschehe: dass ein sollicher mann, dem begegnet ein solches, wie und er im herzen ist." Paraclesus, "Liber de imaginibus idolatriae," *Sämtliche Werke*, Volume II. Goldammer, ed., 277. Translation by Lindsey Drury and Joël Verwimp.

imagined. For that very task that the image imposes upon the labor of the body, the body renders in turn for that same image. That which the internalization gives to the eyes to see is in turn impelled back into the image. Thus, your eyes see a house, and even when the house no longer stands before your eyes, you still see it.[122]

Assigning different bodies to the visible and invisible, Paracelsus's vision of transmutation was one in which matter passes between its states of visibility – its *Bilder* manifest in refractions between internalities and externalities. The immanence of a thing is, in Paracelsus's ideology, not polarized from its execution. Instead, all immanence is executed as such, all execution is a mere pausation teetering on the edge of the true immanence of all materiality. To make sense of the traditional cosmological divisions clarifying upper from lower, astral from terrestrial, and divine from living, Paracelsus gave an addendum expressing the transmutational movement of ideation and image-creation between inner and outer. For Paracelsus, it wasn't that everything was material; instead, nothing in existence was more or less material than anything else, regardless of its visibility or tangibility. Thus, immanence, internality, imagination, and ideation were as material for Paracelsus as mass, surface, act, and rendering.

The consequence of such a perspective, especially for what it meant for Paracelsus's own work, seemed beyond the author's imaginative powers. Incongruence upon incongruence arose from his corpus's expansive cosmology. It is apparent that, over the course of the time it took Paracelsus to write his ideas, time changed his ideas. Perhaps writing his ideas down itself contributed to this process. Nonetheless, what becomes apparent through reading Paracelsus is that even his attempt to provide what he saw as a transmutating world of mobile matter was subject to the circumstances of its production. His writings changed, likewise, within his corpus through its reception and interpretation. Andrew Weeks has articulated this as an aspect of the underlying ambiguity extant within Paracelsus's writings. In Weeks's perception, scholars – rather than probe Paracelsus's ambiguity for its complexity and contradictions – have attempted instead to remedy it and thus solve the riddle. The changing perspectives of a living human being cannot be solved on theoretical terms, however. To address Paracelsus's ambiguity, he and his authorship

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[122] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 799. From the Huser (ed.) *Bücher und Schrifften,* volume 1, third book of *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, 271.

must first be considered as an unfolding process. In Paracelsus's own terms, humanness was processual and cosmological. One's influence could be inflected into one's environs, but one would receive influence in return. However, Paracelsus's notions of transmutation and the digestive *archeus* of matter were vastly more cyclical than progressive. And the Paracelsian author, as autobiographically introduced into his various works, was inevitably described as solidly authoritative and deeply knowledgeable. His processes of change, his maturation and the development of his thoughts, his responsiveness to his environments and situations, the shifting landscape of his body in space as related to the shifting topography of his ideas – all of that was flattened out of how the author described himself, despite the immanent presence of the ways he was changed that register in transmutations of quality, style, and substance of his writings. In other words, though the changes in Paracelsus are always carefully evaded by the man's description of himself, the signs are always nonetheless there in everything else he was describing.

Paracelsus's changes are evidenced, for example, in his shifting description of the St Vitus dance between *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft berauben* and *De Causis Morborum Invisibilum*. The former text approached the St Vitus dance by renaming it as chorea, further sorting it into a range of classifications whose causes ranged from the natural movement of spiritus vitae through the body to the fledgling notion of an 'imagined disease.' The latter text reworked this earlier approach to the St Vitus dance, by grounding the dance's pathologization in the materialization of imagination as a disease-causing force through the projection of will physically into the world.

3.2.2 The Knowledge of Paracelsus's Senses

Through writing, Paracelsus sought to project his own will physically into the world. Paracelsus's writing on St. Vitus' dance thus provides a venue that frames how Paracelsus sought to reposition his practitioner's authority through the practice of writing about it. The structure of his work on the dance and his articulation of the workings of self-deluding physical practice by consequence provides the contours of the paired structure of Paracelsus's own work in relief. Paracelsus's ideas about the senses and sensorial truth are core to how he related the self-deluding St. Vitus' dance through comparison and contrast with the awakened practice of medical truth that he called his own. A question that thus

arises through his work on St. Vitus' dance is this: how exactly, by contrast, did Paracelsus conceive of practice that wasn't self-deluding? In many other writings within his corpus, Paracelsus reaches toward addressing this. Of all possible examples, however, perhaps one in particular suffices, which like St. Vitus' dance itself, is rooted in the notion of invisibility.

In the section on 'Philosophia' in the *Paragranum*, Paracelsus describes the sensorial work of the good doctor in terms of invisibility. The doctor, however, exists in a totally different relationship to invisibility from those who suffered with St. Vitus' dance. While St. Vitus' dance was, in Paracelsus's conception, a disease through which the physical expression of a practice was triggered by the invisible forces of false faith and imagination, the good medical practice was, in Paracelsus's conception, the ability to see through a person, and thus render their imagistic presentation invisible:

> A physician should be able to look through a human being, just as transparently as if seeing through to a distilled dew in which not even the least little spark could be hidden so that it would remain unseen: he should see just as penetratingly as if into a running fountain, to discern how many stones and grains of sand [and] what sort of colors, forms, etc., are within in it. This is how transparent the parts of the human being should be to him: he should know them as transparently as if they were polished crystal in which not the least tiny hair might remain hidden. That is the sort of philosophy that constitutes a foundation of medicine.[123]

Through such a conception, the power of invisibility as described in the Paracelsus corpus changes drastically. The invisible force imagination wields over the body afflicted with St. Vitus' dance contrasts from the power wielded by the physician to penetrate surface appearance, render it invisible, and thus look into the underlying truth. The question remains, however, what exactly Paracelsus means when he speaks of 'seeing through.' Paracelsus only really clarified the conception of seeing into interiors by articulating the idiocy of other physicians who based their work on external appearances,

> So, outwardly, they make a pretty picture, but inwardly they are shit handlers and painted idols. Who of learning and experience would expect to ascertain the physician in external appearances? None at all. Who is it that does seek in external appearances? The simple-minded do.[124]

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[123] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 115.

[124] Paracelsus, "Preface to the book Paragranum," *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 73.

In such a statement, Paracelsus connects the seeing only of externals to idolatry. In his framing, those who see only so far as external appearances are themselves reducing medicine to pictures and façades. When Paracelsus describes his own strange x-ray vision, however, he is by no means attempting to describe a kind of seeing that conceives of exterior and interior in the sense of the exterior of the body being its skin-surface, and the interior as all the anatomical systems lying under that barrier of skin. Paracelsus found little medically worthwhile in the anatomical studies of his time.[125] He developed his own sense of anatomy as an intuitive system of correspondences, and critiqued anatomists resolutely, saying for example that, "when they have seen everything, they know even less than they did before. So, they suffocate in the filth and the cadaver."[126] His fundamental understanding of anatomical study of corpses is that it was a method useless to understanding the living body. It was instead movement and transformation that Paracelsus saw as the most essential component of anatomy, and thus he defined anatomy itself through the correspondences he saw as facilitating the transmutation of matter. In his conception, if life is defined through movement and transformation, all forms are but bodies, and all bodies are given appearance through the *Bild*. The structure Paracelsus sought to visualize was not that of the intricacies of the body in its visualization as *Bild*, but the systems of movement by which matter moves between each formation of *Bild*. He sought an anatomy that crossed between bodies, and thus his sense of interior and anatomy were based on movement and material change between the arrest of image-states.

3.2.3 Paracelsian authority and the act of writing

What then of Paracelsus's own interior? What of the interiors that would define his medical ideas in relation to cross-body influences, to the movement of ideas? What of the materiality of influence and its movement through the physical practice of medicine and the composition of the physician? Paracelsus's approach to the St Vitus dance as disease mediated by inter-body imagination provided the doctor a profound opportunity to further explicate and theorize his arguments about how various practices and ideas spread through

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[125] Pagel, Walter. *Paracelsus: An Introduction to Philosophical Medicine in the Era of the Renaissance* (Basel: Karger, 1982), 362.
[126] Paracelsus, "De Morborum Origine et Causa," *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 542.

the materiality of influence. Yet, despite the fact that Paracelsus wrote of such inter-body systems of influence, and despite the many ways influence implicitly shows up in Paracelsus's writings, it seems that Paracelsus was unable or unwilling to admit how his medical and theological perspectives were themselves involved in systems of influence. The reason for this, as given by Paracelsus's work, is that his work is purely authorized by God and taught by nature. Reaching out to his readers, for example, Paracelsus wrote that, "in order to arrive at the proper *inventiones* of which I have provided many *volumina* full," such readers will first need to "proceed on to a superior medicine, avoiding the other kind, which neither God nor nature has authorized."[127] He saw himself as the proper book-bound medical influence for the student seeking to develop a practice authorized by God and nature. He presented his works as the first true medical corpus shaped according to the truth of the law of God and nature.

Perhaps Paracelsus generally evaded articulating his own influences because he did not live a life in which claiming his own authority was an easy thing to do. His insecurity is palpable in his writings, as is his struggle with being a marginalized outsider in the medical field.[128] Scholarship only turned toward embracing him after his death with the publishing of collected Paracelsian works and the rise of Paracelsian adherents within 20 years after he passed away. That early modern interest in Paracelsus later gained a renewed, palpable presence in scholarship with the resurgence of interest in Paracelsus amongst 19th – mid-20th century historians, who have inevitably struggled with the ways Paracelsus's voice seems to thwart scholarly efforts to contextualize him. Yet, just as much as such scholars wished to pick up Paracelsus, dust him off, and put him to new scholarly use, they also often wished to edit his thoughts and thus manage his re-contextualization.

As part of the 20th century resurgence in Paracelsus scholarship amongst psychologists, for example, Swiss psychologist Jolande Jacobi explained in her 1951 book of Paracelsus's selected writings why she had "omitted all polemical texts, all eccentric

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[127] Paracelsus. "Preface to the Paragranum," *Essential Theoretical Writings,* trans. Weeks, 105.

[128] This shows up repeatedly in the preface of the *Paragranum*. For example: "Now take note that I am a *philosophus*, [and] not educated according to your tune: What do you think prompted me in this? It is the fact that the naturalia are described by you without any truth and are nothing but the opining and imagining of your texts, the reason for this being that the true ground has never been so much as touched upon by the *philosophi*." Paracelsus, "Paragranum", *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 81.

and overly subjective passages in the works" in an effort to cleanse the good doctor of his dirty language. She justified this by stating that,

> Whether these peculiarities can be psychologically interpreted as manifestations of resentment, of over-compensation, or of a volcanic psyche in which the seething contradictions of the age were concentrated, or whether they are characteristic of the coarse language of that time, they have little bearing on the essence of Paracelsus' personality and will. Behind them and untouched by them, there rises the authentic Paracelsus, the dauntless, never-weary seeker of God, the humble mortal.[129]

There is no evidence, however, that Paracelsus considered his flagrant language as counterproductive to his project. On the contrary, he used his spectacular capacity for insult (time and again) to position his work through its energetic antagonism.[130] His famous public book burning recorded in Basel, his insults, his threats—all of these point to Paracelsus's belief that his fundamental challenge to academic medicine rested in his performative imposition of materiality,

> Alchemy will have to boil to an alkali your Aesculapius, your Avicenna, your Galenus, and all the rest, as well as all of your other scribblers, burning them up in a reverberator down to the last feces. And Vulcanus will have to pour on sulphur and pitch, saltpeter and oil. And you must be cleansed until you are purer than the gold that passes through the fire.[131]

First Paracelsus proposed to burn medical books to feces, then he proposed to purify the misinformed doctors until they were like gold passed through fire. The insult draws from 1 Corinthians 3 lines 12-15 and presents Paracelsus and his alchemical work as fire itself— as the elemental force most associated with material transmutation. *You and your knowledge are but things*, threatened Paracelsus, *and so like things you will be changed.* As an author, Paracelsus approached the transmutation of others through the enactment of the written word, connoting by consequence the fact that Paracelsus's sense of his

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[129] Jacobi, Jolande. "Preface." *Paracelsus: Selected Writings* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951), xxvii.

[130] Excrement and gold generally have a strong presence amongst Paracelsian insults. In his preface of the *Paragranum* he wrote of other doctors as "shit handlers and painted idols," and that "If the dead came to life again, and the ruined were healthy again, they would shit on your nose before saying to you, mercy, sir." In *Alchimia* he wrote, "you know about the things that serve for shitting and vomiting," and "you know what is conducive to the brain, the head, the mother, for shitting and crapping. But you do not know what is conducive to the disease." And in *Philosophia*, he wrote, "what do you think, fool's gold physician, will it all come to if one bases [medicine] on your foolish work rather than on the true nature?" See: Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, Weeks, trans., 73, 233, 143, consecutively.

[131] Paracelsus, *Paragranum*, in: *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 77-78.

authorship related implicitly both to his general conception of embodiment and to the power of his own body. He reflected this through the style of his writings, his presentation of himself as an author within them, as well as through the subject matters he addressed, including, for example, the dancing manias.

The many biting insults Paracelsus launched at his detractors he often wrote in highly complex metaphorical terms that in various ways drew from, re-stated, and thus often further clarified his theoretical perspective. As such, his insults often seemed to further propose that his approach to medicine would in the end cleanse the untruthfulness from medicine and its incorrect practices, thus essentially healing an unwell medical profession. Generally, Paracelsus's approach to insult would be easier to label as mere metaphor if Paracelsus's definition of sickness in his writings didn't so easily and so frequently extend to any whose action he found questionable. Taken in the context of his writings that pathologize various practices (such as Anabaptists and St Vitus dancers), Paracelsus's approach to insulting scholars in the medical field can be understood as a quite literal extension of Paracelsian medical prescription for bad medical practice. In this sense, Paracelsus's treatment for bad medical practice followed his general ideology of the medicament or cure. As the problems with medicine stemmed from the reduction of medicine to book-based learning, Paracelsus's literary cure arrived appropriately, in the Paracelsian 'gleich zu gleichem' cosmological construct. The medical literature of Paracelsus, however, would need to be different; it would need to arise from truth rather than from false authority, from experience and scripture rather than from non-Christian medical authorities from a prior epoch.

Paracelsus's resulting work presents a case in which, it seems, the only truly noble form of engagement with the world and with other humans was through the practice of Paracelsian medicine. According to Andrew Weeks, Paracelsus's works reflect the need to "triumphantly proclaim that all disciplines merge in medicine, as all roads lead to Rome; and it is why he could pronounce that the knowledge of the physician is an apostolic gift."[132] By consequence, any other practice within Paracelsus's writings is not only explored for its relation to health, but for how that practice through its misguided nature

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[132] Weeks, *Paracelsus: Speculative Theory and the Crisis of the Reformation*, 171.

might further by consequence clarify the Paracelsian achievement of medical apostolic truth:

> Just as it is a quality of a just [and] chosen apostle that he can heal the sick, make the blind see, the lame whole, and awaken the dead—similarly, those [aforementioned] things pertain to the physician. How could an old and honorably aged man grasp these things when he is so mired in casualibus, in temporalibus?1 For he would need a long time just to get to know the names—how should they beaten into him? Medicine is based on such things of which the physician should have a knowledge. For more depends on medicine than on other faculties. ee.[133]

Paracelsus's approach to authorship, by framing all but Paracelsus's practice as potentially problematic, was thus vested in nothing more than the simple fact of Paracelsus, all his ideas, and all his intuitions. Paracelsus's writing style, however, made it impossible for any person who studies his works, then as now, truly to verify if the Paracelsian practices they seek to master – for example, that of *seeing through* patients as he described – is as Paracelsus would have done it.

3.2.4 Paracelsian authority and the need for an audience

In the preface of his work *Paragranum*, Paracelsus wrote a clarification "…to explain the foundation upon which my writings are based. [By this I intend] the foundation without which no physician can develop professionally. In doing this, I give away so much of myself that my very heart will be made manifest to all."[134] He understood his writing as an essential 'opening of his heart,' and he understood such a heartful opening likewise as essential to any practicing physician. His writing practice was thus not a mere commentary upon his medical work but was bound up with the very personal means by which he rendered himself available to its practice. He continued,

> Considerations are to be demonstrated in my writings that are superior to all previous [medical] literature. Indeed, there is no single letter that has not

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[133] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, Weeks, trans., 285.

[134] "…darinn ich tractier den grundt auß dem ich schreib: den grundt/ ohn den kein Arzt wachsen mag: darinn ich mich so vil entblöß/ daß endtlich mein Hertz meniglich sol geoffenbart warden." Paracelsus. *Essential Theoretical Writings* Andrew Weeks, trans., 64- 65.

been combined with great experience and unique expertise. For this reason,
I hope to encounter [in my readers the equivalent of] such experience.[135]

In essence, his writing is emergent from his experience, each letter on each page is saturated with the experience that has there engendered it. Paracelsus's argument here is that the writing is dispatched from the author's depth of experience and requires likewise to be received back into the reader's depth of experience. Within the same page, Paracelsus acknowledges that he is writing to other medical doctors who are, at present, opposed to him, "not only by causing me hindrance but even by raging quite violently against me."[136] Regardless of their violent opposition to him, however, Paracelsus proclaims that through the power of argumentation he will re-align other medical doctors to his own perspective, which is, as he says, the best of medical literature.

Such a passage is one of many in Paracelsus's works in which he addresses his position and somewhat awkwardly and defensively seeks to strengthen it through the simple act of expressing his own opinion of himself through writing to another. Paracelsus scholars like Jacobi have seen his penchant for such flagrant acts of self-aggrandizing as a weakness and have thus set aside Paracelsus's defensive and sometimes offensive pronunciations in order to render his concepts clear of his self-involvement. And yet, Paracelsus's approach to writing begins to expose a kind of self-involvement not often conceived of as even possible for early modern authors—his ownership of his own image, of his ideas, of his own influence through the written word is a powerful testament to the degree to which authorship, in the modern sense, had already taken shape in Paracelsus's lifetime, stretching over the late 15th and early 16th centuries.

Particularly, what Paracelsus's works expose is his understanding of authorship as a thing performed. He builds his sense of authorship and consequent authority, in part, by using the written word to conduct two kinds of performances of information, (1) the performance of comparison and contrast between the success of his acts with the false and failed acts of others, and (2) the attempt toward full explanation or explication of a total

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[135] "Dann bessers inn meinen Schrifften fürgelegt wirt/ dann die Schrifft bißher erhalten hat: dann nit ohn grosse erfahrenheit/ vnnd sondere Experientzb ein einiger Buchstab eingemischt ist/ verhoffe mich hiegegen mit solcher erfahrenheit mir auch zu begegnen." Paracelsus. *Essential Theoretical Writings* Andrew Weeks, trans., 64.

[136] "…nicht allein hinderung/ sondern auch etwas blůtdürstig entpören." Paracelsus. *Essential Theoretical Writings*, Andrew Weeks, trans., 64 - 65.

world-view which can express the reasons and terms of his success and thereby the consequent prescriptions for the success of others who may follow his example. In his way, as an author, Paracelsus steps into the text as much like a protagonist as Poliphilo in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. As the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* presented its protagonist to act as proxy within the text to assist the learning of the reader, Paracelsus's protagonist position was likewise to facilitate the instructional nature of his medical writings. This means that Paracelsus considered that the personal experience he had in devising his medical and theological perspective – and therefore, the singularity of his very bodily existence as the creator of his cosmology – was fundamental to the reader's ability to grasp what was being said. Importantly, Paracelsus perceived his instructional writing as a replacement for previous medical writings, those books from antiquity which continued to provide the centerpiece of medical education in Paracelsus's time. In the simplest sense, Paracelsus argued that the writings of Galen and Hippocrates were distanced from and distancing from real experience, both in their generation, and in their operation. Key to Paracelsus's project, then, was the aim of reintegrating the written word into the experience and physicality as he saw them. He approached writing with a profound, overarching critique of medical literature on the tip of his tongue; he had to conceive of the written word, therefore, in different terms from those by which it had ever been practiced before. With no means to describe his lofty, integrated, medico-theological way of perceiving experience without asserting his own identity and selfhood in so doing, Paracelsus uniquely brought himself to the pages of his medical thought in an attempt to perform himself as the sole representative of his medicine for his reader.

It is a wonder, however, that scholarship's framing of Paracelsus as an experiential physician with a strong distrust for the written word has not, by consequence, produced more scholarly questions about Paracelsus's existence as a writer. Paracelsus dedicated much print against dependence on rhetoric and lack of experience, as divulged by texts from antiquity, and thus also against scholarly physicians who had relegated their study only to such books. Of such academic medicine, Paracelsus wrote, "so let's let it rest with those dead books, from which no real physician has ever emerged from your ranks."[137] As

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[137] "Lassens also gutt sein mit den todten büchern/ auß denen kein warhaffter Artzt bey euch nie erstanden ist." Paracelsus, *Paragranum*. From *Essential Theoretical Writings*, Weeks, trans., 287.

pointed out by Andrew Weeks, Paracelsus's insults the "rhetorical and poetic skills" of his former Basel colleagues "are so frequent and stereotypical that they provide an index for dating Paracelsus's undated works."[138] Paracelsus's 'frequent and stereotypical' attack on the medical establishment have a history of being articulated as generally against book-based medical education. The claim has often by consequence caused historians to oversimplify Paracelsus's ideas about action and experience. Such ideas have been expressed by many scholars in many ways, but an example from the work of J.R.R. Christie's essay "The Paracelsian Body," suffices:

> 'Action' is itself a term of Paracelsian emphasis, opposed to orthodox medical book-learning and prescription. True medicine and alchemy consisted in deeds, rather than words, and useable knowledge came from active, practical experience. The Paracelsian body, the agent of alchemical and medical practice, was active in ways which not only lead the historian into the practical detail of alchemical preparation, but which also pertain to the political and ideological history of Paracelsus and Paracelsianism.[139]

Most certainly, Paracelsus emphasized action against tradition of book-learning and the medical theories of Galen and Hippocrates from antiquity that formed the foundation of medical education in his time. His own words variously attest to this."[140] Yet, to say Paracelsus believed that medicine and alchemy "consisted in deeds, rather than words" is to miss a profound element of what Paracelsus actually *did* as an alchemist and medical doctor. He wrote. More than that, Paracelsus wrote in a time when the rise of print culture was vastly changing how *acts of writing* engaged with politics, culture, and society – in essence – how *acts of writing acted*. In the simplest sense, this meant that Paracelsus could through the printing press and its acceleration of book production, partake in challenging what has been called by the medical historian Carlo Cippolla the more than millennium-long dominance of Galenism, "and its persistence for such a long time is one of the most

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[138] Weeks, Andrew. *Paracelsus: Essential Theoretical Writings*. Written in a footnote, 78.

[139] For example: "Do you really believe that everything is true that is written *De Gradibus*, or *De Compositionibus*? Far from it." See: Christie, J.R.R. "The Paracelsian Body." *Paracelsus: The man and his reputation, his ideas and their transformation*. Grell, Ole Peter, ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 285.

[140] Weeks, Andrew. *Essential Theoretical Writings*. Translated from the preface to the *Paragranum*. Weeks noted that, "The references are to traditional medical distinctions and writings criticized and corrected by P.," 103.
"Meinent jhr das recht geschrieben sey de Gradibus, recht de Compositionibus? Es ist weit fehl: Die artzney die hatt so ein grossen grundt in jr/ das dise ding alle dem anfang nicht gleichen mögen." Huser, *Bücher und Schrifften,* volume 2, 20.

remarkable phenomena in intellectual history."[141] Beyond print's acceleration of writing within the 16th century, writing was further different deed than it had been before, changing drastically on two major fronts: (1) epistemologically, as an act of truth-telling and meaning making, and (2) teleologically, in its purpose and social function. The consequences were profound for the notion of authorship, but also for the subject matters about which authors wrote, for the society for whom they wrote, and, of course, for the act of writing itself.

In *Authority and Representation in Early Modern Discourse* (1996), Robert Weimann characterized Luther's authorship, writing that, "distinctly self-authorized activity manifests itself in terms of a proud, if precarious, performative mingled with a strangely groping rhetoric of something akin to embarrassment and apology."[142] As Weimann suggests, the nature of writing changed as authorship began to emerge in the 16th century around those who challenged centralized authority and claimed their own (albeit self-conscious) authority instead. The change in style, identifiable in Luther's writing as in Paracelsus's, wasn't merely symptomatic of the problem of claiming authorship. It was performative – the self-conscious insertion of the authorial self was an important rhetorical element in such writings. Compositionally, the trick was to tie the authority of the writer to their insecurity, and thus to legitimize their outsider status as powerful evidence that they can be trusted. Weimann quoted Luther in just such a writerly act performing the trustworthiness gained through his outsider status:

> I know full well that I shall not escape the charge of presumption because I, a despised and inferior person, ventured to address such high and great estates on such weighty matters, as if there were nobody else in the world except Doctor Luther to take up the cause of the Christian estate and give advice to such high ranking people.[143]

Luther then claims authority by pointing to the fact that he will be labeled as a fool for venturing to tell the truth, "if I succeed, I shall for the time being become a court jester."

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[141] Cippolla, Carlo. *Public Health and the Medical Profession in the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976) 5.

[142] Weimann, Robert. *Authority and Representation in Early Modern Discourse* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 1996), 31.

[143] Luther, 44: 123. Quoted in: Weimann, Robert. *Authority and Representation in Early Modern Discourse*, 33.

He immediately follows the idea with his pride in so becoming, "more than once a fool has spoken wisely, and wise men have often been arrant fools… I am glad for the opportunity to fulfill my doctor's oath, even in the guise of a fool."[144] Though of a very different disposition from Luther, Paracelsus offered a similar argument that, "precisely because I write from this [true] ground of medicine, I am to be rejected."[145] In giving such a statement, Paracelsus was focused particularly on his reception amongst elites and those involved in medical scholarship.[146]

While such author-as-truth-teller arguments are common amongst Reformation-era writings, the written word's relationship to truth was further being renegotiated in the period. This changing early modern epistemological status of writing in the period has been discussed in much scholarship. David Glenn Kropf, for example, began his book *Authorship as Alchemy* with the point that, "prior to the late 1700s 'literature' referred to virtually all that was written."[147] Kropf continued his these initial thoughts on alchemy by writing about the challenge alchemy presented to the rising desire to delineate literature from scientific writings.[148] As Kropf expresses it, just as alchemy "engages in the transmutation of metals, it also 'melts'" what during the Enlightenment came to be regarded as separate disciplines or fields of study."[149] In this way, alchemical thought slipped the increasing outlines by which "the 'truth value' that came to be applied to scientific writing slowly relegated imaginative works to a separate discipline," maintaining instead its use of literary approaches to the written word.[150] By the 18th century, alchemy was notable in how it continued to work against the increasing separation of imaginative

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[144] Luther, 44:123-24. Quoted in: Weimann, Robert, *Authority and Representation in Early Modern Discourse*, 33-34.

[145] "Vnnd darumb daß ich auß dem grunde der Artzney schreib/ so muß ich verworffen warden." Paracelsus, *Paragranum*, in: *Essential Theoretical Writings*, Weeks, trans., 72.

[146] Paracelsus follows the passage by disparaging physicians "not borne from the [true ground]," then further speaks of "all the learned," and follows up with an insult, calling scholarly physicians "horned academic vaganti." See: Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, Weeks, trans., 73.

[147] Kropf, David Glenn. *Authorship as Alchemy : Subversive writing in Pushkin, Scott, Hoffmann*. (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 1994), 1.

[148] It must be noted that Kropf's actual analysis of historical alchemy is limited to his use of it toward addressing modern works of literature and that Kropf not only ignored the question of biblical authority, but also primarily used the historical notion of alchemy as a metaphor that functions toward the articulation of his point.

[149] Kropf, David Glenn. *Authorship as Alchemy: Subversive writing in Pushkin, Scott, Hoffmann*, 211.

[150] Kropf, *Authorship as Alchemy,* 1.

and scientific writing through its use of an allegorical, fanciful, emblematic literary corpus as a body of instruction manuals for lab-based experimentation and pseudo-scientific inquiry. In the 16th century, however, alchemy was no less noteworthy for its approach to the relationship between the written word and the burgeoning of science. In her analysis of late humanism and the rise of skepticism that challenged its tenets, for example, Katharine Eggert in her book *Disknowledge* specifically proposed that by the 16th century "alchemy became humanism by other means," by shifting humanistic discourse in the direction of natural philosophy and proto-science through the use of nonetheless literary modes of expression in the rising Age of Reason.[151]

Though by no means a textbook example of an alchemist, Paracelsus is certainly an ideal illustration for historical accounts on the interactions of proto-science, 'truth-value' and literature.[152] Paracelsus's vast corpus of writings provides a kind of crossroads of influence wherein Neoplatonist, humanist, and alchemical thought intermingled with Christian esoterica, ideas of kabbalah, folk healing practices, superstition, empiricism, artisan-based practicum, pragmatism, literary criticism, storytelling, and Reformation-era ideology. A vast assortment of threads uniquely comes together through the intuitive, medical-theological, and certainly self-aggrandizing impulses characterizing Paracelsus's authorship. The integration of many fields and forces in 16th-century thought was also operational in the work of Paracelsus's contemporaries, notably Rabelais, but Paracelsus wasn't writing novels.[153] In fact, Paracelsus's fundamental perceptions of writing, reading, and enactment conditioned the entwinement of all three in his work. Paracelsus wasn't a

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[151] Eggert, Katherine. *Disknowledge: Literature, Alchemy, and the End of Humanism in Renaissance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 19.

[152] As beautifully written by Andrew Weeks, "Paracelsus' work reveals unnoticed patterns of allusion and affinity. He was responding to current issues in his discussions of mining, metallurgy, medical herbs, syphilis, medical education, and the reform of apothecaries, as well as in his Bible commentaries and doctrinal writings on the Eucharist and the Trinity. He reacted, albeit idiosyncratically, to the prestige of astronomy and anatomy. The dual impact of theological and humanistic controversies is ingrained in the complexities of his writings in the form of extended complex allusions." See: Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 4-5.

[153] Andrew Weeks made the comparison between Paracelsus and Rabelais in his introduction to his large-scale translation of Paracelsian works, *Essential Theoretical Writings:* "Rabelais and Paracelsus appear to be polar opposites of the sixteenth-century intellectual universe: the French fabulist, wildly imaginative and outrageously satirical; the German physician, lacking irony and grimly obsessed with a sense of mission. In 1531, without knowledge of one another, the two wrote simultaneously on their chefs d'oeuvre as inspired outsiders of their respective societies," Weeks, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, 31.

novelist because his writing was attached to his occupation, and he wrote shards of autobiography into his works because his occupation was informed by his self-given authority. Finally, Paracelsus's self-given sense of authority was informed by none other than his identification as a reader. Paracelsus believed his literacy uniquely extended to the natural world and the intentions of God as expressed through it. His writings merely sought to transmit Paracelsus's gift for reading back into a more common and more easily shared literary space—that enacted by words on the page. In the end, Paracelsus expresses his underlying intellectual-sensorial elitism in the *Paramirum*, telling his reader, for example, "don't worry about it if your peasant eyes cannot recognize that… the peasant is not made for such things but the physician is."[154]

3.2.5 The conjuring of body

Through his work on the *De Causis Morborum Invisibilum* Paracelsus added to his dissent against the Galenic notion of internality as a space of humoral balance and imbalance by presenting a theory of the internal as a space of conjuring. Implicit to Paracelsus's description of the human being's relation to their embodied experience is the idea of human internality as a living, moving, creative space; thus Paracelsus presented a somatic interior of the body – the enactment of being in a body – as in part defined by the transformation of imagination into the material expression of the body itself. This aspect of embodiment Paracelsus further defined as unnatural, as shown by his work *Das sibent buch von ursprung und herkomen der franzosen*:

> From this it follows that the imaginatio is more than nature and reigns over it, it takes away innate properties, and destroys men with that which neither the heavens nor the nature of the earth knows; he [man] then escapes through the imagination of all. As soon as he has escaped, he is never under the doctor's hand, nor is he subject to nature and its works. From this, that which is impossible for the doctor is produced, and by which, the more imagination is in the world, the less the effect of the physician, and the more ill and strange and miraculously [are people] recovered.[155]

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[154] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 379.

[155] "Daraus dan folget, das imaginatio mer dan die natur ist und regirt sie, nimpt die angeborne eigenschaft hinweg und entsezt den menschen, das in der himel nicht kennet, noch die natur der erden; dan er ist durch die imaginirung denen allen entwichen. so er nun entwichen ist, so ist er nimer under der hand des arztes auch nimer der natur und iren werken underworfen. aus dem folget nun, das dem arzet vil unmüglich ist, und ie sterker die imaginationes in der welt seind, ie schwecher die wirkung des arzts und ie mer kranker

Imagination extends embodied power beyond the bounds of explication furnished by heaven and earth, rendering the doctor impotent in the face of the empowered body that seems to contain the power to foster unreality and mediate the miraculous into the real material world.

When Paracelsus described imagination as an unnatural force in *Das sibent buch von ursprung und herkomen der franzosen,* he further characterized the body as the form through which the unnatural can enter into existence. Such an idea was of course supported by his conceptions of birth and the influence of the mother's imagination, his work on St. Vitus' dance, syphilis, and plague, wherein Paracelus expressed imagination not as a thing to be confirmed or denied through experience, but as a thing which instead manifests as experience itself. "That which they believe comes before them," Paracelsus wrote, comparing St. Vitus' dancers to people who had waking visions of saints, further expressing that belief itself "puts out candles, turns the key in the lock, knocks the scissors and sieve around." [156]

Yet, Paracelsus's ideas about the unnaturalness or super-naturalness of the body were only indirectly expressed in a few lines from the end of the section on the St. Vitus' dance in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilum*. There Paracelsus wrote that, *"it may be the case that in belief we are like the spirits and all things are known to us. But not all things need to be revealed to the body. Hence, if we believe credulously, it turns out for us just that way."[157]* With this statement, Paracelsus makes the bold proposal that any knowable potentiality can be called into existence by belief, that physicality responds to what we envisage for it, and that the body is our tool for the almost boundless enactment of fantasy upon materiality. Against this, he offers the necessary limits of what is expressed in the physical world and thus known to our bodies. His demand for limiting the physical body's experience of the 'known' resonates deeply with his argument that invisible diseases are the overstepped bounds of creative self-determination expressed as sickness. For

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und ie seltsamer, wunderbarlicher genesen." Theophrast von Hohenheim, called Paracelsus. *Sämtliche Werke.* 7th Volume. Ed. Karl Sudhoff (Munich and Berlin: Oldenbourg, 1923), 330. Translated by Lindsey Drury.

[156] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 791.

[157] Ibid.

Paracelsus, then, the impressed *Bild* given us by God is a determining factor—not one that is unavoidably controlling, not one that gives destiny, but one that must be through self-control knowingly and thoughtful adhered to. It is with this kind of struggle with the power of belief to produce physical expression in the world that Paracelsus turned his attention to the St. Vitus' dance, seeing in it the traversal of imagination and reality, through the power of belief, beyond the limits set by God.

3.2.6 Magic in Paracelsian medicine

Paracelsus's understanding of imagination as having physical consequences reasserts itself in how Paracelsus proposed cures for 'invisible diseases' in his book on *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft berauben*. Paracelsus responded to the performativity of the St. Vitus' dance by articulating methods by which sufferers could be cured through forms of performative invocation of magic.

For Paracelsus, imagination produced matters of fact regardless of its own basis in fact. It was thus *into* the matters of fact produced by imagination that Paracelsus sought to intervene with his cures. In *Von den Krankheiten, die der Vernunft berauben,* for example, Paracelsus describes a cure based in displacement of the imagination into a wax figure through the use of a curse because "curses work against those who utter them and not against the men at whom they are aimed. There is no resistance in the image, but it is physically destroyed and the thoughts are destroyed with it."[158] Such a curse will thus by consequence refract a cure into the sick person,

> The first is the *cura choreae estuationis*, or *imaginationis*, which comes from swearing… It is as follows: the patient should make a likeness of himself in wax or resin, and should concentrate on it so that all the curses he has uttered may be destroyed in that likeness, by his will. He should concentrate his mind and the memory of his swearing solely and entirely on that likeness, thinking of no other person, and then he should cast it into the fire, letting it burn completely so that neither ashes nor smoke shall remain. In this way the thoughts pour so strongly and powerfully fully from him into

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[158] Theophrastus von Hohenheim, called Paracelsus. "The Diseases that Deprive Man of his Reason such as St. Vitus' Dance, Falling Sickness, Melancholy and Insanity and Their Correct Treatment." In: *Four Treatises of Theophrastus Von Hohenheim Called Paracelsus* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1941), 181.

the likeness that they cannot be directed against him, as if the image were alive.[159]

Paracelsus's approach to curing the St. Vitus' dance was, like the dance itself, performative in nature. Yet, his cures also show the degree to which Paracelsus understood belief as a physical force and objects and bodies as receptacles of its powers. Relating invisibility to belief, he thereby extended both the concept of 'an act' and its material expression all the way back to its roots in unexpressed, non-exteriorized impetus. In the simplest sense, he saw impetus as material, and in his cures obviously tried to make use of that fact.

It is clear from Paracelsus's writings that he had an ambivalent relationship with magic. Of waxen images, he wrote in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* that, "you should be aware with regard to belief that the images originated as follows: The human being fashioned an image of wax in the name of his enemy and proceeded to injure its body."[160] Giving images origination in such violent intentions, Paracelsus proceeded to explain that,

> It is in this manner that those lewd ones have come into being, the ones who have cast their spell over women, who have made waxen images, and used lighted candles to make them melt, and thereby brought about their lascivious affair. What happened is that their spirit was inflamed by the invisible light.[161]

Nonetheless, Paracelsus's defense of magic and the use of words and images within it is splattered throughout his larger corpus and clarifies the terms by which Paracelsus understands the nature of the miraculous and its possible relations with humans. His particular identification of idolatry as residing within intention extends, in part, from his defense of his own use of magical arts for healing. Within *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, Paracelsus focuses his attention on curing by using the "names and words" composing 'characters.'[162] His writing on 'characters' completes the text on the powerful

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[159] Paracelsus, "The Diseases that Deprive Man of his Reason," 181.

[160] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 763.

[161] Ibid.

[162] Within the fifth book of *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, Paracelsus first defines "characters" as names and words, and then rescinds his earlier statement: "It is my purpose to describe the powers of names and words, whether spoken or written, and how [the powers] come into being," he writes at the beginning of the text, but later on, "the characters are not words or names. But the ceremonial [abusers] have reduced them to words and names so that the spirits would be understood to be invested in these." See: Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 887 & 923.

influence of imagination with a defense of natural magic.[163] He argues that performing acts of curing and healing through the same magic which others had deemed demonic is acceptable if done in alignment with the grace of God. Upholding the premise that magic may be meaningfully adopted into medical practice within the fifth book of *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, Paracelsus wrote of the appropriation of characters for healing that "in this sense then are the weapons broken of those who thought to stab us with them. Their weapons are our medicine."[164]

The description of 'characters' at the end of *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* also stems from Paracelsus's desire to clarify the difference between magic and imagination. Magic for Paracelsus is related to God's will. It is not invented through imagination, or ultimately manifested through the spirit world or by the devil but granted its miraculous existence by God himself. Through this argument, Paracelsus seeks to distance forms of magical healing from superstitious practices. He does so by articulating that God does not require belief, faith, and thus superstition to support the ways he goes about healing the living:

> He [God] proves this clearly by the medicine that purges and mends not only those who believe but those who do not, the faithful [and] the superstitious, those who love and those who hate, all [are treated] the same. For this reason, these matters do not lend themselves to unbelief or superstition, as long as God is understood in his mercy.[165]

Paracelsus polarizes diseases of imagination and belief from God's equanimity. Presenting such diseases as arising from lascivious obstinance shared between spirits and humans, Paracelsus turns toward an early modern witch sabbath narrative. Demonic practices had long interrelated dancing, sex, and ceremony. Through mention of the sabbath, Paracelsus sought to define superstition. To do so, Paracelsus first proposed that he would explain "the four categories" of healing through magic, and then abandoned the proposition to express

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[163] It is herein worth noting that evidence from Paracelsus's own writings point to the idea that he was cast out of Basel not entirely because he was identified with Protestants or for burning a book of Avicenna (though both such accusations were true). In *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, Paracelsus writes that, "They call it sorcery, witch- craft, [or] superstition. They do not know what it is… Basel retained me [as a teacher] at its university, [and then] accused me of causing annoyance with such teachings." Paracelsus was expelled, in part, because it seems he taught magical cures. See: Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 887.

[164] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 889.

[165] Ibid., 895.

that all his readers should "be aware that these things are accompanied by many *lascivious superstitiones*."[166] Endeavoring to demonstrate his claim, Paracelsus mentioned a holdover of "ancient origin," that had maintained the narrative of the "Mount of Venus" through the place of "Höberg."[167] Within his description of the demonic activities there, Paracelsus made it clear that he understood superstition as a powerful source of magic which seeks to replace the power of God with its own operations. Ultimately, those partaking in *lascivious superstitiones* fail to acknowledge that, even in their efforts to reclaim power from God against God's wishes, all such actions remain within God's purview, and thus allowed (for one reason or another) by God to exist. In other words, what Paracelsus found most fundamentally demonic amongst the demonic is the belief that any action in the world could be outside the scope of God's authority. By extension, Paracelsus's definitions for gluttony and lasciviousness were rooted in the idea that sinners lust after experience of their own making, and thus lust for an existence beyond the bounds of God's influence. That, for Paracelsus, was the core of imagination: the idea that humans or spirits could inflict or enforce any state of being that had not already been considered by God; the idea that there was any other basis for power or truth independently of God's creative omnipotence. All obstinance, all lasciviousness, all superstition – from that driving the St Vitus dance to that of the mythologized demonic rituals of Höberg – for Paracelsus were networked into one massive self-deluding attempt at evading God's omniscience and omnipotence by substituting for it imagination-induced wayward realities.

In the *Zeitschrift des Harz-Vereins für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* [1870], Paracelsus's account is contextualized in relation to German writings on witchcraft through the mid-15th century Swabian mystic Johann Nider in Basel, a sermon by a pastor named Geiler in 1508, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, a baron named Liechtenberg, and a mid-16th century treatise on witchcraft published by Jacob Wecker.[168] In this analysis, Paracelsus's

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[166] Ibid., 929.

[167] Paracelsus, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, trans. Weeks, 929, 931.

[168] "Wenn aber schon ein Zeitgenoße Molitors, der schwäbische meist zu Basel lebende Mystiker Johann Nider um die Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts von einem Zauberer, der in Frau Venus Berg fahren wollte, spricht,) so erwähnten wir schon bei Anführung der Stelle in Geilers Predigt vom Jahre 1508, die auf Nider Bezug nimmt, daß dieser Venusberg ein mythischer Berg sei, den man ver schiedentlich localisire. Nider sagt, daß der Zauberer jene Fahrt im Traum gemacht und erwachend sich in einer Mistlache gesunden habe, 'das war Fraw Venus Berg.' Ganz ebenso behandelt ihn als mythologischen Begriff Paracelsus (1493–1534), indem er sagt, daß die 'Mannen' (die männlichen Zauberer) ihren Frau Venusberg hätten, auf

"Höberg is said to be the Heuberg [Hay Mountain] near Balingen in the Kingdom of Würtemberg."[169] Weeks further connects Paracelsus's citing of history to "a folk superstition of lascivious spirits or goblins that dance on a mountain, associated with the harvest or the midsummer 'hay month' (Heumonat) of July."[170] This notion is further fleshed out by histories of witchcraft, such as that written by Wolfgang Behringer that discuss the common belief in 15th and 16th century Bavaria that witches gathered on the Heuberg (Hay mountain) to dance. As described by Richard Baxstrom and Todd Meyers,

> The best-known meeting place for the Sabbat was the Heuberg ("Hay Mountain") in southwestern Germany. Sometimes also called "Venusberg," this remote site was suffused with myth well before the emergence of the witch in the late Middle Ages. Believed to be the peak where the goddess Venus convened her clandestine court, the Heuberg was known far beyond its local region, as evidenced by Nider's mention of the place where witches assembled at the Council of Basel in 1435 and the fact that the site is directly named in trial transcripts from the 1520s.[171]

There are serious implications to Paracelsus's appeal to late-medieval witch writings within his book *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*. First, the fact that Paracelsus took Bavarian witch sabbath narratives seriously discounts long-standing scholarship on Paracelsus's work on St Vitus dance. The early 20th century work of Gregory Zilboorg pitted the Paracelsian approach to 'diseases of reason' against Galenism through witchcraft:

> Mental diseases, which were at the time a department of theology and not of medicine… belonged to demonology and not to psychiatry, and the best textbook of mental disease, the most popular and the most authoritative, was the *Malleus Maleficarum*, and not a treatise on clinical medicine. The *Malleus* was willing to recognize the authority of Galen only for the purpose

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welchem der Teufel in Frauengestalt zu einer Frauen werde. Entsprechend hätten die Unholden (die Zauberinnen) ihren Höberg (Höwberg). Dieser Höberg soll der Heuberg bei Balingen im Königreich Würtemberg sein. Grimm vergleicht damit den Huy, den nördlichen Vorberg des Harzes. Den im Jahre 1506 zuerst genannten Höberg führt auch der süddeutsche Freiherr Joh. v. Liechtenberg um die Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts in einem von Dr. Jak. Wecker in Basel herausgegebenen Traetat von der Zauberei als Versammlungsplatz der Hexen an und sagt, daß der geißfüßige Teufel dieselben„ etwan auff den Hewberg, Laubenlinden, an heimlichen Orten, damit sie vor der Welt nicht zu schanden werden, 'entführt. Mit Salben geschmiert fahren sie durch das Rauchloch und durch die Lüfte 'auf den Gablen, Thieren, biß sie kommen an das Ort, da sie den Heimgarten haben.'" See: Jacobs, Ed. *Zeitschrift des Harz-Vereins für Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, Selbstvlg Wernigerode, 3. Jahrgang, 1870, pgs. 879-880.

[169] Jacobs, *Zeitschrift des Harz-Vereins für Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, 879.

[170] Weeks, *Essential Theoretical Writings*, f2, 931. Weeks further footnotes on p. 930 that Paracelsus described Höberg was the breeding place for witches in *Fragmentum Libri de Sagis et Earum Operibus*,

[171] Baxstrom, Richard and Todd Meyers. *Realizing the Witch: Science, Cinema, and the Mastery of the Invisible* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016), 80.

of emphasizing its own preconceptions; the result was that very few natural diseases of the mind were recognized.[172]

Following Zilboorg, Kélina Gotman described Paracelsus's approach to isolating the St Vitus dance from demonological thought by clarifying it as 'natural disease' in her work *Choreomania*:

> Paracelsus, in the early sixteenth century, ventured an anti-establishmentarian view: what he called chorea merely echoed nature's ripples, tremors, and falls. Thus wresting otherwise unexplained gestures from a history of religious and scientific writings of witchcraft—a trope that, for centuries, had seemingly accounted for unwanted intrusions into everyday life—Paracelsus claimed that the natural world was the sole cause of trembling movements.[173]

Beyond the fact that there is nothing in Paracelsus's writings that argues the natural world as the sole cause of St Vitus dance, there is also not a clear 'wresting' of St Vitus dance from larger realms of demonological thought. In fact, Paracelsus followed the precedent of his times in thinking about the gestures of St Vitus dance in relation to the stories of demonic dances of witches at Heuberg, clarifying the use of imagination in both as an idolatrous invoking of lascivious superstitions. Ultimately, Paracelsus used the two as the only mentions of dance in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium* rendered relevant to a defense of the practice of magical healing.

3.3 Post-Paracelsian Authorship

In their dissemination, the texts of Paracelsus gained the qualities of material influence their author had described in invisible diseases. In the absence of their maker, Paracelsus's texts made their own impressions. Traveling via the material matter of his books, his ideas passed physically, body to body, and intellectually, mind to mind, finally overcoming, even, their identification with the Paracelsian corpus. The work of Paracelsus then began to reincorporate into other books, to bastardize, to shift in intention, to become

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[172] Zilboorg, Gregory. "Introduction: The Place of Paracelsus in the History of Psychiatry." In: Temkin, C. Lilian, Paracelsus, and Henry Ernest Sigerist. *Four treatises of Theophrastus von Hohenheim, called Paracelsus* (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

[173] Gotman, *Choreomania*, 71.

other to itself. In the end, Paracelsus's thought finally became quite simply corporeal within forms of thought and zones of discourse Paracelsus himself may have never dreamed of; his texts vanished into the constantly progressing weave of discourse from which the underlying Paracelsian influence cannot now entirely be extracted. Due to the fact that Paracelsus had placed himself at the center of his own theoretical position, his identity became caught up in many of the ways that his corpus would be reshaped. Many publications that interpreted and reshaped Paracelsian thought also called themselves by his name. In other words, the idea of 'Paracelsus,' that the good doctor had himself woven into the center of his cosmology, continued to carry his cosmology through the power of his image even as his portraiture changed. In a way, this was as it had always been; Paracelsus changed his ideas in his own lifetime; likewise they have been changed by his interpreters after his death. In a manner of speaking, life goes on.

What Paracelsus warned of through his writing on St Vitus dance – that human beings had the performative power to project their imaginative forces on reality itself – was perhaps not so much heeded as enacted through the historical passage of the Paracelsian corpus. The incredible tangibility of writing, expressivity of language, and characterization of the writer himself produced in writing something akin to the material effects of imagination that Paracelsus had described in part through the St Vitus dance. Along the way, Paracelsus's writings were waylaid from their dedication to God, in some contexts so fully that Paracelsus himself became the 'theological figure' to whom the extended Paracelsian lineage was dedicated.

Specifically, in the occultist lineage traceable to Paracelsus, one finds that the ultimate measure of occultist mystery in Paracelsus's works is the ambiguity of Paracelsus himself: Paracelsus, whose sensorial experience of the world evaporates from the page in a mist; Paracelsus, whose medical 'apostolic gift' was not, in the end, transferrable. This rendered the occultism to be found in his writings dependent upon their reinterpretation. Such reinterpretations had to work with the inherent ambiguity of Paracelsus's works. The Paracelsians with occultist and alchemical leanings tended to do with Paracelsus's writings (and thus, with the product of his embodied authorship) what the occultist tradition is best at doing: they tended to identify the ambiguity as intentional, and tended to look for the underlying linguistic and symbolic systems by which the writings could be understood as

encoded matter. In other words, Paracelsus created a medicine out of seeing through bodies to the living system, and his adherents created Paracelsianism out of seeing through his writings to his ideas of the living system. In so doing, Paracelsian adherents expressed more deeply the relationship of Paracelsus's writing to his cosmological theory of influence. His authorship splintered into a network of codependent interactors, and through its own influence Paracelsus's authorial body gave way to the many Paracelsi offered up by his protégées.

3.3.1 Paracelsianism's proximity to the printing house 'à l'enseigne de la Licorne'

Paracelsus's work as re-rendered into Paracelsianism almost arrived on the doorstep of the printing house *à l'enseigne de la Licorne*. But not quite. Jacques Gohory, a colleague of Jacques Kerver, who was the first of two translators to work with Kerver on the French *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, caught wind of Paracelsus early amongst French scholars.[174] Gohory had been working on the translation of the 1546 French printing of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* up until 1544, and assisted Kerver between 1552 – 1554 on the revised 1554 printing. By 1558, Gohory had turned to Paracelsus, and he was at work gathering all of the Paracelsian corpus he could. He was preparing the first Paracelsian work for publication in Paris by 1562 or 1563, and printed De Vita Longa with his commentary under the sign of 'Concordiae' in 1567.[175] His Paracelsian publication leaned upon Gohory's knowledge of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, in part, to reframe the Paracelsian conception of embodiment into that which was in vogue amongst mid-16th century Parisian humanists. Thus, it is through the *Hypnerotomachia* that the first Paracelsian work to emerge from Paris can be indirectly connected to the house *à l'enseigne de la Licorne*. The terms of that 'almost-connection' highlight, as well, the circumstances in which Paracelsian ideas first took to print in Paris – through a book-loving translator.

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[174] Yolande Bonhomme, whose books of hours were the topic of the first chapter of this thesis, was one of perhaps 30 women publishers running printing houses in Paris in the 16th century. Her son, Jacques Kerver, published the first French translation of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (the work that is the center of the second chapter of this thesis).

[175] The printing house 'sub signo Concordiae' seems to have printed various treatises related to judicial concerns in the 16th century, and Gohory was close with at least one of the other authors, Barnabé Brisson, who published with the house in 1564 (just three years before Gohory).

3.3.2 Jacques Gohory, Paracelsus's French Interpreter
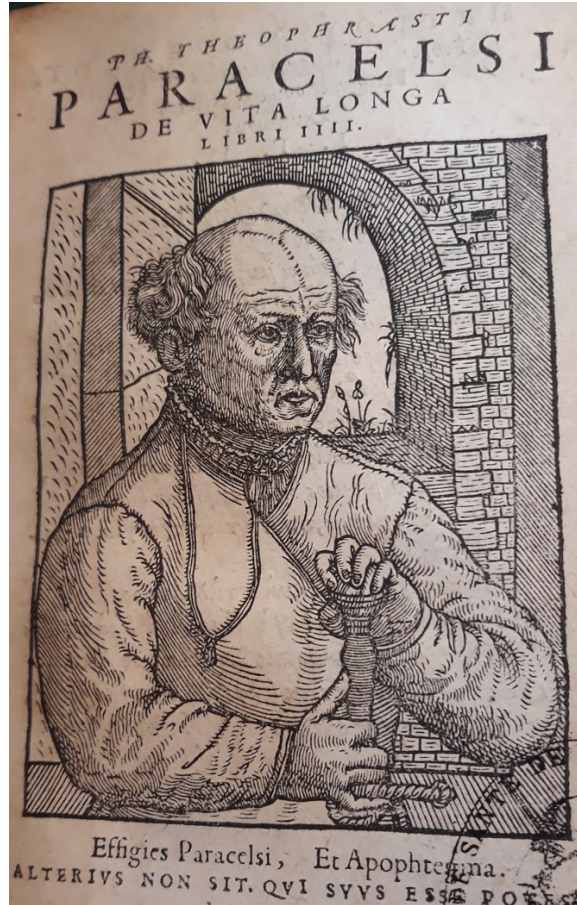
Figure. 3-2. Effigy of Paracelsus in Jacques Gohory's Paracelsian compendium (1567)

From De Vita Longa Libri IIII. Photo by author, Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire de la Santé, Paris.

Jacques Gohory was one of the first proponents of Paracelsianism in France. He authored the second work on Paracelsus to be published in the French-speaking world; his work on Paracelsus appeared perhaps less than a year after that published by Pierre Hassard in Antwerp.[176] In his history of the French Paracelsians, Allan Debus described Gohory's

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[176] Debus, Allen G. *The French Paracelsians: The Chemical Challenge to Medical and Scientific Tradition in Early Modern* France (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991), 27

"*Compendium* of Paracelsian philosophy," however, as "very different from the medical translation of Pierre Hassard" that came a few years before it, and expressed that difference as rooted in the very nature of Gohory's occultist literary orientation. An historian of early modern Paracelsians, Allan Debus related Gohory's approach to the *Hypnerotomachia*, for example, to his approach to Paracelsus,

> No less open to mystical interpretation was his translation of Francesco Colonna's (1433-1527) *Hypnotomachie, ou Discourse du Songe Poliphile* (1561) with its allegorical illustrations and its dream setting - a form familiar to anyone who knew the alchemical and Hermetic literature. One need not be surprised then to find that Gohory's account of the work of Paracelsus should be centered less on practical medicine than on the occult interpretation of the Paracelsian description of the cosmos.[177]

When Gohory wrote one of the earliest books in France on Paracelsus's medical and alchemical ideas, titled *Theophrasti Paracelsi philosophiae et medicinae utriusque universae, compendium, ex optimis quibusque eius libris*, under the pen name of Leo Suavius in late 1567 – 1568 [fig. 3-2], Paracelsus's ideas about dance were also emerging into public view.[178] In 1565, three years prior to Gohory's *Paracelsian Compendium*, Paracelsus's thoughts on 'Saint Vitus Dance' had been published in Köln as a part of Paracelsus's work *On the Invisible Diseases*, and by 1567, Adam von Bodenstein of Basel had published another of Paracelsus's works to address St. Vitus' Dance in *von den Kranckheyten, so die Vernunfft berauben*.[179]

Of his experience studying the works of Paracelsus, Gohory wrote in his Paracelsian compendium about his methods for gathering information: "legi ego partim.,

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[176] Bowen, Jacques Gohory, *Jacques Gohory (1520 – 1576)*, 26 ; The book published by Hassard was: Paracelsus, and Pierre Hassard. *La grande, vraye, et parfaicte chirvrgie, dv ... Philippe Aureole Theophraste Paracelse ... Nouuellement tr. en langue Françoise* (Anvers: par G. Silvius, 1567).

[177] Debus, *The French Paracelsians,* 27.

[178] Gohory, Jacques (as Leo Suavius). *Theophrasti Paracelsi Philosophiae et medicinae vtriusque vniuersae compendium, ex optimis quibusque eius libris. Cum Scholiis in libros IIII. Eiusde[m] De vita longa, plenos mysteriorum, parabolarum, aenigmatum / auctore Leone Suauio I.G.P. Vita Paracelsi ; catalogus operum & librorum ; cum indice rerum in hoc opere singularium par Paracelse in aedibus Rovillii, via Iacobaea* (Basel: sub signo Concordiae 1567/1568).

[179] Paracelsus, with Adam von Bodenstein, ed. *Dess hocherfahrnesten Medici Aureoli Theophrasti Paracelsi Schreyben von den Kranckheyten, so die Vernunfft berauben, als da sein S. Veyts Thantz hinfallender Siechtage, Melancholia und Unsinnigkeit etc. sampt ihrn warhafften Curen: darzu auss gemeldts Authoris Büchern gethan sein etliche lustige und nutzbare Process Administrationes und Würckungen dess Vitriols und Erdenhartzes* (Basel: Petrus Perna. 1567); Vale, Thiago Cardoso, and Francisco Cardoso. "Chorea: A Journey through History." *Tremor and Other Hyperkinetic Movements* Vol. 5., (2015).

partim audivi ex Germanorum interpretatione plurima illius opera," — in other words, partly he read, partly he listened to the German interpretations of Paracelsian works.[180] In a notable departure from how he more habitually worked as a translator, Gohory chose to write his Paracelsian compendium – and the Paracelsian text *De Vita Longa* within it – not into his native French, but into the high-brow linguistic estate of Latin. Whereas with other translations he rendered Latin into his local tongue (thus making intellectual writings available to a broader audience), Gohory responded to Paracelsus by instead choosing the clarity and precision he saw in Latin, perhaps as a means to overcome Paracelsus's notorious abstruseness. Both his understanding of Latin's eloquence and his opinion of Paracelsus as perplexing are well documented in Gohory's writings. Of Gohory's regard for Latin, Willis Herbert Bowen's 1935 dissertation on him perhaps gives the best elucidation. Describing "Gohory's oft-repeated ideas" in prefaces to works he translated, Bowen wrote that Gohory would habitually express the "difficulty in putting the beauties of Latin into the rude language of France."[181] Drawing from his opinion of Paracelsus as a difficult and obscure writer, Gohory described his goal in producing a Paracelsian gloss: "confero ego quae possum ut usus artis maximae optimis in communem hominis utilitatem elucescat" – asserting not only his capacity to clarify Paracelsus for others, but his ability to select the most important aspects of Paracelsian thought as contributions to common knowledge.[182]

According to Debus, Gohory was "a diplomat and an advocate at the Parlement of Paris," whose translations of Machiavelli and *Amadis de Gaule* belied his "special interest in the occult arts."[183] Gohory's pursuits as a translator and author, however, seemingly confirm his preoccupation with redefining a wide net of literature into the cast of occultist 'books of secrets.' Like a good diplomat (and a good humanist), Gohory's approach to occultism was not exclusive in nature—he both expanded the field of occultism by

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[180] Gohory, Jacques. *Theophrasti Paracelsi Philosophiae*, 156.

[181] Bowen, Willis Herbert. *Jacques Gohory (1520 – 1576).* (Cambridge, Mass: Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Harvard University. September 1935), 145.

[182] Gohory, Jacques. *Theophrasti Paracelsi Philosophiae et medicinae vtriusque vniuersae compendium, ex optimis quibusque eius libris*, 156

[183] Debus, Allen G. *The French Paracelsians: The Chemical Challenge to Medical and Scientific Tradition in Early Modern France* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991), 27.

identifying books like the *Hypnerotomachia* as a part of its oeuvre, and sought to widen its readership and readability through his work as a translator and commentator.[184] As described by Bowen (Gohory's most unabashedly dedicated biographer), Gohory "wished to make new scientific works available to a large group of persons who were unable to read anything not written in French."[185] It is up for speculation as to whether this was an ethical or an economical choice. Perhaps it was both. Regardless, Gohory didn't seek to maintain occult literature's veiled status quo; his pursuits instead fell in line with the rise of 16th century print culture and its expanding economy of distribution.

Central to Gohory's ethic was a perception of the written word as itself somewhat esoteric, to which Gohory sought to respond by acting as a demystifier. As explained by Bowen, this impetus is stated throughout his prefaces to works, showing up in example after example of how "secrets are to be found" by the "patient, attentive reader."[186] Though formulating Gohory's larger tendencies, Bowen was particularly cites Gohory's preface to *Les occultes merveilles et secretz de nature* (1567), an occultist medico-religious treatise by the Belgian doctor and minister Levinus Lemnius. Gohory's work on the treatise is particularly indicative of Gohory's belief in the benefits of medical knowledge and the literature of 'secrets' for a wide readership:

> Ceste excellence de langage qui est en luy, m'a donné beaucoup de peine à vouloir exprimer la proprieté exquise d'iceluy, ainsi que cognoistra le lecteur qui parcollation des deux langes en voudra faire preuue. Or est-il plein quant à la matiere de telle varieté de discours que persóne ne se peut ennuyer à le lire, & qui le lira diligemment en raportera assez de fruit, combien qu'il ait protesté que le plaisir ait esté son but primcipal. En quoy iay estimé faire bon office enuers ma nation, si ie luy communiquois ces beaux secrets de Nature en sa langue: comme ie feray desormais de plusieurs autres si ie sens ce premier labeur comm auánt coureur luy auoir esté agreable.[187]

In the above passage, Gohory first expresses the difficulty of translating the eloquent prose of Lemnius; he then chastises the speedy, bored reader, and encourages a slow,

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[184] Bowen, *Jacques Gohory*, 150.

[185] Ibid.

[186] Ibid., 145.

[187] Gohory, Jacques. Preface, "De Paris ce 2. Feurier. 1567." In *Les occultes merveilles et secretz de nature: avec plusieurs enseignemens des choses diverses tant par raison probable que par conjecture artificielle: exposées en deux livres de non moindre plaisir que proufit au lecteur studieux par Levin Lemme nouvellement traduit de latin en François* (Paris: Pierre du Pré, 1567).

contemplative, and diligent reading of the text; and finally, he estimates that a wide, conscientious readership of the text will benefit the French nation with "these beautiful secrets of nature" – which will prove not only informative, but pleasurable to learn. In this way, Gohory expresses his interest in the literature of secrets not only because of its subject matter, but for the style of reading through which it is necessarily absorbed – Gohory implies in his preface that the literature of secrets necessitates a mode of attentiveness that is itself beneficial.

It is by meaning of such statements that Gohory framed himself and his work within a specifically pedagogical light. Not only did he wish to expand readership to those who could only work in French, Gohory further wished to counsel such readers in their practice of reading. He was certainly successful in expanding readership of certain humanist texts – Gohory partook in an expanding culture of translation that helped extend such writing to a less aristrocratic readership by using translation as a means for ideas to cross the linguistic divides between the middle classes. For example, his work on an edition of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* would ultimately simplify the text, catapult it to fame, and spark French Renaissance 'hypnerotomania.'

Gohory has been framed by various historians (most notably Debus) as a translator who shifted a variety of important humanist works into a direction that suited his occultist curiosity. Certainly, his work on the *Hypernotomachia* further influenced future readings of the text as an alchemical work, and certainly his collaboration with Jacques Kerver of the Kerver/Bonhomme printing house influenced Kerver's own move toward further publishing of occultist literature. Yet, there is a facet to Gohory's occultist interests, to his musing over literary 'secrets,' that seems more driven by his interest in pedagogical approaches to textual interpretation. As his various prefaces clarify, – Gohory saw himself not only as a translator, but as an interpreter who sought to render complex ideas into more common, graspable language. His pedagogical inclinations increased throughout his lifetime; indeed, he dedicated the last years of his life to running a Paracelsian school.

The interest in Paracelsus from such a literary man in France in the 16th century does not merely attest to Gohory's occultism, nor to the flexibility and diversity of his interests as a reader. In the 16th century, Paracelsus rose as an important author within numerous fields of scholarship. By the second half of the 16th century, his books began to

circulate, and within a few decades, a vast corpus of commentaries and 'Paracelsian' literature of all kinds – including medical, alchemical, theological, and occultist texts – began to emerge from printing centers throughout Europe.

3.3.3 *Hypnerotomachie* and *De Vita Longa*: Gohory's materialist-syncretistic cross-theorization

Gohory treated his various literary ventures as all interstitial to one another. Gohory's thoughts on the relations between Paracelsus's *De Vita Longa* and the French-language *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* he worked on with Kerver and are indicative of this. When Gohory got the chance, he would inevitably cross-reference between his various textual productions, thus creating an overarching discourse between the various works. In the end, Gohory's networking of the texts had no greater justification than Gohory's own particular life and the happenstance of biographical luck that brought various texts into dialogue through Gohory's work on them. For Gohory, however, the connections ran deeper than himself. Gohory's faith in the underlying unity of the textual world was quite literally occultist in nature: he believed the texts he worked on were variously involved in encoding powerful, universal secrets. His humanist activity toward unraveling those secrets was in the deepest sense aimed at articulating a unity of divergent philosophies, theologies, and sciences. Like Paracelsus before him, Gohory dedicated a great deal of his thought and time to literature, but his literary pursuits were bound within the unifying pull of his particular materialist syncretism.

Through the lens of Gohory's analysis, literature was magnificently hyperlinked. Similar phrases and images were taken as flagging devices for tracing the fundamental unification of literature. For example, Gohory sought to use a book of secrets he translated for the Dutch physician Levinius Lemnius' (*Occulta naturae miracula)* to clarify the Paracelsian definition of Iliaster. "Of Iliaster, which is the Sun's nature, Paracelsus has said to be of gold, it is made accessible here from one who has recently written of gold, Levinus Lemnius;" in other words, one idea on gold was best elucidated by another idea on gold.[188]

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[188] "Ad Iliastem in quo Solis naturam Paracelsus esse dixit id est auri, fiat haec accessio ex iis quae de auro scripsit nuper Lemnius Levinus (in secunda parte nuper edita libri de occultis naturae miraculis: quem

Gohory's search for sympathetic relationships caused him to pursue through his arguments a total networking of thought. This Gohory would seek to achieve, in part, by turning a blind eye to profound differences – such as Paracelsus's outright rejection of Aristotle, Hippocrates, and humors – all of which provided the foundation for Lemnius's work.

The link Gohory forged between Paracelsus's *De Vita Longa* and the *Hypnerotomachia* went on a far lengthier and more winding philological journey than that pursued via Lemnius. Gohory saw the pathway linking Paracelsus's *De Vita Longa* and the *Hypnerotomachia* as riddled with allegorical symbolisms. Gohory saw the lines of connection as occupied by further references – to Trithemius's writings on code, the *Romance of the Rose*, the figure of Solomon, and a form of 'twofold' marriage or unification Gohory called "matrimonio duplici."[189] Drawing from his descriptions of the enigmatic writing of philosophers of the past, allegories of union, the symbolism of the sunrise, and conceptions of east and west, Gohory then arrived at the symbolism of the moon's composition as a blending light and dark from the *Roman de la Rose* and its relation to the sleeping body of Poliphilo at the base of a tree in the beginning of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Be reminded, this is all apparently repurposed as interpretation and clarification of Paracelsus's writing:

> Eo spectare mihi videtur descriptio aurorae in principio Hypnerotomachiae Polyphili & Io de Meun in Romantio rosaeo gallico doctrinae reconditae plenissimo, de figura serpentis, cuius caput versus occidentem, cauda versus orientem, quique dorso arborem portat ramis in orientem pendentibus, sed quodam circumflexu, cuius in obliquitate ipsa incumbat homo pedibus in occidentem versis.[190]

Here, Gohory identifies two moments – one at the beginning of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* and the other in Jean de Meun's latter half of the *Roman de la Rose* – when the symbolic image of a tree and a human figure creates the basis of relation between the *Roman de la Rose*'s description of the moon and the image of Poliphilo sleeping at the base of a tree at dawn. The meaning of such images, as Gohory describes it, have been deeply

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rectius forte de naturae miris operibus inscripsisset, quod miracula propriè ad Deum pertineant ex Alberto lib. de mirabili scientia Dei) de auro (inquam) primum scripsit in genere quae de aere etiam atque argento circa popularem avaritiam dici possunt." See: Gohory, Jacques, *Theophrasti Paracelsi Philosophiae* (1567), 369.

[189] Gohory, Jacques. *Theophrasti Paracelsi Philosophiae*, 213.

[190] Ibid.

hidden. Gohory then describes the image given by the *Roman de la Rose* of the moon's darker patches that compose "the figure of the serpent with the head toward the west, the tail toward the east, at whose back is the tree that carries clusters of branches hanging down in the east."[191] The tree's branches bend and thus circle around from east and back toward west, where they meet with a man sleeping at the base of the tree with his feet pointed west.[192] Through such an image, the moon describes multiple levels of unification, a yin and yang, if you will, between dark and light moon material, east and west, plant, animal, and man, dawn and dusk. In Gohory's reading, the man on the moon is Poliphilo himself, who, as his name suggests, is *lover of all things*, and thus a love-driven symbol of unification. All this Gohory does to clarify the relationship of Paracelsus's work to the Cabala.

Certainly, Cabala – or at least Paracelsus's interpretation of it – is was used as a binding agent, fusing what would otherwise divide the theological, alchemical, and medical concerns operational within the Paracelsian corpus. Testifying to this idea is Cabala's function within *De Vita Longa*, the centerpiece of Gohory's Paracelsian compendium.[193] In Gohory's surmising, Paracelsus's participation in the rise of cabbalistic writings in the period owed substantially to Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and Johannes Reuchlin after him.[194] Certainly both writers had a major influence on the rising early modern interest in Cabala. Pico's *900 Conclusiones Philosophicae, Cabalisticae et Theologicae* was published in 1486, and Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* after it in 1494, followed by *De Arte Cabalistica* in 1517. Paracelsus could have also been influenced by cabbalists when he was

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[191] Gohory, Jacques. *Theophrasti Paracelsi Philosophiae*, 213.

[192] As quoted from an English translation of the Roman de la Rose: "The dark part of the moon represents to us the shape of a very marvelous animal, a serpent that keeps his head always bent toward the west and whose tail finishes toward the east. On his back he carries an upright tree that extends its branches toward the east but that in doing so turns them upside down. On this upside-down arrangement dwells a man, leaning on his arms, who has pointed both his feet and thighs toward the west, as it appears by the looks of them." See: Lorris, Guillaume de and Jean de Meun. *Romance of the Rose*. Trans. by Charles Dahlberg (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), Lines 16881 – 16894.

[193] As summarized by Peter Forshaw, "Looking through Paracelsus's genuine and pseudepigraphic works, it is easy to find references to what he variously calls 'Cabala,' 'Gabala,' or 'Gabalia.'" Forshaw lists such findings in *De Natura Rerum*, *Philosophia sagax*, the *Fragmenta Medica*, *Liber de religione perpetua*, the *Paragranum*, and *De Vita Longa*. See: Forshaw, Peter J. "Cabala Chymica or Chemia Cabalistica —Early Modern Alchemists and Cabala." *Ambix* (a journal by the Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry), Vol. 60 No. 4 (November, 2013): 361–389.

[194] Gohory, *Theophrasti Paracelsi Philosophiae*, 199-201.

a student in Ferrara, though Paracelsus's works rework Cabala into something distinctly his own. According to Janet Sethre, Cabala appeared in centers such as Venice and Ferarra "after 1492, when Sephardite Jews were expelled from Spain and found refuge in such centers," where scholarship bloomed in Italy.[195] It seems Paracelsus was amongst the promptest adherents to early modern Christian cabalism, as Paracelsus scholarship commonly estimates that the doctor began dictating his earliest thought on Cabala for what would become *De Vita Longa* in German in 1526 or 1527, within ten years of Reuchlin's Latin-language publication in the German-speaking world.[196]

Paracelsus's conceptions of the St Vitus dance are not present in *De Vita Longa*, but the theoretical basis for those conceptions is nonetheless clearly taking shape in this early work, specifically through those sections Gohory analyses as derived from cabbalistic influence. In his introductory description of *De Vita Longa,* at the end of a section of commentary on astral forms in Cabala, Gohory specifically analyzes Paracelsus's conception of female imagination, its material influence, and relation to menstrual projection, writing: "imaginatio mulieris ab astro, infixa menstruo, tanquam subiecto spiritui muliebri."[197] Paracelsus's words in Gohory's edition further described the *impressiones, inantationes*, and *superstitions* so central to his St Vitus dance argument in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*:

> In fact, in the presence of this place impressions come into being; they are something contrary to nature, conversely it is certain they coincide with supernatural life, but yet also with the firmament of the body, which is the second nature. Even if the supernatural impressions would appear, nevertheless knowledge of them is obscured, this is because it is said impressions began from other terms, either from incantations, otherwise from superstitions, and also from the various remaining remedies similar to magical arts. Thus, because it conjoins with that mentioned, which for Greeks is Mageiria, which is something other than impressions –

[195] Sethre, Janet. *The Souls of Venice* (London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2003), 109.

[196] Paracelsus, *Sämtliche Werke*, Karl Sudhoff and Wilhelm Matthiessen (ed.s) *Medizinische, naturwissenschaftliche und philosophische Schriften,* vol. 3, Munich 1922–1933.
Dating of the work is based, in part, on the fact that Paracelsus is not yet dubbed Paracelsus – the name came after his time in Basel. See also: Sudhoff, Karl. *Bibliographia Paracelsica* Berlin, 1894.

[197] Gohory, Jacques, *Theophrasti Paracelsi Philosophiae*, 43.

incantations & superstitions – something is never expressed, & that very thing [is] the supernatural body.[198]

Following the trend of Paracelsus's wider corpus, *De Vita Longa,* written in the mid-1520s, shows less maturity in its ideation than his latter text *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*. The two share, however, in expressing the themes of impression, incantation, superstition, and Cabala that run through the Paracelsian corpus.[199] These threads are quite easily associated with Marsilio Ficino, whose work *De Triplici Vita* (*Threefold life* or *Three Books on Life*) has been shown to have held strong influence over Paracelsus's conception of how astral influence and magical medicine related to what Paracelsus scholar Walter Pagel describes as "one of the main tenets of Platonism as revived by Ficino: that all corporeal activity derives from a non-corporeal vital principle joined to matter."[200] Poignantly, Pagel further describes Paracelsus's adoption of such a notion as core to his "search for the hidden invisible spirit which governs and moves visible bodies."[201]

For his part, Gohory picked up on Paracelsus's debt to Ficino, but stretched Paracelsus's literary relations much further, for example, toward his own interest in encoded forms of writing, specifically in relation to Trithemius. In so doing, Gohory was relating to fundamental trends in the 16th century Paracelsian revival. As Didier Kahn observes:

> One of the first publishers of "Paracelsian Revival" alchemy, Cyriacus Jakob, who in 1550 dedicated to Count Palatine Ottheinrich his edition of De alchimia opuscula, at the beginning of which he presented for the first time Paracelsus as a great alchemist, was also the publisher of several works of Trithemius ... it is also in 1550 that Gohory himself published his *De Usu & Mysteriis Notarum Liber*, where if Paracelsus is not already of concern,

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[198] Translation by Lindsey Drury; "Nam hoc loco palam fuint impressiones, quae praeter naturam sunt, utut scilicet in supernaturalem vitam simul concurrunt, utut etiam firmamentum in corpus, quod secundum naturam est, concurri: etsi impressiones supernaturales appareant, tamen obscure est cognition illarum: hunc est cur impressiones ab aliis dici coeperunt, ab quibusdam incantations, ab aliis superstitiones, ab caeteris aliter iuxta praescriptum magicae artis: quia ex his fluit ea, quae Graecis Mageiria est, ea praeter impressiones, quas incantationes & superstitiones appellant, aliud nihil tractat, & idipsum in corpus superaturale." Gohory, Jacques. "Scholium, Cap. VI: 'Ex influentia corporum super-naturalium praesidium perendum longae vitae: tractatum à "Marsilio Ficino de vita caelitùs comparanda.'" Gohory, *Theophrasti Paracelsi Philosophiae,*, 101-102.
[199] Paracelsus discusses cabala (Gabalia) in the third book of *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*. See: *Huser Bücher und Schrifften,* vol. 1, 282.
[200] Pagel, Walter. *Paracelsus: An Introduction to Philosophical Medicine in the Era of the Renaissance*, 2nd revised edition (Basel: New York: Karger, 1982), 218.
[201] Ibid.

at least Trithemius and alchemy is. Eleven years later, Gabriel de Collange published his French translation of *Polygraphia* through Jacques Kerver of Paris... [202]

As such a networking of publications shows, Gohory and Jacques Kerver were participants in a Paracelsian revival that brought Paracelsus's ideas into the orbit of those of Trithemius. The consequences of this for modern scholarship have been substantial. Paracelsus has been, for example, believed to have been a student of Trithemius. Though evidential evidence for such claims is scant, such ideas have certainly been used to conceptualize Paracelsus's work through the lens of Trithemius.[203] In his book *Spiritual and Demonic Magic* (2003), Daniel Pickering Walker, for example, followed Gohory's lead in relating the ideas expressed by Paracelsus in *De Vita Longa* to Trithemius's conception of magic telepathy in *Steganographia* (1499), which, I argue, is a substantive misinterpretation of Paracelsus's ideas.[204] Notably, Walker chose to write of Paracelsus through the lens of Gohory because he doubted "whether Paracelsus' philosophical writings are in fact intelligible," and thus felt akin to Gohory, who he said had likewise admitted that, like many others, he was "not at all sure what it is about, let alone what it says."[205] All this is to say that historically, as well as at present, the difficulty of Paracelsus's ideas has given his readers cause to substitute for understanding his works the ability instead to contextualize them.

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[202] Translation by the author. "L'un des premiers éditeurs d'alchimie du "renouveau paracelsien", Cyriacus Jakob, qui dédia en 1550 au comte palatin Ottheinrich son édition des De alchimia opuscula, en tête desquels il présentait pour la première fois Paracelse comme un grand alchimiste, fut aussi l'éditeur de plusieurs ouvrages de Trithème… C'est aussi en 1550 que Gohory lui-même publie son De Usu & Mysteriis Notarum Liber, où il est déjà question sinon de Paracelse, tout au moins de Trithème et d'alchimie. Onze ans plus tard, Gabriel de Collange publie chez Jacques Kerver, à Paris, sa traduction française de la Polygraphia, dédiée a Charles IX, avec approbation des docteurs de la Faculté de théologie de Paris." See: Kahn, Didier. *Paracelsisme et alchimie en france à la fin de la renaissance (1567-1625)*. (PhD Thesis, Paris Sorbonne, 1998), 171.

[203] Walter Pagel argues the debt of Paracelsus to Trithemius, based on Paracelsus's description of his early tutoring by various figures, including "an abbot 'of Spanheim' – to all intents and purposes the famous Johannes Trithemius of Sponhiem." There is no evidence, however, that Paracelsus ever ventured to Sponheim or that Trithemius ever ventured to Paracelsus's childhood home in Einsiedeln. See: Pagel (1982), 8.

[204] Walker, Daniel Pickering. *Spiritual and Demonic Magic: From Ficino to Campanella* (University Park: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 102-103.

[205] Walker, *Spiritual and demonic Magic*, 96.

The influence of the scholarship of Paracelsian revivalists like Gohory has caused Paracelsus's ideas on the performativity of language and imagination to be confused with a wider network of ideas on letter-magic, divination, and forms of code. Perhaps the most that can be said of such scholarly leanings that lump Paracelsus's writings with those of others – like Trithemius – is that there is a certain poetic justice to it. The originality of Paracelsus's ideas seems to derive from powerfully reinterpreting and thus rewriting strong discursive traditions into his own cosmology, and in scholarship on Paracelsus, the same was done to him – his ideas were powerfully reworked back into discursive traditions, some of which Paracelsus had specifically sought to extricate himself.

Paracelsus's misuse of Cabala is indicative of how, exactly, Paracelsus sought to distance himself from discursive traditions, even while using terms lifted from such traditions to frame his own ideas. Of Cabala, for example, Paracelsus wrote that,

> … as if one were to say to someone else: "Do that." This is only a word, and yet the word forces it to happen. The word passes out of the body and thereby compels someone to go more than thirty miles. In the same way this comes about, by the same cause, the body compels the imagination to bring about what the body desires; and in this particular context it is understood no differently from the way we would understand a word which departs from the body and does not itself have a body, and yet it forces the other to bring about that which was desired by the body from which the word proceeds. These things are effected by the Olympian spirit that casts the shadow of all works of the body. In this Olympian spirit there resides the Cabalistic art.[206]

The above passage is from *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, and within it, it is possible to witness Paracelsus reworking writings of Cabala circulating in his time toward his ideas on the physical power of imagination. To do so, he draws a comparison between words and deeds, articulating utterance and imagination as forms of media that, though incorporeal, cast particular shadows beyond the frame of the body that enacts the will or desire of the person who is their source. Words and states of imagination thus extend the will or desire of the embodied person into the exterior world.

Paracelsus further connects this extension of will through the mediating forms of words and imagination to 'Olympian spirit' and 'Cabalistic art,' by further relating both to

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[206] Paracelsus, *De. Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, trans. Weeks, 823.

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his conception of the internal astral dimension. As he wrote in *De Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, the Olympian spirits "are the same as the stars which are within the human being," following with the comment that "these things are discussed in the books on Gabalia."[207] As Paracelsus's conception of the internal astral was likely influenced by Ficino's re-invigoration of Plotinus's limitation of astral influence, in so doing, Paracelsus blends strands of Neoplatonism into his attempt at cabalistic analysis. Paracelsus further relates the Cabala away from its Jewish sources and toward Greek antiquity. Paracelsus understood Greek and Roman pagan antiquity as influential to the spirit world that, for example, influenced the demonic ceremonies Paracelsus described at Höberg, and connected to antiquity by writing that "just as the demons celebrate their lusts on the Höberg and convene there in order to acquire from the spirits the arts with which they operate, so also do men have their own Höberg, which they call the Mount of Venus."[208]

What emerges from Paracelsus's discussion of Cabala, Olympian spirit, Höberg, the Mount of Venus, imagination, and demonic ceremony is, in the end, a theorization not only of the material powers and spiritual relations inherent in language and imagination, but, as well, of the participation of language and imagination in historical processes of spiritual experience through such powers. For Paracelsus, language and imagination cast their shadow not only into the exteriors beyond the surface of the body, but into the manifestations of spiritual experience over the passage of time – thus linking antiquity with the present not only through the traditions and lineages of ideas and beliefs, but through the material ramifications of language and imagination that carry spiritual experience over time and across religious divides.

Within such a process, the acts of dancing Paracelsus brought into his wider conceptualization of the material consequences of imagination were edited out of the portraiture of Paracelsian ideas by Paracelsian revivalists within 20 years of his death. It has been argued that the St Vitus dance and its textual lineage instead traveled in another direction. As the work of Kélina Gotman shows, for example, Paracelsus's writing on the St Vitus dance fed the rise of secularized psychosomatic pathologizations of dancing

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[207] Paracelsus, *De. Causis Morborum Invisibilium*, trans. Weeks, 825.
[208] Ibid., 931.

mania.[209] That lineage certainly left behind the imprint of the theological, alchemical, and magical on the Paracelsian conception of St Vitus dance, while nonetheless utilizing Paracelsus's writings on the dance as exemplary for the history of psychiatry and its theorization of psychosomatic illness. As secularized as such medical history writing must have seemed, however, its pathologization of dancing manias nonetheless carried a tinge of Reformation-era religious moralism, and ultimately adjusted religious ideas into the foundations for how sanity and insanity would be defined as apart after the 16th century.

However, Paracelsus's writings on the St Vitus dance were left out of most of the later explorations of Paracelsian thought. Perhaps the splitting of the St Vitus dance from Paracelsus's magical and theological ideas on invisible diseases bears witness to a process of secularization in the history of medicine. However, writings that drew Paracelsus's magical and spiritual ideas into literary investigations of aesthetics and somatics were, by the mid-20th century, connecting Paracelsus with new discourses on embodiment and art. Considering this, it is difficult to give Paracelsus's ideas on the performing body, the imagination, and their productions of kinesthetic, material experience, as expressed through his writings on St Vitus dance, entirely over to the history of medicine.

Paracelsus's ideas about the invisible materiality of imagination, for example, hang like a shadow over Artaud's essay *Alchemical Theater* when Artaud writes that:

> … this essential drama, we come to realize, exists, and in the image of something subtler than Creation itself, something which must be represented as the result of one Will alone—and without conflict. We must believe that the essential drama, the one at the root of all the Great Mysteries, is associated with the second phase of Creation, that of difficulty and of the Double, that of matter and the materialization of the idea.[210]

Artaud, turning his attention to the created world as itself material, herein describes 'the idea' as made of and through what composes the material world. The perspective of alchemy, and the alchemical basis of Paracelsus's work, present matter as transmutational. Artaud, like Paracelsus, weaves ideation into the material processes of this transmutational model. Artaud, writing at the forefront of a 20th-century avant-garde movement that fundamentally questioned the theoretical isolation of materiality from conceptualization,

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[209] See: Gotman, Kélina, *Choreomania*.

[210] Artaud, Antonin. "Alchemical Theater." *The Theater and its Double* (New York: Grove Press, 1958), 51.

re-posits the materialism of the alchemical perspective in a move that would eventually cast its reflection on the rise of dance postmodernism through the influence of John Cage.[211]

Figure 3-3. The St Vitus dance in Georg Wilhelm Pabst's 1943 film *Paracelsus*.

With the Austrucktanzer Harald Kreutzberg playing the afflicted dancer 'Fliegenbein', and Werner Krauss playing 'Paracelsus.' Photo from The Getty Image Archive.

Paracelsianism was of course also inflected into other aspects of the 20th-century history of time-based arts, including into Ausdrucktanz and film under Nazism. Perhaps most notably, the film *Paracelsus* by Georg Wilhelm Pabst from 1943 contained a St Vitus dance performed by the Ausdruckstanzer Harald Kreutzberg [fig. 3-3]. The film is set in 16th-century Basel and tells a fictionalized story of Paracelsus's presence there in 1527.

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[211] The relations between Cage's interest in Artaud and his influence on dance postmodernism are variously explored in secondary literature. See, for example: Dyson, Frances. *Sounding New Media: Immersion and Embodiment in the Arts and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Banes, Sally. *Terpsichore in Sneakers: Post-Modern Dance*, (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2011); Bramble, John. *Modernism and the Occult* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

The dancer Kreutzberg played a charlatan named Fliegenbein who was infected with plague and had snuck into Basel, though Paracelsus had ordered the city gates closed to keep out the disease. Fliegenbeing's dance symbolically combined two diseases Paracelsus wrote about in his texts: that of the plague itself, of which Paracelsus had written as a disease created through collective imagination, and that of the 'dancing plague' or 'dancing mania' of Strasbourg in 1518. In the movie, dance was thus symbolic of a plague that drew the local people into a form of social contagion as they were all, through watching the dance, influenced by Fliegenbein's performance. As described by Eric Rentschler, in the film "Paracelsus intervenes, squelching the collective hysteria unleashed by Fliegenbein's dancing, combatting the specter of Death itself, and restoring order."[212]

The filmmaker Georg Wilhelm Pabst was not a willing participant in Nazism; he was in flight through France, attempting to get to the United States when he was captured by the Nazis and dragged back to Germany to make the film. Pabst was thus in the position of producing propaganda for the Nazi state and working with actors who were collaborators with Nazis and Nazi sympathizers. For example, Paracelsus was played by Werner Krauss – an actor who had just finished acting the main role in perhaps the most famous work of anti-Semitic Nazi propaganda, *Jud Süß*. In *Jud Süß*, Krauss had been the Jewish enemy of the people, but as Paracelsus, he was instead symbolic of the German leader of the people – as Paracelsus, he symbolized Hitler himself, as well as Hitler's role as the 'healer of the German populace'. The film finished with Paracelsus proclaiming that, "the people need me, they cry out to me."

Krauss went on to produce a number of anti-Semitic works of theater – including the by now notorious version of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, in which he played the role of the Jewish Shylock in a way that expressed Nazi anti-Semitic ideology. By 1944, Krauss was added to a list of 'indispensable German artists' by the Third Reich. After the war, and after some difficulties, Krauss returned to the graces of the German artworld. Within ten years of the war, Krauss's previous Nazism didn't impose at all upon the fact that he received major awards honoring him for his career as an actor in Germany 1954

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[212] Rentschler, Eric. *The Ministry of Illusion: Nazi Cinema and Its Afterlife*, 3rd edition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 173.

and in Austria in 1955.[213] The connections between Paracelsus and Nazism run deep and extend to one of Nazism's most important authors – Erwin Guido Kolbenheyer – who wrote a trilogy on Paracelsus between 1917 and 1925 that made Paracelsus into a symbolic figure of what Kolbenheyer called "the philosophical conscience of the white race." The politics of the dancer Harald Kreutzberg, the performer of the St Vitus dancer in the Nazi propaganda film on Paracelsus remain unclear. He was a queer man but was not deported to concentration camps, though others in the artsworld were. First Kurt Joos left, then Laban, but like Mary Wigman and others, Kreutzberg stayed, and continued to perform as a part of the new national program of the Nazi Ministry of Propaganda.

The history by which Paracelsus became connected to dance art in the 20th century is a deeply troubling, deeply problematic history. In my own work, I am not seeking to rehabilitate Paracelsus from the association he gained with Nazism in the 20th century – I don't believe that the history of Paracelsus should, in the end, be isolated from the history of what he came to mean in later centuries. The argument presented in this thesis about the nature of bodies and their extension into media theoretically demands that what Paracelsus became through his writings is deeply relevant to what he – as an authorial figure rather than a living man – now means. Moreover, Anti-Semitism and the systematic expulsion and persecution of Jews was profoundly present in Paracelsus's own time, and anti-Jewish sentiments were present in Paracelsus's writings, as they were present in many writings of his time; thus his own works do not entirely push back against what the figure of Paracelsus became under Nazism.

Paracelsus's identity and a version of his narrative, as adopted by Nazism, return in a way to what Paracelsus himself theorized about influence and the control, or lack of control, human beings have over the larger consequences of their actions. When refracted through Artaud's sense of 'matter and materialization', there is a difficult truth to witness from this end of history about Paracelsus's ideas. In response to the dancing plague of 1518, Paracelsus wrote that when we act faithfully upon what we imagine, we create an invisible force that surpasses us, that extends beyond our control, and that has consequences far beyond the surfaces of our own bodies and the supposed limits of our

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[213] Bock, Hans-Michael and Tim Bergfelder. *The Concise Cinegraph: Encyclopaedia of German Cinema*. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 261.

own identities. Paracelsus's work has become, in our own time, indicative of the material consequences ideas can manifest when they can travel in the bodies of books through time. In the end, the lack of control each of us has over the consequences of actions and ideas is perhaps terrifying to behold; nonetheless, it is there. The unwieldiness of influence, the uncontainable ramifications of imagination, and the transmutational nature of ideas – though posited as faith-based disease forms in Paracelsus's writing – are in fact everywhere unfolding around us and into us and through us, surpassing the frameworks of lifespan, rippling through generations.

Conclusion.

On This That Completes the Work

No work of art may appear completely alive without becoming mere semblance, and ceasing to be a work of art. The life quivering in it must appear petrified and as if spellbound in a single moment. The life quivering within it is beauty, the harmony that flows through chaos and that only appears to tremble. What arrests this semblance, what holds life spellbound and disrupts the harmony, is the expressionless [das Ausdruckslose]. That quivering is what constitutes the beauty of the work; the paralysis is what defines its truth. For just as an interruption can, by a word of command, extract the truth from the speech of a liar, in the same way the expressionless compels the trembling harmony to stop and immortalizes that quivering through its objection [Einspruch]. In this immortalization the beautiful must vindicate itself, but it now seems to be interrupted in its vindication. The expressionless is the critical violence which, while unable to separate semblance from truth in art, prevents them from mingling. But it possesses this violence as a moral dictum. In the expressionless, the sublime violence of the true appears as it determines the symbolism of the existing universe according to the laws of the moral universe.[1]

- Walter Benjamin, *On Semblance*.

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[1] Benjamin, Walter. "On Semblance." *Selected Writings, vol. 1*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 224.

Within this thesis, 'the somatic' has been wielded as a means to explore how through the spellbinding of dance into book culture, the interdependency of thought and body has itself remained a quivering, moving force. The chapters have unfolded a narrative of early modern books that, through their approaches to the literary expression of dance, served to dispatch larger conceptions on embodiment. The associations between the Parisian printers Yolande Bonhomme, her son Jacques Kerver, and his translator/author colleague Jacques Gohory have along the way spoken to the poetics of personal happenstance through which book culture and the history of ideas in part emerges through the chance of family relations and the coincidence of acquaintances and friendships. This thesis endeavors to maintain such personal connections because they speak to a fundamental condition of embodiment: that which emerges from the physical facts of bodily presence and the interpersonal entwinements it produces. The material, social, and discursive conditions that influenced the production and reception of the works hhas been analyzed in this thesis beginning with that idea.

Furthermore, this thesis has sought to speak to what a particular history of the mediation of dance through the discourses of book culture might mean to the field of dance studies. As this thesis challenges traditional notions that delineate the dancing body's physical practice as separate from the physical practices of reading and writing, I have also sought to demonstrate in three intertwined case studies an example of how dance studies research can open to itself wider historyal considerations within its expanded field.[2] The

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[2] The concept of the 'extended field' derives from Rosalind Krauss's well-known essay "Sculpture in the Expanded Field." See: Krauss, Rosalind. "Sculpture in the Expanded Field." *October*, Vol. 8. (Spring, 1979): 30-44.

field of dance, being based in the body, can expand in its relations beyond the contours it takes in reified form. This thesis has sought to show how, through book culture, the very physicality of dance has been transmitted to new meanings on the page, has moved through the hands and imaginations of authors, and has been animated and reanimated in the minds of readers. Fundamentally, however, any approach to the contours of dance's delineation or non-delineation within and from its expanded field arises from the problem of delineating the body itself.

That being said, in this conclusion, I will seek to open this body of historically-rooted research back up to the reveries of literary and dance criticism. In so doing, it is my intention to initiate this thesis's entrance into a conversation that continues beyond these pages, and thereby lend this thesis its own expanded field of relations. To do so, I will veer toward some formative voices in dance and literary criticism in the 20th century, and thus endeavor to characterize the importance that questioning the body's delineation has continued to have, and how that fact continues to bring dance and literature into a continued implicit conversation.

1. The Delineation of Body from Act

To complete his poem *Among School Children,* in its eighth stanza Yeats wrote:

> O chestnut tree, great rooted blossomer,
> Are you the leaf, the blossom or the bole?
> O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
> How can we know the dancer from the dance?[3]

The isolation of body would demand its delineation, not only from other bodies, but from its very acts. Forms of art like dance are aimed directly as enacting the incompletion of that delineation, as was Yeats' poem. And moreover, Yeats cut the poem from himself before he drew it to completion; he laughed at himself from the start, othering himself into what he called "a sixty-year-old smiling public man." His self-description arouses an idea of delineation as something arising from the stuff of the normative—old men who are not teachers do not belong in schoolhouses. Yet, for all the completion, isolation, and

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[3] Yeats, William B. *The Tower*. (New York: Macmillan), 1928.

delineation that Yeats builds into the poem, both structurally and in its self-reflexive content, he leaves the physical end of the poem a faded unfinished line, a trickle of thought not severed from the continued rumination of a reader. Knowing the dancer from the dance, is, in the end, like knowing the author's from the reader's thoughts. George Bataille observed, "every human is connected to other humans, is only the expression of others. Whatever his ambition might be, a writer is never more than an expression of the human past, present, and future."[4] Perhaps Bataille goes too far, but his authorial point resounds nonetheless, as one can never truly tell where the author's intention isolates itself from one's own reading. Thus the reified form of the book begins to speak to how through actions and relations an ambiguity of isolation arises between *these thoughts* and *those thoughts*, *this body* and *that body*, *this perspective* and *that perspective.*

In *Among School Children*, Yeats wanders the space of a schoolhouse with the same intention (or as an imagined expansion) of what it is that drives him as a poet. The poet's questions, like children's questions, address the endlessly unfinished nature of delineation. Amongst dance artists, this poem (and its question of delineation) have been repeatedly cited for the way the poem touches upon what would be important to experimentation in dance in the 20th century.[5] To do that, Yeats only had to mention dance once, just at the end of varied reveries on Plato, Aristotle, shadows, Pythagoras, the muses, mothers, nuns, etc. The question Yeats raised about dance is core to the questions dancers ask about the existence of their chosen art: Where does dance reside in relation to its performer? What is it in the art of movement that matters? Yeats gave a simple answer:

> Both nuns and mothers worship images,
> But those the candles light are not as those
> That animate a mother's reveries,
> But keep a marble or a bronze repose.[6]

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[4] Bataille, Georges. *The Unfinished System of Nonknowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 236.

[5] As written by Peggy Phelan: "The idea of a 'neutral doer' had made frequent appearances throughout dance history. Yeats' famous question… is itself a consolidation of the notion that dance's beauty comes from the inseparability of the mover and the movement." See: Phelan, Peggy. "Introduction," *A Woman Who--: Essays, Interviews, Scripts,* by Yvonne Rainer (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press), 1999, 7.

[6] Yeats, *The Tower*, 1928.

Yeat's poem offers up the moving body and its art of movement to the idea of movement within the reveries through which ideas themselves come to pass.

There are many kinds of stillness. Statuesque arrest physically resists the movement that animates any response to it. Yet, Yeats' question on the isolation of dancer from dance proposed a different stillness in dancing, one perhaps there, but never identifiable, never classifiable – that is – the grounded, stable, holding point isolating body from act. There are, in the end, dances done and bodies passed, but what do we know of what completes the 'work' emergent precisely from the art that cannot exist unless a body and an act are tied together in immanent co-dependence? And more, what do we know of how such a question might be passed undiminished into the realm of writing?

In the short essay *On Semblance* written early in his career and unpublished in his lifetime, Walter Benjamin proposed that art can never be resident in living tissues, and that art and thought instead arise through the arrest that shatters the pulsating, breathing wholeness of living itself:

> Quivering life is never symbolic, because it lacks form; but the beautiful is even less so, because it is semblance. But that which has been spellbound, that which is petrified and mortified, is undoubtedly in a position to indicate the symbolic. It achieves this thanks to the power of the expressionless. For the expressionless destroys whatever legacy of chaos still survives in the beautiful semblance [*Schein*]: the false, the mendacious, the aberrant—in short, the absolute. It is this that completes the work by shattering it into fragments, reducing it to the smallest totality of semblance, a totality that is a great fragment taken from the true world, the fragment of a symbol.[7]

The coil Benjamin found at the center of thought and the avenues into it provided by art was that the substratal wholeness of the flesh (and the world) could only be fragmented into view as symbols; perception of reality necessitated arrest of the flow, arrest of flow shattered the essence of living. Such an arrest Benjamin called 'das Ausdruckslose' translated as 'the expressionless'.[8] For Benjamin, an investigation of 'the expressionless'

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[7] Benjamin, Walter. "On Semblance." *Selected Writings, vol. 1*., 224.

[8] As described by Arne Melberg, "he is of course alluding to the very Schein that Hegel claimed to be the sensory (re)presentation of the idea and that Nietzsche embraced as the only accessible reality." See: Melberg, Arne. "The Work of Art in the Age of Ontological Speculation: Walter Benjamin Revisited." 2005 *Walter Benjamin and Art* (New York: Continuum),2005, 96.

was an act of thinking around what cannot be thought about—the paralysis upon which thought depends but that which it cannot truly turn toward, which it truly cannot express.

In the analysis of the art historian Aby Warburg, this idea gained a greater (if ironic) tactility through a particular example: Warburg identified his own sense of what Benjamin called 'the expressionless' in Renaissance paintings as the tension between flowing garments and the moving body beneath them. What Warburg found as the expressionless was neither the beautifully depicted body nor its flowing garment, but the presence of recognizable tugging and pulling implied but not actually present as paint on the canvas. For Warburg, the implied space – itself with no independent expression and captured as a still moment in movement between body and garment – brought Renaissance painting into direct touch with the world to which it referred. Warburg saw that the representative painting and the tactile world shared in the reality that form does not necessarily arise from direct observation. In reality, as in painting, form appears as a consequence of the gaps between perceivable flows. The *expressionless* that Benjamin offered as proxy for what cannot be thought Warburg instead conceived as coimplication between reified forms. This was, for Warburg, also how painting most fundamentally sought to cross time: in the perceivability of movement that was, itself, not movement, but merely implied, equally, in visual art as in life. In other words, for Warburg, the perceivable pull of garments against the legs of a nymph collapsed the difference between representation and real life by being mere implication to be inferred in both. As implication, Warburg's idea thus drives inside Yeats' question about the dancer and the dance to ask further about the emergence of dancer and dance, not in delineation from each other, but as equally compelled into perceivable existence through their relation to each other. Such a question ceases to be a particularly human question, it casts the problem of human back into the elements, which is (funnily enough) exactly where Benjamin's thinking also ventured as he continued trying to work out this problem of semblance from later on in his writings.

In the lauded essay Benjamin wrote on *Goethe's Elective Affinities*, before the part where he went into a massive debate on Kant and marriage and the sibling-hood of art and philosophy, he said this:

> …And with one stroke, an invaluable criterion of judgment springs out for him; only now can he raise the basic critical question of whether the semblance/luster [Schein] of the truth content is due to the material content,

or the life of the material content to the truth content. For as they set themselves apart from each other in the work, they decide on its immortality. In this sense the history of works prepares for their critique, and thus historical distance increases their power. If, to use a simile, one views the growing work as a burning funeral pyre, then the commentator stands before it like a chemist, the critic like an alchemist. Whereas, for the former, wood and ash remain the sole objects of his analysis, for the latter only the flame itself preserves an enigma: that of what is alive. Thus, the critic inquires into the truth, whose living flame continues to burn over the heavy logs of what is past and the light ashes of what has been experienced.[9]

Returning to his conception of the *Schein,* here Benjamin uses the chemical, elemental nature of Goethe's *Elective Affinities* to question the causal relationships between matter and truth in works of art, finding instead a difference between commentators and critics, and thus a difference of perspective. In other words, Benjamin seeks to begin on Goethe's grounds, with Goethe's investigation of the thinking of the human back into the elements. Thus, Benjamin inflects and reflects upon his critical position, he attempts to implicate himself, to both speak from exterior and from interior. If the distance between Benjamin and Goethe's *Elective Affinities* lends the work its power, nonetheless Benjamin seeks inside of it. Sometimes Benjamin knows this, other times he does not. He knows it when he writes,

> The umbrage taken at every critique of art that supposedly stands too close to the work, by those who do not find in that critique an afterimage of their own self-complacent reveries, testifies to so much ignorance of the essence of art that a period for which the rigorously determined origin of art is becoming ever more vivid does not owe this complaint a refutation.[10]

He goes on, arguing for a specific multiplicity in the ideal: "The ideal can represent itself solely in a multiplicity. The ideal of the problem, however, does not appear in a multiplicity of problems." His point is (somewhat) made as the idea that there is no question which, in the reach of its inquiry, encompasses the unity of philosophy. The truth thus lurks endlessly in the means; this is why Benjamin points to art as the sister of philosophy, as philosophy's only material engendering. The ideal question is pushed back from physicality; in its place, multiplicity speaks to the movement of garments over legs.

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[9] Benjamin, Walter. "Goethe's Elective Affinities." *Selected Writings: volume 1, 1913-1926* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), 298.
[10] Ibid., 333.

"It is this that completes the work," wrote Benjamin, "by shattering it into fragments." Yet perhaps those fragments are not the pieces and parts, breaking down into symbols. Perhaps the fragments are the delineations of ourselves, which are only ever contingent upon the next moment when such a delineation might be transgressed into an incompletion that unfolds a work into its own space, where for a brief and magical moment, it is contained by none of us, and within none of our corporealities.

2. To Transgress Delineation

At least, explicitly, Georges Bataille didn't have much to say on the completion of works or the delineation of bodies. Explicitly, he did have a lot to say about sexually explicit art-works and acts. Bataille's far-reaching investigation of taboo and transgression extended from incest and orgies, to the labor economy of prostitution, to erotic artworks, to the sexual implications of the crucified Christ. Within his writings on erotics, Bataille said that "transgression does not deny the taboo but transcends it and completes it."[11] There is where his thoughts on bodies and completion can be explored fruitfully for my inquiry: through his conception of taboo and its completion and transcendence through transgression.

Perhaps surprisingly, the completion enacted by transcendent transgression was, for Bataille, ultimately the imposition of order: "Continuity is reached when boundaries are crossed," he wrote; "the most constant characteristic of the impulse I have called transgression is to make order out of what is essentially chaos."[12] Bataille ended up articulating that any transgression against taboo was itself an extension of the fundamental, underlying nature of transgression itself. "Transgression becomes a principle of an organised disorder," Bataille explained; "such an organisation is founded upon work but also and at the same time upon the discontinuity of beings."[13] In other words, transgression had its roots in the fact of embodiment (the discontinuity of beings), and a consequent

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[11] Bataille, Georges. *Erotism* (San Francisco: City Lights Books), 63.
[12] Ibid., 119.
[13] Ibid.

human imposition of continuity upon a chaos produced by a physical world of isolated, differentiated bodies.

Bataille's theory rests on his own ability to tell the dancer from the dance. We have to be able to see the delineation between where the structure of the dance begins and the chaotic 'body' of the non-constructed world ends to agree with Bataille. Assuming our agreement, Bataille then essentially says that the nature of transgression is to render the unknowable real into a dancing bear. There is an underlying transvestitism to his work; he believes that ideas dress the world up in clothes that post-factually identify it. He believes that sense is a human thing laid overtop that then penetrates, not so much into the world where we have laid it, but refractively, *into us*. Here Benjamin and Bataille depart from each other, as for Bataille the moral universe and existing universe do no share planes of existence—the moral is, instead, an attempt to smear a uniformity of color over the nondescript hues of a primordial soup.

Bataille doesn't answer the underlying question of how to tell the difference between the dancer and the dance, the transgression and the real. The severing of human from world for him is never fully articulated; it runs through his work as its own transgression. It transgresses him. And as such, Bataille's concept of transgression offers its in: one can enter into philosophy (as how Paracelsus investigated embodiment through disease) through its problems, cracks, and mistakes. Because, unable to solve the riddle of bodies and their delineation, Bataille does the next best thing: he turns to writing. He folds his work back on itself through how he writes it. He layers the riddles of meaning over each other and into each other. His writing method does not solve his inexplicable severances, it uses severance itself as a perforation in paper, a means to fold. His writing shows transgression as an ever-incomplete thing.

This solution is everywhere in art. Unable truly to overcome the severance of subject and object in art, artists refract the two with mirrored surfaces. The work folds back on its delineation and the subject goes into the object goes into the subject ad infinitum. But it begins with the severance, and this is what Bataille was trying to point out: order depends on severance, severance is always violent, it is transgression… but what he got wrong was the idea that it was human, and as such, exterior to the world itself. Bataille didn't try to address the non-severance of *severance itself* from the real, the chaos of the

world. He needed human culture to be some kind of alien force. And yet, human beings remain just another example, amongst many, that articulate how the rupture of severance itself brings the whole world into thought and thus into movement. The trick is not ours, it is the world's, that from within the world we come to think of ourselves as alien, as othered, by the natural, embodied position of subjectivity through which we find ourselves assuming that everything but ourselves is exterior.

Bataille's argument roots the sense of alienation – one that we augment through society – in our 'discontinous' bodies. His argument places us within the social discontinuousness emergent from the divergent particular perspectives of our own particular eyes, tongue, ears, nose, and skin. Yet Bataille is not consistent with this idea, as he shows in what I earlier quoted of him (as I will do again): "every human is connected to other humans, is only the expression of others. Whatever his ambition might be, a writer is never more than an expression of the human past, present, and future."[14] In such a statement, Bataille upended his own ability to transgress how completely he, as a writer, was transgressed by the thoughts, responses, ideas, and bodies of his readers. He made a continuity of the discontinuity he saw in bodies. To transgress, then, was for Bataille not a means toward freedom, but a means toward union with others through the physicality of thought that though produced in society, transgresses its ruptures.

So how then can we know the dancer from the dance, the artist from the art, the book from the performance? How then can we know the endpoint of one body and the beginning of another, the endpoint of one work of art, one act, one thing, and the beginning of another? How do we even know ends from beginnings? What is the point, where is the point, of our delineation?

3. Body Lies and Sensual Truth

In an interview with Gerald Siegmund in 2002, the well-known dance artist Jérôme Bel cited the statement of another choreographer. Somewhat melodramatically, he described how "a choreographer who shall remain nameless said: 'The body does not

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[14] Bataille, Georges. *Erotism*, 119.

lie.'"[15] Bel then disputed the unnamed artist: "Such a remark is based on that disgusting old modernist myth bogged down in Judeo-Christianity."[16] Bel's remark set him up to articulate the nature of the body's deceit. He did so by defining a lie of the body as the inauthenticity produced in it through its subjection to constructed human contexts: "the body is not the sanctuary of truth, authenticity or uniqueness. It is deeply subjugated to culture, politics, and history."[17] In other words, bodies are socialized and institutionalized and thus rendered inauthentic long before choreographers prescribe dance movements for them.

Hanging over Bel's interview – though perhaps not intentionally alluded to – is the specter of the seminal modernist choreographer Martha Graham, who decades prior had presented the idea that, "movement never lies".[18] Graham's framing of her own work was saturated in her overtly expressed pursuit of truth, authenticity, and uniqueness in the body and thus the self through dance. Despite her different opinion, stated years before that of Bel, Graham was similar to Bel in her proclaiming of the value of her work by pitting it against what she saw as an endemic perspective on the body that was likewise religiously saturated. In her case, however, this was more specifically the Protestant idea of the body and its expressivity as indicative of inconstancy, seduction, and tantalization. She snubbed the idea by simply claiming the body as honest, a likewise Protestant value. Almost ironically, Bel's statement against the truthfulness of the body and its dance suggested instead that he saw a unique truthfulness in his perspective as an artist of dance. His statement implied that he countered other choreographers' claims for the body as authentic with his authentic point of view. The difference between Bel and Graham's statements comes down to the fact that Bel saw truthfulness in dance art as necessitating the admission that dance was infiltrated by the demise of body-truth as a result of human social and political existence; Graham instead proclaimed her dances as giving space to bodies for manifesting an honesty of expression. Either way, the two choreographers sought truth as artists through their means of evading the problem of deceit. And, either way, both seemed

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[15] Lepecki, A., ed. *DANCE: Documents of Contemporary Art* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2012), 74
[16] Ibid.
[17] Lepecki, A., *DANCE: Documents of Contemporary Art*, 74
[18] Graham, Martha. *Blood Memory* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 4.

to feel that their understanding of truth necessitated that they go beyond just dancing or making dances to speak of it in words.

As even now the act of dancing is brought into meaning through its relation to words (as Bel and Graham displayed by speaking their thoughts and thus contextualizing their dances), the present artform continues to be, in part, an art conjured in language. The claim made by Bel and many others of the body as "bogged down" by its subjection "to culture, politics, and history" raises the question as to what then Bel might be doing through his cultural, political, and historical influence if not building a construct through which bodies might thereby be further bogged down.

Bel's argument articulates the contextualization of the body as antithetical to its purity. In this research, I seek to do the opposite. That being the case, I propose quite simply that despite what Bel said, his so saying was nonetheless a means of partaking in discourse and contributing to facilitating a social sense of embodiment. I argue that a body becomes by what it is mired in and what it relates to – I propose a body as fundamentally relational. Nonetheless, Bel's critique of the bogging down of body through context – through the body's responsiveness to inference and implication, its vulnerability to sociality and environment, its integration with mind, judgement, and the ability to change both – is shared, in fact, by many writers in history who called upon dance in written attempts to warn of the inconsistency and problematic nature of the body. Ultimately, Bel's argument is thereby perhaps one of the most profoundly Judeo-Christian arguments a person could make about a body; it even harkens back to the myth of Adam and Eve and the Tree of Knowledge.

As this is a thesis that has discussed the history of dance as expressed through writing, it is particularly the last component in Bel's list – that of history – that becomes important to consider here. This thesis is the product of research that has sought to address what of history infiltrates and implicates bodies, how historical narratives of dance are carried in the transference between books and bodies, and how it is that they together carry it. As earlier quoted from Benjamin (thus calling Hegel to the page), "the ideal can represent itself solely in a multiplicity". Yet "the ideal of the problem, however, does not appear in a multiplicity of problems." Likewise, this thesis offers up mere splinters of

history with the conviction that the investigation of multiple tiny fragments might point to the same problem and might be answered with the same basic idea.

4. Unfinishing

This small history has lumbered under the absence of dancing bodies and the necessary catastrophe of rendering dance into words and images, thus mirroring the condition of the books that inspired this research. This document has been an attempt to consider books as mutually implicated with bodies in the making what I can only call the somatic interior. I have herein argued for the experience of embodiment in the somatic sense as one networked, influenced, and implicated with the world. The first-person experience, in other words, is never just first-person. This thesis speaks to my disagreement with Bel in considering the influence of the world and all its human constructions on the body as a downfall from truth. If Bel was speaking of the body as laden with societal influence, he was speaking also of the body as laden with a self that is not constructed in a vacuum. Against attesting to social or societal influence as a bringer of untruthfulness to bodies, I propose it as essential to experiencing them, and I propose, as well, that such an idea is present in writings on dance and the body extending far back into history.

History is a thing never finished. Thus history becomes a practice through which we attempt to address the limits of corporeal existence by doing our best with these physical conditions, again and again - refining, re- conceiving, re-doing, re-writing, re-telling, re-establishing, re-assessing. The physical practice of keeping history is, as such, resident in languages, in songs, in forms of writing, and of course in rituals. Only some such practices adhere to the idea that they must remain solidly tied to their original forms. Quite often, what we pass from generation to generation in practice is up for change. And so, the history of physical practice is a history about making history and accepts that making history provides the very means by which predecessors are overturned by the subsequent generations who pick up the mantle, take what they have learned, and do something new with it.

It is on this note that I will conclude the conclusion: the completion of the work is precisely what provides for its incompletion. The moment a published, printed, shelved, and thus finished book is picked up, it becomes unfinished. The moment the completed

dance is performed and witnessed, it becomes unfinished. Such is the nature of reception: to upend the finished state of any completed work with the dissolution of that work into the bodies and minds of others, and thereby into the social milieu through which the work's intactness will be dissolved into the networks that will carry its factitude as an historical object within the movement of its influence. The delineation by which bodies and reified forms are isolated from their acts is the means by which the dance gains the liberty to move and slip from body to body, from mediation to mediation, materially, as movement.

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I declare that I have referenced all resources and aids that were used and assure that the paper is authored independently on this basis.

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