CORPOREAL SELFHOOD: VISCERAL IDENTITY IN EARLY MODERN MEDICINE AND SHAKESPEAREAN TEXT

by

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Abstract

The body is an integrated participant in identity formation, and the autonomous interpretation of its visceral matter by the individual subject provides an opportunity to construct a notion of selfhood grounded in the fabric of the body. Its transhistorical and interdisciplinary presence as the physical mediator of human experience situates corporeal materiality within a nexus of critical discourses. Within literature, the body is often subject to metaphorical, rhetorical, and poetic readings which tend to displace its viscera into symbols and emblems. However, the corporeality crafted throughout Shakespearean text exposes, satirizes, and refutes these conceptual readings by confronting their immaterial interpretations with reassertions of the physical body. My work holds that conceptual displacement poses a detriment to the legibility of the physical body by usurping its homeostatic meanings with more easily manipulated allegorical ones. This thesis examines the ways in which Shakespearean bodies reject conceptualization and reassert corporeal materialism as a component of the self.

Before exploring the examples of corporeal selfhood embedded throughout Shakespearean characterization, the first chapter situates these readings within the context of the early modern body. By investigating the scientific advancements heralded by anatomists like Andreas Vesalius, this chapter traces the dissemination of body knowledge to a wider public from the mid to late sixteenth century. Bookending Shakespeare's life and work, this history moves from pre-Vesalian foundations in Galenic tradition to the application of Vesalian empiricism in mid seventeenth century imperatives of *nosce te ipsum*, "to know thyself" through corporeal self-exploration. *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* provides a case study

in the individuated practice of corporeal self-creation through autonomous engagement with the experience of surgery.

The close readings of Shakespearean text move from the boundaries of the bodily exterior to the inner workings of the vital body via *Coriolanus*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *King Lear*. Chapter 2 puts the visceral body in dialogue with the rhetorical body politic, using the wounds of Coriolanus to explore the interpreted public body, the bodily interior as a sanctuary of selfhood, and the continuity of self with the generative maternal body. Chapter 3 reads the fragmented body in *Titus Andronicus* as a condensed unit of meaning, which contains and transmits identity in the corporeal unit severed from homeostatic purpose, whilst reframing the corporeally altered remaining body within adaptive modes of agency. Chapter 4 unpacks the homeostatic mechanisms of form and function relations underscoring anatomy and physiology in the context of *King Lear*'s linguistic vivisections and reunifies the human body with its animalistic continuity in nature.

Although its textual bodies are early modern, the transhistorical performance of Shakespearean drama revives the historical experience of corporeality in the present physical bodies of modern actors. Reading the bodies of these texts within the context of their contemporary medical understanding illuminates more nuanced elements of their characterization and facilitates a more continuous view of medical history as an inherent component in humanity's ongoing development, rather than an isolated oddity of the past. By reasserting the visceral into readings of humanity through the Shakespearean lens, we allow the body and its parts to retain value, not as representations of other ideas, but as the manifest matter of humanity.

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Introduction to Corporeal Selfhood in the Shakespearean Body

Hans Holbein's 1533 painting of *The Ambassadors* encapsulates the early modern period's emphasis on self improvement via the mastery of worldly knowledge (see fig. 0.1). Globes, compasses, books, and musical instruments displayed between Jean de Dinteville and Georges de Selve boast humanity's capacity for godliness via tools enabling ownership of nature through comprehension built on control. Amid the books of explanatory certainty and maps set on stabilizing the seas, one science slips outside the reach of human control.



Figure 0.1. Hans Holbein the Younger, *Jean de Dinteville and Georges de Selve (The Ambassadors)* 1533. Courtesy of The National Gallery, London.

In the foreground of the painting, an ominous anamorphic invites a shift in perspective to make out the large skull looming before the subjects. The presence of the skull in the study is not unusual in terms of *memento mori* tradition and, as the opening chapter of this thesis will address, it inevitably bifurcates into both scientific object and allegorical symbol.[1] What is unique about Holbein's particular *memento mori*, however, is the active manifestation of the *memento mori* tradition into a practical exercise. To see the skull, one must physically move into a place where they are disoriented to everything else in the image. The tools of certainty must be skewed into meaninglessness for mortality to be fully realized. Holbein's reminder of death asserts itself in the foreground where it refuses to be integrated into vain human pursuits and instead demands the dissolution of human knowledge.

Holbein's contextualization of the mortal image within the encyclopedic display of intellectual pursuits also grounds the symbol in its medical context. Whilst fulfilling its duties as *memento mori*, the skull's presence alongside other tools representing cartography, astronomy, music, and mathematics also situates the skull as the representative tool of the anatomist. In such a reading, anatomy occupies a unique realm amid the other studies as one not fully conquered. From the standard perspective, the anamorphic skull stands for a field of science which is difficult to stabilize or look directly into. Perhaps it is the anxiety of looking inward, the inherent strangeness of using the brain to think about the brain, or the central conflict of man versus mortality which makes the study of medicine so unlike other pursuits allowing a greater sense of objective detachment. The Holbein skull combines the fears of mortality with the inherent instability of the body to reflect, not only a culture of popular

[1] Rose Marie San Juan, "The Turn of the Skull: Andreas Vesalius and the Early Modern Memento Mori," in *Art History* 35 (2012) https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-8365.2012.00932.x (accessed July 2020).

mortality awareness, but the unique struggle of the anatomist to stabilize a constantly fluctuating and disintegrating subject.

Shakespeare brings this exercise in the experiential art of the body to the stage where physical embodiment enables an intimate engagement with the wounded, dismembered, and acutely mortal body. The theatrical realm, in its fantasies and freedoms, allows for scientifically impossible case studies on the character of the body and the self it engenders through corporeal manifestation. As Holbein's anamorphic skull illustrates, the body requires a dramatic shift in perspective to be fully understood. Its physical persistence, not just as a mediator of experience, but as a participant in the act of being, demands that the body must be understood as both subject and object, anatomist and cadaver, actor and character, self and other.

This thesis sets out to establish a corporeal selfhood borne of pre-disciplinary early modern medicine and fostered by the cultural response to the Vesalian body reflected in the corporeally driven characterizations throughout the Shakespearean canon. Corporeal selfhood describes a mode of identity formation in which the subject utilizes their physical body not as a passive tool, but rather as an integrated participant in the creation of the self. It can be understood theoretically as a form of constructivism which engages conscious agency in the personal interpretation and ownership of the body. In this sense, corporeal selfhood extends the realms available to personalization beyond the more overtly controllable tonsorial and cosmetic exterior planes to include a similar, if less direct, engagement with one's unique bodily interior.

By reasserting the visceral body into the discussion of identity, corporeal selfhood resists the metaphorical body to insist that its viscera contain inherent meaning without the need for conceptual displacement. Throughout this thesis, Shakespearean bodies use

corporeal materialism to react to and protect themselves from the rhetorical, poetic, and socio-political modes by which the body is conceptually usurped. In its discussion of corporeally validated identity in opposition to rhetorical manipulation, this thesis makes use of the term "authenticity," not as a claim to philosophical notions of truth, but as a way of specifying meaning which is relatively stabilized by the material evidence of the flesh. The notion of an "authentic" self, in this context, refers to a personal sense of identity which uses internal visceral grounding to counteract external projections by others.

The three plays most suited to this discussion of Shakespearean corporeal selfhood are *Coriolanus, Titus Andronicus,* and *King Lear*. Each provides significant instances of characterization built on and driven by the characters' engagement with the visceral corpus. These texts approach body knowledge in unique ways which reflect the shifting perceptions of early modern anatomy. Scientific taxonomies and cultural perceptions influence the notion of the body throughout the early modern period. Shakespeare's bodies participate in this fluctuating discourse by investigating dissection culture, subverting the body politic, breaking the body into parts, and ultimately investing meaning in the functionality of living bodies.

To trace Shakespeare's engagement with body knowledge, it is more productive to arrange this investigation conceptually, rather than chronologically. My work moves through the body in its own dissection process: beginning at the surface to define the boundaries of the flesh with *Coriolanus* before moving inward to examine wholeness and interconnectivity in *Titus*. Once the body has been fully mapped through complete anatomization, the question of physiology may be addressed. *King Lear* reflects on the forms revealed in the anatomy and then extrapolates how they function to create and maintain life through homeostasis.

The contexts of Shakespearean bodies are interdisciplinary by nature. As such, this thesis begins with an overview of the scientific roots underscoring early modern dissection

culture. The first chapter on Vesalian medicine constructs the early modern body as both science and art. Shakespeare's investment of identity into the viscera of wounded, dismembered, and deteriorating bodies participates in what Jonathan Sawday refers to as "the culture of dissection": a drive throughout the Renaissance to locate the body at an interdisciplinary junction. According to Sawday, "The body had to be 'placed' within a nexus of complementary discourses, so that the full symbolic significance would be appreciated by those gathered to watch its progressive disintegration."[2] If symbolic significance is a necessary component of the scientific dissection of the body, the complementary dramatic enactments of anatomization on stage must reciprocate by taking into account the medical and visceral readings accompanying textual and performative bodies. Richard Sugg refers to this cultural exchange between science and drama as "the popular market value of anatomy."[3] The early modern body was a site of interdisciplinary cultural exploration and exchange both instigated and perpetuated by its breakage.

After the contextualizations of Chapter 1, the remaining chapters turn to the three Shakespearean texts. Their ordering, whilst achronological, reflects the medical categorizations of bodily matter with which each play is most readily concerned. The scale of anatomical structure classification situates "organs" after "tissues" in the hierarchy from cells to systems in which each category is made up of the previous. Cells form tissues, tissues form organs, and organs integrate operations into the systems which work to maintain homeostasis.[4] In this sense, *Coriolanus*, *Titus*, and *King Lear* lend themselves to analyses of the body as tissue, organ (part), and system respectively.

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[2] Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995), 63.
[3] Richard Sugg, *Murder After Death: Literature and Anatomy in Early Modern England* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2007), 13.
[4] Alistair Farley, Ella McLafferty, and Charles Hendry. "Cells, Tissues, Organs and Systems." *Nursing Standard (through 2013)* 26, no. 52 (August 2012): 40-5.

The second chapter, on *Coriolanus,* applies the effects of dissection culture to individual bodies with a focus on the initial breach of the flesh. Coriolanus exemplifies the corporeally constructed self in his visceral struggle against the usurpations of political metaphor. The play's central corporeal conflict between internally constructed and externally ascribed meaning also makes it an ideal starting point for an investigation of the perimeters of the body, its permeability, and its vulnerability to infection. The scars accenting these bodily perimeters localize the delineations of interiority and exteriority. As rhetoricians displace this scar tissue from flesh into symbolism, Coriolanus struggles to keep his wounds integrated within his corporeal self. This chapter maps the trajectory whereby the tension between the metaphorical body and the visceral one can culminate in nothing less than a body torn to pieces.

Taking Coriolanus' ultimate dismemberment as its conceptual impetus, the third chapter moves back in time but forward in concept. *Titus* fits after *Coriolanus* in terms of dissection steps as more of the bodily interior is explicitly exposed in the dismemberment process, moving deeper inside the body. *Titus* also follows on *Coriolanus* taxonomically because the scars and surface wounds of *Coriolanus* focus on tissues whereas the amputations of *Titus* move up to a more macroscopic view of parts made up of tissues. As the discussion of the body moves on a trajectory from the layered systemic body to a severed cross-section, this chapter uses the severed parts of *Titus* to expose the myth of corporeal wholeness via the body's visceral disintegration.

The fourth and final chapter reintegrates and revivifies the dissected corpus to examine, through *King Lear,* the vital functions of the living homeostatic body. The form and function relationship touched on throughout the previous chapters shifts to the forefront of *Lear*'s homeostatic discourse. Whereas the form/function relationship in *Titus* focuses on an

isolation from homeostasis, it lends continuity and integration to the bodies of *Lear*. In the later play, Shakespeare's corporeal language links the body's composite parts to their interdependent roles within the whole-body system. Although one dialectic pairing drives each reading, the interconnectedness of all states of being remains relevant, in varying degrees, to each mode of corporeal engagement. The crossing, inverting, and destabilizing of these otherwise straightforward dialectics is the critical deconstructivism necessary to locate the elements of selfhood enmeshed in the corporealities of Shakespearean bodies.

Deconstructing Bodily Binaries

Ania Loomba establishes a binary "between physical attributes of the body (such as skin colour) and the inner qualities of a person (such as religious faith and morality)."[5] By creating this dichotomy between "physical" and "inner," Loomba implicitly restricts "physical attributes of the body" to the exterior realm and relegates the equally physical bodily interior to the realm of the conceptual. In this model, livers and blood vessels are usurped by moral codes and personalities. Since Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, inwardness has been largely recast as a force or state of being which may peripherally invoke the body, but which fails to fully account for its physical makeup.[6]

The body cannot be severed from its socio-cultural meanings any more than it can be displaced from its materiality. David Hillman identifies the roots of this paradox in a reliance on the visceral body even as language dematerializes its meaning. Hillman explains:

> Somewhere in the course of the sixteenth century, the word 'inwardness,' for example, began to lose its primary meaning as 'entrails,' gradually coming to mean 'interiority, inner

[5] Ania Loomba, "Identities and Bodies in Early Modern Studies," in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment: Gender, Sexuality, and Race*, ed. Valerie Traub (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 235.
[6] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). See also Katharine Eisaman Maus, *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

> essence.' But the earlier meaning continued to shadow the later; for if the period ushered in a shift away from the notion of the embodied nature of the self, it was a move that paradoxically could not do without the body as the essential other of this new self.[7]

The entanglement of selfhood with the material of the body, even in theories which rely on it only out of opposition, permeates the transhistorical development of both body and self from early modernity onward.

This thesis contends that the physical body contributes as much to identity in its material depth as the manifold meanings it carries by way of metaphor.[8] The incorporeal ideas derived from the body are a valuable component of identity formation, but they must be considered in tandem with the physical corporeality of the body so that the former's displacement of the latter is reorganized into a balanced collaboration of concept and material.

The organizing principles of this thesis are a series of interconnected binaries which illustrate, through their methodical deconstruction, the integral role of corporeality in identity formation. The two central binaries which link all others back to the core concept of corporeal selfhood are subject/object and self/other. Branching off these, peripheral binaries provide specialized foundations to each chapter. Chapter 1 begins by blurring the line between science and art through a brief history of the medical field's interdisciplinary roots. Chapter 2 destabilizes the notions of interiority and exteriority via the surface wounds of *Coriolanus*. Chapter 3 utilizes the dismembered bodies of *Titus Andronicus* to trace the fluctuating categorizations of part and whole. Finally, Chapter 4 reaches into the living body

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[7] David Hillman, *Shakespeare's Entrails: Belief, Scepticism and the Interior of the Body* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 4.

[8] See Jennifer C. Vaught, *Rhetorics of Bodily Disease and Health in Medieval and Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010) for the role of metaphor in the medieval and early modern development of the body.

to explore the intimate relationship between form and function alongside its parallel binary of anatomy and physiology.

Within each chapter, these binaries are interrogated, deconstructed, and reevaluated in terms of their influence on notions of both body and self. Often, a kind of Hegelian dialectic is formed whereby the supposedly oppositional forces synthesize a new way of thinking through their collision. In other cases, the binary itself is revealed to instead be a spectrum with the capacity to engender elements of both "extremes" simultaneously and to various degrees. To identify corporeal selfhood in the Shakespearean body, the deconstruction of these conceptual and corporeal binaries is necessary to move past standard assumptions and reach the organic, fluid, and interconnected perspective the body requires.

Placing Presentism in a Continuum

This thesis is largely historicist in its methodology, but nonetheless relies on a modified presentism to read text within its historical moment and place the moment within its ongoing trajectory into the present. Greenblatt's contextualizing New Historicism forms the foundation by situating the text within its contemporary time period and eschewing modern projections.[9] Whilst the textual vehicles for this thesis are Shakespeare's works, the central reading of the project is on the human body. As such, both the plays and the body must be understood as products of their own time. However, the transhistorical persistence of the body combined with the incremental development of medicine requires an acknowledgement that the body's history is never isolated to either past or present.

[9] Stephen Greenblatt and Catherine Gallagher, *Practicing New Historicism* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

As Terence Hawkes argues, "History results from a never-ending dialogue between past and present." Hawkes urges that the literary historian should remain linked to the now via "an engagement with/acknowledgment of the past in order to better understand ourselves in the now, where we've come from, and where we're going."[10] Rather than isolating past medicine from present medicine as a purely historicist approach might, a modified approach, which I call "Continuum Presentism" allows the history of the body to be taken as an unbroken trajectory of steadily developing trial and error from antiquity to modernity. Because the body has always existed, but carries a fluctuating legibility depending on its contemporary medical definitions, both the cultural context of historicism and the transhistorical link of "Continuum Presentism" are necessary to accurately read the perpetuity of the human body.

This approach builds on Ewan Fernie's transhistorical presentism. Fernie challenges the temporal notion of presence by engaging "a deliberate synthesis of presentism's commitment to 'the now' and historicism's orientation to what is 'other'"[11] to acknowledge an organic "range of human presences."[12] In locating Shakespeare in the present, Fernie specifically links the dramatic character to a "'real' human being," implicitly situating the presence of Shakespeare within the corporeality of the modern actor's body.[13] The manifestation of non-temporal characters from early modern text into present bodies in modern performance illuminates the dissolution of linear temporality by the transhistorical persistence of the human body. As such, this thesis will occasionally draw on modern

[10] Terence Hawkes, *Shakespeare in the Present* (London: Routledge, 2002), 3.
[11] Ewan Fernie, "Shakespeare and the Prospect of Presentism," in *Shakespeare Survey* 58 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 169.
[12] Ibid, 177.
[13] Ibid.

performance and modern medical understandings to illustrate the transhistorical nature of corporeality.

One element of New Historicism which lends particular resonance to this thesis is the interdisciplinary priority of Cultural Poetics. In his "Shakespearean Negotiations," Greenblatt refers to works of art as "the products of collective negotiation and exchange."[14] As Chapter 1 explores, the medical understanding of the body is both art and science dependent on collaborative negotiation. The literary and dramatic arts which respond to their contemporary scientific developments form a collaborative interdisciplinary dialectic. In its prioritization of "reciprocal relations between text and context, literature and history,"[15] Cultural Poetics provides a means of reading both medicine and literature as equal contributors to corporeal understanding. The methodologies of anatomists and poets are both crucial components in the development of the human body. Shakespearean bodies are written with an integral awareness of their contemporary definitions of intersectional scientific, social, cultural, and personal corporealities.

Albert Tricomi's Cultural Historicism prioritizes diversity of texts and interpretive modes to circumvent a "cerebral, inveterately suspicious manner of reading, as if all texts spoke a repressive language from the center."[16] Instead, Tricomi suggests cultural historians must strive to read texts "symbolically, processually, and diachronically from multiple perspectives"[17] to more cohesively map transhistorical and interdisciplinary meanings. I propose that the body requires a similar treatment to facilitate an understanding which

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[14] Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) vii.
[15] Michael Davidson, *On the Outskirts of Form: Practicing Cultural Poetics* (Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 2011) 12.
[16] Albert Tricomi, *Reading Tudor-Stuart Texts through Cultural Historicism* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996) 156.
[17] Ibid.

encompasses the historical body, not as a discrete object of the past, but as a participant in the continuum of medical revelation which reaches into the present.

The model of Cultural Poetics is also conducive to reinforcing the social undercurrent of interdisciplinary work. As Greenblatt describes, "In this model, social energy moves swiftly and smoothly from sphere to sphere through silent transactions."[18] This notion of a social economy for the exchange of not only concrete ideas, but the feelings, pressures, and trends encapsulated by "energy" illustrates the sociocultural interconnectivity fueling the development of bodily understanding across medical and dramatic spheres.

This transhistorical body is not limited to performance theory and instead asserts itself across corporeal discourses. Michael C. Schoenfeldt identifies a continuity of corporeal experience which remains persistent despite the fluctuations of medical theory. As Schoenfeldt argues, "Bodies have changed little throughout history, even though the theories of their operations vary enormously across time and culture." He identifies the consistent vessel linking bodies across time in the language of embodied experience "and its profoundly sentient terminology."[19] Language offers an ideal medium for the investigation of the transhistorical body because of its tendency to carry meaning beyond the obsolescence of the theories from which the terminology originated. Although Galenic humoralism has yielded to the medical advancements of the centuries, its "near-poetic vocabulary of felt corporeal experience" still contributes communicative meaning to physical sensation.[20]

To encompass the breadth of corporeal experience throughout medicine and culture, this analysis occasionally touches on modern medicine and performance where it becomes relevant to exemplify the transhistorical continuity of the human body. This is a crucial

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[18] Stephen Greenblatt, *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture* (London: Routledge, 1992) 154.
[19] Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 6.
[20] Schoenfeldt, 3.

component of the work as it reasserts the history of medicine as an ongoing, evolving science in which the past is not an isolated event, but a building block on which modern medicine relies. In addition, the inclusion of modern performance analyses within this discussion of corporeality offers necessary reference points for the corporeal embodiment of otherwise purely textual characters.

Establishing a Critical Starting Point

The aim of this thesis is to read the body as an integral component of the self. As such, the Shakespearean bodies under discussion beyond the Vesalian cadavers of Chapter 1 are not always necessarily medicalized, nor do they necessitate the presence of physicians to be interpreted. Instead, the focus is on a personal, individuated sense of corporeal self which is influenced, but not dictated, by the authority of medical knowledge. Throughout the history of medicine, this power hierarchy between physician and patient has sought a functional balance between clinical expertise and personal experience. Arthur Frank's prioritization of the patient narrative lends unwell bodies the crucial autonomy of "a voice they can recognize as their own" in the pursuit of self-affirming storytelling.[21] While Frank's patient-first framework provides a helpful theoretical basis for individualism in corporeal studies, his focus on a more ubiquitous sense of chronic illness remains couched in clinical contexts. Rather than restricting the notion of corporeal selfhood to bodies requiring medical intervention, this thesis identifies instances of internally motivated corporeal selfhood throughout early modern drama beyond isolated physician scenes. As such, I turn away from the mediation of the doctor characters, often a "satirical treatment" of the "mumbo jumbo of

[21] Arthur Frank *The Wounded Storyteller* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1997) 7.

doctors"[22] rather than a legitimizing influence, to focus on the subjective constructivism borne more of experiencing one's own body than analyzing others.

The extensive work already done on the role of the physician in early modern drama is thorough and diverse. Hoeniger's foundational *Medicine and Shakespeare in the English Renaissance* is joined by William Kerwin's *Beyond the Body*[23] and Jonathan Sawday's *The Body Emblazoned*[24] as well as Gail Kern Paster's *The Body Embarrassed*[25] to form a significant field of analysis on the early modern physician in dramatic and literary representation. Alongside these foundational works, Eleanor Decamp's *Civic and Medical Worlds in Early Modern England*[26] and Andrew Wear's *Knowledge and Practice in English Medicine*[27] offer historical accounts of the medical profession's development driven by the nuanced identities of physicians and barber surgeons in their multitudinous derivatives. The identities of medical authorities throughout the early modern period enjoy a pronounced presence in corporeal scholarship. With gratitude to the context provided by these historians, this thesis sets its focus instead on the bodies which are broken, dismembered, and exposed without the authoritative mediation of the physician.

Before exploring the individualism of corporeal selfhood throughout the aforementioned Shakespearean works, it is necessary to first establish the contemporary popular medical contexts from which the plays emerge. The following chapter also situates this thesis within a thoroughly established tradition of art as a communicative and active

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[22] F. David Hoeniger, *Medicine and Shakespeare in the English Renaissance* (London: University of Delaware Press, 1992) 58.
[23] William Kerwin, *Beyond the Body* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005).
[24] Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995).
[25] Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1993).
[26] Eleanor Decamp, *Civic and Medical Worlds in Early Modern England: Performing Barbery and Surgery* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).
[27] Andrew Wear, *Knowledge & Practice in English Medicine, 1550-1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

collaborator with science in the development of medical knowledge. In his contextualization of Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Angus Gowland points out that, "The majority of medieval and early modern university discussions concluded with the observation that it was both science and art: science, insofar as it was based on the demonstrable knowledge of natural philosophy, but art insofar as this knowledge was applied for the production of health."[28] The theoretical elements of science combined with the practical endeavors of art to form a dualized foundation of medical study equally dependent on intellectual analysis and manual craftsmanship.

In this methodological focus on the interconnectivity of art and science in the early modern development of the body with a priority placed on corporeal materiality, I follow on the critical traditions established by Sawday, Schoenfeldt, and Hillman, as well as Carla Mazzio, Valerie Traub, and Farrah Karim-Cooper.[29] As Chapter 1 delves into the models of knowledge production which established the notion of the standardized early modern body, it sets the stage for the successive chapters' close readings of Shakespeare's reciprocal individuated bodies as illustrative components of a demonstrable history of corporeal selfhood.

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[28] Angus Gowland, *The Worlds of Renaissance Melancholy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 36.
[29] See Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995); Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); David Hillman, *Shakespeare's Entrails: Belief Scepticism and the Interior of the Body* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, *The Body in Parts* (London: Routledge, 1997); Valerie Traub, "The Nature of Norms in Early Modern England: Anatomy, Cartography, *King Lear*," *South Central Review* 26, (2009); and Farah Karim-Cooper, *The Hand on the Shakespearean Stage* (London: Arden, 2016).

Chapter 1: Establishing the Early Modern Body

Introduction

The human body is an interdisciplinary and transhistorical locus of meaning. It is the self-aware science by which the brain contemplates itself, the economic reward for the executioner, the brave new world for the anatomist, and the handbook to God's love for the religious scholar. For both poet and physician, it is the tangible seat of emotion. As the vessel by which all lived experience is perceived, the body brings all modes of thought and experience together in its common denominator of being. This shared system of sensory filtration simultaneously links all human experience and distinguishes each body from the next. More than simple vessels of flesh, bodies are points of contact with the world and one another. They play a critical part in even the seemingly incorporeal aspects of thought and emotion. The breadth of corporeal discourse is as varied as the bodies that populate it. From the wounded, broken, and othered to the privileged, the fractured, and the objectified, each body participates in the formation of the identity to which it lends tangibility.

Margaret Owens defends corporeal studies against critiques that a purely materialist approach to the body relies on an illusion of certainty. Her response to the reductive assumption that the body is either material or concept sets the stage for the crucially unstable, fluctuating, and organic nature of the field:

> Most practitioners of body studies in the field of early modern drama are highly conscious that their subject of study is neither, at one extreme 'brute facticity' nor, at the other extreme, a rarefied textual effect. Rather, it is an inexorably amorphous, mobile topos, constituted through the imbrication of diverse linguistic, psychological, biological, economic, and sociocultural vectors. Almost every scholarly contribution to body studies begins by disavowing any adherence to the belief

> that it is possible to encounter the body outside the reaches of cultural discourses.[1]

By deconstructing binaries across various corporeal planes, this thesis aims to destabilize the polarizing assumptions to which Owens responds. This thesis holds that the visceral Shakespearean body manifests meaning and value not in isolation from its immaterial contexts, but precisely because it is embedded within the cultural discourses which contribute to its taxonomical, experiential, and psychological reality.

The focus of this work is to read the body as a catalyst for the union of the arts and sciences in order to examine the interdisciplinary role of corporeality in identity formation. In this chapter, I will contextualize my literary analyses within early modern notions of the body evidenced by academic and vernacular medical texts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. By examining the philosophies, practices, and public dissemination of early modern medical understanding, I will construct a scientific foundation on which to read the Shakespearean body in context.

To ensure a thorough acknowledgement of the evolution of scientific knowledge alongside Shakespeare's shifting engagement with it, my historical range in this chapter will span approximately a century before and a century after Shakespeare's life and work. Before diving into Shakespeare's contemporary medical zeitgeist, it is crucial to assess the significant leaps in empirical science which took place in the mid-sixteenth century, around the time of Shakespeare's birth. For this backstory, I will begin by addressing Andreas Vesalius' paradigm-shifting approach to human anatomy as it sets the groundwork for the individual subjectivity of the dissected corpse. By the late sixteenth and early seventeenth

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[1] Margaret E. Owens, *Stages of Dismemberment: The Fragmented Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern Drama* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005) 16.

centuries, the acknowledgement of selfhood in the Vesalian body had woven its way through Shakespeare's works; his characters could be seen interpreting their subjectivity via identification with their corporeality. The following chapters provide more in-depth analyses of corporeal selfhood via close readings of Shakespearean text.

In the years following Shakespeare's death, this corporeal selfhood may be found occurring in the lives of seventeenth-century laypersons well outside the academic sphere from which the Vesalian body originated. For this personal application of otherwise scientific and literary concepts, I turn to Samuel Pepys as a case study in the practical daily experience of corporeal selfhood. Pepys' first-hand accounts of his experience in a post-operative life between 1658 and 1664 offer examples of both implicit recognition of corporeality as a function of selfhood and explicit performative displays of the bodily interior in daily seventeenth-century life.

In approaching the scientific texts of Vesalius with consideration for their artistry and the literary works of Shakespeare for their engagement with the anatomical sciences, my aim is to construct a humanist notion of selfhood more holistically in tune with the corporeal body. The identity of the anatomized cadaver remains tied to its physical features whether anonymously unearthed in a cemetery after dark, publicly displayed as a double punishment and warning to criminals, or reconstructed in the emotive illustrations adorning the medical manuals which instruct on the methods of its dissection.[2] The shadows of identities and narratives still legible even in the arguably uninhabited body point toward the crucial role the tangible corpus plays in the perception of human nature and the construction of selfhood.

[2] See Richard Sugg, *Murder After Death* (London: Cornell University Press, 2007) for his extensive work on the dissected criminal corpse.

My work examines the degrees of selfhood, inherent and constructed, in early modern bodies both living and dead. This chapter will focus on the bodies of cadavers, patients, and the physicians and anatomists responsible for them. In later chapters, I will apply the notion of corporeal selfhood developed here to the absent bodies of literary characters represented in Shakespearean text and embodied on stage. While the visceral reality of the dissected cadavers and unwell bodies addressed here plays a crucial role in early modern medical discovery, the imagined bodies which surround them in art and literature are no less significant in the formation of corporeal identity. The stage, page, and canvas provide a non-fatal laboratory in which to explore the implications of dismemberment, mutilation, and other avenues to the bodily interior outside the limited contexts of the anatomy theatre and gallows.

Quantifying the Pre-Disciplinary Body

In bringing Vesalius and Shakespeare together on this search for corporeally manifested notions of selfhood, it is important to consider to what degree such questions of body-based identities are inherent in early modern texts. This chapter begins by tracing the legacy of Vesalian influence across disciplines throughout the early modern period. After addressing the methodological models most suited to perceiving medical history in its incremental evolutions, I will turn to the poetry of John Donne to exemplify the period's poetic engagements with the emergent discoveries of scientific institutions.

Early modern medicine is predicated on the emergent practices fluctuating in categorization for centuries prior. Nancy Sirasi's history of medicine prioritizes an amorphous and incremental development of body knowledge over the simplification of sweeping revolutionary models. She identifies this complexity in the sheer variety of medical practitioners emerging out of the late Middle Ages:

> Members of the medical profession thus varied widely in training, type of formal qualification (if any), occupation, and social and economic status. Yet, despite this diversity, they shared a common medical culture in which they participated with differing degrees of intellectualization and sophistication. Hence, delineation of the general contours of medical activity based on broad and non-restrictive terms will promote an understanding of the uses to which medical knowledge was put as well as the impact of new forms of medical knowledge as they become diffused in a variety of ways and at many different levels.[3]

Sirasi's notion of a "common medical culture" as one specifically transcendent of regulatory class structures opens the otherwise institutional history of medicine to a wider and more personal history of the body. By factoring in the voices and experiences of patients, surgeons, and physicians together, the medical understanding of the body benefits from a constant socio-cultural evolution which is necessarily always incomplete. This thesis embraces Sirasi's model of common medical culture especially for its capacity to validate the personal engagement with the subjective body. Sirasi's "broad and non-restrictive" approach informs this chapter as it traces the trajectory of body knowledge from Galenic traditions and Vesalian practices to vernacular dissemination and patient experience.

The work of the anatomist is an eternal destruction of the subject in the pursuit of analysis. While the body itself must be systematically destroyed in the physical act of dissection, the reigning notions of the body must also dissipate and yield to the new understandings uncovered there. It is therefore necessary to utilize historicist and presentist methods in tandem in order to fully acknowledge the corpus of medicine as a body of work driven by constant change, evolution, destruction, and recreation.[4] As scientific theories

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[3] Nancy Sirasi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1990) 23.

[4] See Ewan Fernie, "Shakespeare and The Prospect of Presentism," in *Shakespeare Survey,* ed. Peter Holland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) and Terence Hawkes, *Shakespeare in the Present* (London: Routledge, 2002).

replace one another in pursuit of quantifiable truths, the questions at the heart of these discoveries remain rooted in basic humanist selfhood. The spectacle of scarred bodies, comedic bodies, fractured, objectified, murdered, and misgendered bodies paraded across Shakespeare's stage encourages the observation and analysis of human corporeality just as Vesalius' exploration of the bodily interior observes and analyses selfhood from the inside.

As the medical sciences work to uncover the mysteries of the bodily interior, the quest to quantifiably map human anatomy simultaneously carries a curiosity about human nature. In his exploration of the constructs around the distinctly human act of "suffering death," Michael Neill addresses a certain obsession of the English Renaissance with what he refers to as "the maddening opacity of the human body."[5] During this period of intellectual curiosity, the conceptually distant though manifestly immediate bodily interior represented a tempting and terrifying new frontier in the exploration of life, death, and human nature for scientists and artists alike.

The parallelism of language surrounding both the colonization of the Americas and the quantification of the bodily interior is indicative of the shared spirit of discovery working simultaneously on macrocosmic and microcosmic scales. Valerie Traub links art, medicine, and geographical exploration in "the pre-disciplinary organization of knowledge of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries."[6] She argues that these modes of thought occurred prior to the strict demarcation of fields we now term "literary" or "scientific." As a result of this more nebulous structure, "even as literature and science produce different *kinds* of cultural and empirical knowledge, their common storehouse of representational strategies suggests that, at least in certain cases, the *modes* of knowing that they inaugurate may have

[5] Michael Neill, *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 135.
[6] Valerie Traub, "The Nature of Norms in Early Modern England: Anatomy, Cartography, *King Lear*," *South Central Review* 26, (2009): 44.

been intimately related."[7] This "common storehouse of representational strategies" serves the innately interdisciplinary structure governing the pursuit of art, science, and exploration throughout the early modern period.

Jonathan Sawday identifies this intermingling in the poetry of John Donne. He argues that the language of the body is multiform, addressing these pre-disciplinary modes of thought simultaneously. He writes:

> To say of the New World that it was like a body, as Donne observed in 1622 when he addressed the Virginia Company as 'not onely a *Spleene*, to drain the ill humours of the body, but a *Liver*, to breed good bloud', was to explore a metaphor, but it was also to appropriate the body in the service of colonial expansion.[8]

Sawday pinpoints the shared interdisciplinary language throughout Donne's poetry as one, "informed by the vocabulary of discovery and appropriation, so that colonialism and the discovery of the body appeared to complement one another."[9] His qualifying "appeared" is crucial when considering the complexity of Donne's poetry. Donne's work is well suited to the analysis of pre-disciplinary knowledge given his tendency for intentionally bringing contradictions together in order to tease out the linguistic predicament of "negative theology" – that is, the notion that human language is incapable of expressing the perfection of God.[10]

Perhaps driven by this intermingling of interior bodily and exterior geographical landscapes, the language around both forms a strange bond as the two new horizons struggle to find new words with which to express their respective frontiers. The body becomes a building sectioned into "larders and cellars, and vaults" or sometimes "furnaces of our

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[7] Ibid.
[8] Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995), 25.
[9] Ibid, 26.
[10] Charis Charalampous, *Rethinking the Mind-Body Relationship in Early Modern Literature, Philosophy and Medicine* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 67.

spirits"[11] and the more naturalistic "bladder's cave."[12] As the body is imagined in terms of landscapes more practically fathomed in the external world, the unopened bodily interior is made susceptible to contemplative fancy.

Donne's writing anxiously conceives of the bodily interior as darkened rooms in an old house, a prison for the spirit yearning to escape via the process of decay. For Donne, the ribcage is a gruesome gibbet of the soul. When considered in tandem with the soul, the body tends to be read as a hindrance at best and a captor at worst. This relationship to the body is not unusual in the context of sixteenth-century ideas of the afterlife and how to get there. The body is generally vilified as the secular weight restraining the soul from reaching Heaven, "projecting onto the material body the image of a prison that holds the superior soul in captivity."[13]

Charis Charalampous argues that "the tendency in modern literary criticism to draw a symmetry between Donne's metaphors and the mysterious nature of the divine" is an oversimplification of Donne's engagement with the body/soul relationship. [14] Rather than "passively reflecting divine mysteries," he suggests that Donne's strategic use of opposites engages the reader in a transcendence of discursive reasoning to actively bridge the secular and the divine. Charalampous claims that, in doing so, Donne has "constructed a poetics capable of conveying the inexpressible."[15] This achievement theoretically brings the reader closer to the divine on the basis that human reasoning is, by nature of the fall, incapable of comprehending and expressing the nature of God.[16] While Donne's references to body and

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[11] John Donne, "Sermon No. 10," *The Sermons of John Donne* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), 236.
[12] John Donne, "Of the Progress of the Soule," *The Epithalamions Anniversaries and Epicedes of John Donne* (London: Oxford University Press, 1978), 49.
[13] Charalampous, *Rethinking the Mind-Body Relationship,* 69.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid, 65.

soul seem to reflect the popular opinion of the material body as captor of the soul, Charalampous' argument for Donne's poetic capacity "of (re)uniting mind and body" illuminates the subversive exploration of the body, soul and self as one in Donne's poetry.[17]

"Of the Progres of the Soule" appears in Donne's *Second Anniversarie* series, published in 1612, on the life and death of the young Elizabeth Drury. After tracing the path by which the soul is relinquished from its corporeal prison, Donne interrogates the body, citing the mysteries of the interior as evidence of man's incapacity to reach personal enlightenment.

> Knowst thou but how the stone doth enter in
> The bladders Cave, and never breake the skin?
> Knowst thou how blood, which to the hart doth flow,
> Doth from one ventricle to th'other go?
> And for the putrid stuffe, which thou dost spit,
> Knowst thou how thy lungs have attracted it?
> There are no passages so that there is
> (For ought thou knowst) piercing of substances.
> And of those many opinions which men raise
> Of Nailes and Haires, doest thou know which to praise?
> What hope have we to know our selves, when wee
> Know not the least things, which for our use bee?[18]

In one reading, Donne's words situate the bodily interior as an unknowable mystery and, therefore, evidence of its insignificance compared to the soul it contains. Gruesome imagery of "putrid stuffe" propagates the body as prison metaphor in favour of the soul's posthumous freedom. As a reflection on the tragic death of the young Drury, this focus on the soul released to the joys of Heaven offers a hopeful perspective to the specific personal contexts of the piece.

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[17] Ibid, 70.
[18] Donne, "Of the Progres of the Soule" [269-280] 49.

However, in its broader corporeal and theological contexts, the same passage may also be read as an indictment of man's ignorance to the makeup of his own flesh. Even in this direct address to the specific body and person of Drury, Donne's corporeal engagement is never wholly individualized because the self, body, and environment remain inextricably linked. As Nancy Selleck argues, "His physical treatment of selfhood incorporates the self with the body and the body with the rest of the world."[19] Donne's specific citations of controversial debates in urology, cardiology, and pulmonology incorporate his poetic body into the wider world via realism grounded in contemporary science.

The question of how blood "doth from one ventricle to th' other go" refers to pre-circulatory cardiology which, prior to the discovery of directional venous valves by William Harvey in 1628, left the movement of oxygenated blood from the lungs back into the left ventricle via the pulmonary vein unacknowledged by early modern European cardiologists. [20] Although Arabian physician Ibn al-Nafis did uncover the route of pulmonary circulation in the thirteenth century, his findings remained largely unrecognized in western medicine.[21] Early modern anatomists therefore continued to rely on the outdated Galenic theory as, "with no alternative, it became necessary to recognize pores in the septum of the heart" through which the blood must have travelled to fill both ventricles.[22] Donne's acknowledgment of this complex and highly debated conundrum in early modern cardiology indicates his investment in the anatomy and physiology of the bodily interior beyond purely aesthetic appropriation of the imagery.

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[19] Nancy Selleck, *The Interpersonal Idiom in Shakespeare, Donne, and Early Modern Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 59.
[20] William Harvey, *Exercitatio Anatomica de Motu Cordis et Sanguinis in Animalibus* (Frankfurt: Guilielmi Fitzeri, 1628).
[21] Marios Loukas, "Ibn al-Nafis (1210-1288): The First Description of the Pulmonary Circulation," in *The American Surgeon* 75 no. 5 (May 2008): 440-2.
[22] Charles Donald O'Malley, *Andreas Vesalius of Brussels, 1514-1564* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1964), 9.

As he calls upon anatomists to illustrate the concrete mysteries of the body, Donne also questions the validity of their often contradictory findings by asking of his readers, the laypersons sifting through the anatomists' debates, "dost thou know which to praise?" Donne's poem seeks out the line between religious expectations for the soul and anatomical understandings of the body in a way that allows both philosophies to coexist. At the end of the passage, Donne asks a question more provocative than the interrogation of contradictory theorists. Regardless of whether one subscribes to the doctrines of religious texts, classical Galenic medicine, or the visceral new findings of sixteenth-century empirical anatomists, the search for the soul within or without the body is a search for the self. Donne's explicit linkage of our hopes "to know our selves" via the knowledge of these bodily faculties represents an important example of early modern corporeal selfhood.

Donne's poetry appears approximately seventy years after the publication of Vesalius' work, illustrating the growth of public engagement with academic understanding for laypersons outside the universities. Selleck explains this interest in terms of the body's constant mediation of experience: "Early modern writers not only live in the humoral body, they are also frequently fascinated by its implications for selfhood – particularly the ways it conflates self and world."[23] As anatomical pursuits exposed more of the body to the external world, writers were afforded more routes to explore the potential localities of selfhood contained therein. In addressing physiology and the critical debates driving medical discourse, Donne exemplifies the shift in public bodily perceptions from oral, folkloric tradition to an engagement with the empirical sciences. His works on the poeticized visceral body will return in Chapter 2 regarding its role as a container of the soul.

[23] Selleck, 58.

Situated within this span of time between the establishment of the Vesalian body in the mid sixteenth century and the widespread accessibility of its knowledge in the early seventeenth is the entirety of Shakespeare's life and work. I have begun here with Donne before exploring Vesalius within the isolated educational institutions in which he worked in order to illustrate the legacy of his anatomical work as it influenced artists like Donne and Shakespeare in late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Empiricism and Accessibility in the Vesalian Body

Medical science of the sixteenth century was not in opposition to the philosophies which sought the physical seat of the soul. Instead, it participated in the search through empirical experimentation. By reaching physically into the body, anatomists put the philosophies of essentialism, centuries of religious doctrine, and poetic introspection to the test by literalizing metaphors which would otherwise turn the bodily interior to a series of symbols rather than visceral components. Far from the over-simplified nervous system practically parodied by the modern notion of "left brained" mathematicians and "right brained" artists, the anatomists of the early modern period undertook their art with a balance of objective scientific analysis and subjective contemplation on human selfhood.

The revolutionary anatomist at the forefront of not only the discoveries themselves, but also the methodology by which they were made, was the renowned Flemish physician Andreas Vesalius. Up until Vesalius, the study of medicine functioned primarily as a process of hierarchal indoctrination removed from the brutal viscera of the subject. Although conceptually ripe for analysis, the messy bodily interior was preferably observed from a distance. While learned physicians imparted their knowledge from books read aloud on pedestals, barber-surgeons got their hands bloodied in the low status job of actually opening

the body.[24] This distance from the bodily interior, reinforced by the social divide "which separated the philosophers from the craftsmen," created a dichotomy in medicine which persists throughout history in perceptions of studied physicians and practiced surgeons.[25] The impact of this dichotomy on the unstable notion of the surgeon in early modern culture will be explored in more depth throughout Chapter 2 via Coriolanus' self-administered bloodletting, and Chapter 3 surrounding the categorical divide between mutilation and amputation.

As modern neuroscientist Marco Catani explains of the new paradigm forged by Vesalius, "His anatomy was based only on knowledge derived from direct observation, which led him to identify significant differences between animals and humans."[26] These differences in particular put Vesalius in direct opposition to the dogma of Galenic medicine. Despite the criticism he faced, Vesalius kept to his staunch principles of empirical evidence. Catani sums up Vesalian technique thusly: "If he had not dissected it, or had not seen it, he chose not to mention it rather than report the words of others. His work constitutes the expression of a firm belief, one that now underpins modern science in the power of observation as a direct source of knowledge."[27]

Vesalius is a significant influence in the interdisciplinary development of the body thanks to his overhaul of both the hands-off method and the body perceptions that initially put it into place. As Neill describes:

> Vesalius, by contrast, insisted on restoring the investigative, exploratory role of dissection, which the anatomist must now perform in person. Like the macrocosm with which it was habitually analogized, the microcosmic body was to be treated

[24] Marco Catani, *Brain Renaissance: From Vesalius to Modern Neuroscience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 4.
[25] Carlo M. Cipolla, *Public Health and the Medical Profession in the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 3.
[26] Catani, *Brain Renaissance,* 4.
[27] Ibid.

> as a site of discovery, with important consequences for the understanding of human biology and pathology.[28]

By enforcing a tactile connection between anatomist and cadaver, Vesalius recasts the body from a grotesque necessity into a respected source of knowledge, sidestepping spectacle and fear in favour of exploration and discovery driven by reason and physical evidence. Sawday asserts the prevalence of this approach throughout anatomy theatres, claiming, "What the Renaissance anatomist strove to achieve in the dissection theatre was not 'clinical detachment' but, instead, a form of cultural location."[29] The empirical sciences worked in tandem with interdisciplinary modes of thought to retain the symbolic, humanist, and philosophical significances of the dissection process.

Neill's assessment casts Vesalius as an anatomical explorer heralding the transition between hands-off and hands-on dissection methods. While the pedagogical significance of Vesalius' personal scalpel work is not to be understated, more recent scholarship also notes other innovations he introduced to public anatomy lessons. Usurping the role of the barber surgeon and personally dissecting the body was not completely unique to Vesalius.[30] Beyond engaging with the bodily interior first-hand, Vesalius also pioneered new techniques for public dissection including, "the use of animals as dissection subjects, the preparation and display of articulated skeletons, and the use of printed and hand-drawn illustrations."[31] Although the accuracy Vesalius is hailed for comes from corrections to Galenic errors arising from animal subjects, the impracticality of acquiring a human body meant that substituting an

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[28] Neill, *Issues of Death,* 104.
[29] Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned,* 63.
[30] See Gionata Liboni, "Humanist Post-Mortems: Philology and Therapy," in *Pathology in Practice: Diseases and Dissections in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Silvia De Renzi, Marco Bresadola, and Maria Conforti (London: Routledge, 2018) on the pioneering dissection methods of Nicolo Leoniceno and Antonio Musa Brasavola during the late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-centuries.
[31] R. Allen Shotwell, "Animals, Pictures, and Skeletons: Andreas Vesalius's Reinvention of the Public Anatomy Lesson," *Journal of the History of Medicine* 71, no. 1 (2015): 3.

animal subject in public lessons was simply an economical use of resources. The animal subject provided a secondary display alongside a human subject to allow observation of systems which may have been destroyed in the process of exposing the primary system under scrutiny in the human cadaver.

By using animal corpses as practical substitutes for humans, Vesalius also afforded himself the opportunity to engage in comparative analysis. As R. Allen Shotwell explains, "It was Vesalius who made the startling announcement that Galen had mistaken animal for human anatomy and was therefore wrong on a number of points."[32] While Vesalius was famed for disproving much of Galen's work, he nonetheless subscribed to Galenic philosophies and practices throughout his career. To pit the two anatomists against one another is dangerously reductive. The foundation set by Galenic practices is integral to Vesalius' innovations, even when he finds and corrects Galenic errors along the way.

The diverse "contours of medical activity" in Sirasi's historical model highlight the interconnectedness of both scientists' value. As Sirasi explains, "[Galen's] contributions to anatomical knowledge – despite the limitation of his dissections to animals other than man – remained unsurpassed for nearly fourteen hundred years."[33] Comparative anatomy is valuable and, although Galen's assumptions about the similarities between animal and man may have overreached, the limitations to which Sirasi refers ultimately prove beneficial to the development of vivisection technique.

Shotwell points out, "what is clear in the case of Vesalius's treatment of vivisection is that rather than rejecting Galen, he made extensive use of him. Vesalius adopted both Galen's reasons for vivisection and his methods for performing them."[34] The trajectory of scientific

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[32] Ibid, 8.
[33] Sirasi, 4.
[34] R. Allen Shotwell, "The Revival of Vivisection in the Sixteenth Century," *Journal of the History of Biology* 46, no. 2 (2013): 180.

understanding emerges via a synthesis of Galenic and Vesalian methods during the early modern period. Chapter 4 will address animal vivisection and the natural world's contributions to human physiology in more detail.

Vesalius had to maintain a methodological balance that simultaneously respected the findings that came before him and allowed him the freedom to make his own progress. As Shotwell concludes, "the methods for learning anatomy were important to Vesalius because they were important to Galen…but it was in following Galen's advice that Vesalius also encountered Galen's mistakes."[35] It was not a straightforward rejection of contradictory ideas which propelled Vesalius' advancements in medicine, but rather a complex trans-historical discourse driven by empirical evidence. Again, Sirasi's model reinforces this evolutionary, rather than revolutionary, growth: "even the achievement of Vesalius, often thought of as overthrowing Galen, would have been inconceivable without Galen's foundation to build on."[36]

The progress of understanding depends on a consistent awareness of the historical tools which enable modern innovation beyond the limitations of those who came before. When combined with the sixteenth century's "pre-disciplinary organization of knowledge,"[37] the amorphous nature of both scientific and artistic understanding illuminates the benefits of reading texts like Vesalius and Shakespeare in tandem within their early modern contexts and throughout their trans-historical afterlives. As Vesalius discovered of Galen, the path to enlightenment runs between the ancient authority of historically defended dogma and the courage to challenge it.

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[35] Shotwell, "Animals, Pictures, and Skeletons" 18.
[36] Sirasi, 4.
[37] Traub, "The Nature of Norms," 44.

In 1546, Vesalius printed *The China Root Epistle* in response to critics of his anti-Galenic ideas. The work is primarily organized around Vesalius' assessment of the popular root's benefits when properly concocted (as well as its shortcomings), but ultimately tangents into a personal defense of his methodology against Galenist critics. In its case studies on primarily botanical remedies, *The China Root Epistle* offers a more physiological partner to his famous *Fabrica* of 1543. The prolific illustrations of the latter highlight its morphological (observable anatomy-based) priorities in contrast to the focus on functionality (physiological activity) via individual patient analysis in the former. This divide between morphological and physiological medicine will be explored in greater depth in Chapter 4.

Vesalius is perceived as the founder of modern anatomy because of his dramatic changes to Galenic doctrine, primarily driven by his accusation that, for all his conceptual achievements, "Galen did not dissect humans, but teaches the study of animals instead of man."[38] The perception of Galen and Vesalius as antagonists is partly grounded in a conflation of Vesalius' defense of empiricism with a direct attack against Galen. As Vesalius explains in his *China Root Epistle*, empirical medicine is not threatened by the history of Galenic error, but by the staunch dogmatic rationalism of Galenists. His frustration with the investment of truth in the person of Galen over his findings is made clear in a section of *The China Root Epistle* on "Hapless people who gratify themselves by publishing something:"

> Though they should have been glad for these things, because I was the first that had the courage to drive out false and untrustworthy opinion from the minds of men and to uncover the rare imposture of the Greeks, and because I provided a unique occasion for investigating the truth, nevertheless you will find many who take such a perfunctory look at my labors regarding the authority of Galen that they still argue (without examining the body) that nothing at all was written by Galen

[38] Andreas Vesalius, *The China Root Epistle: A New Translation and Critical Edition*, ed. Daniel H. Garrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 52. All references to *The China Root Epistle* are from this edition. Page numbers refer to the page of the translation, rather than those of the 1546 edition provided in the margins.

> with anything but the highest truth. You have seen writings of many of the most learned men of our time who have publicly praised my youthful efforts far beyond their merit; they are happy to say that their trust is placed in their own eyes, not in the writings of Galen.[39]

According to Vesalius, if there is tension to be found in the reception of his methodology, it is in Galen's blind followers, rather than the foundational writings of the centuries-old scientist.

Vesalius acknowledged the practical obstacles of empirical anatomy. His efficient methods in the anatomy theatres reflect a priority of accessibility and practical dissemination legible in the illustration, organization, and publication of his findings throughout his career. These pedagogical priorities combine with Vesalius' belief in the practical and philosophical benefits of first-hand dissection to inform a more personal approach to corporeality which lends itself to fields outside medical academia.

The most significant installation of Vesalius' published findings comes in the seven-volume folio print of his greatest work and arguably the most influential book on the collective perception of the body, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*.[40] With its uncompromising empiricism, revolutionary methodology, and meticulously detailed illustrations, it is unsurprising that many critics and historians echo Shotwell's sentiments that "Andreas Vesalius's *Fabrica* of 1543 is arguably the most important and unquestionably the most famous work on anatomy in the sixteenth century."[41] The *Fabrica* was so integral to the new

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[39] Vesalius, *The China Root Epistle*, 47.
[40] Andreas Vesalius, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* (Basel: Johannes Oporinus, 1543).
[41] Shotwell, "The Revival of Vivisection" 180. For more critical praise of the *Fabrica*, see Erika Gielen and Michele Goyen *Towards the Authority of Vesalius* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), Rinaldo F Canalis *Andreas Vesalius and the Fabrica in the Age of Printing* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), Andrea Carlino *Books of the Body* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), Jonathan Sawday *The Body Emblazoned* (London: Routledge, 1995) and Charles Donald O'Malley *Andreas Vesalius of Brussels* (Bekeley: Californnia University Press, 1964).

frontier of the bodily interior that the understandings it provides are still acknowledged today in modern anatomical studies.[42] Neill even goes so far as to invoke the sacred in his description of the book as "the bible of this revolutionary science."[43]



Figure 1.1. Andreas Vesalius, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica Libri Septem* 1543. Courtesy of Wellcome Library, London.

[42] See Kevin T. Patton, *Anatomy & Physiology* (St. Louis: Elsevier Health Sciences, 2016), 5.
[43] Neill, *Issues of Death*, 102.

The book's iconic title page (see fig. 1.1) reflects the "nexus of complementary discourses" Sawday reads in the atmosphere of the dissection process.[44] Although the title plate may not depict a necessarily accurate rendering of an anatomy theatre, the scene tells more about the accessibility, liveliness, and practical application inherent in the pages that follow. The scene is packed full of onlookers craning over one another to get a closer look at the body on the table. Crucially, these spectators are not limited to scholars alone. While the front row is filled with the beards and robes of academics, the real life of the scene comes from the pointing, grabbing, and fighting populous jostling for position everywhere from the balconies to the floorboards. The vitality of the scene reflects the printed anatomy's efforts to capture life on paper. As Katherine Craik argues, "Anatomical knowledge was in fact emerging at this time as a new version of life in the world."[45] Like the bodily interiors diagramed throughout, the title page of the *Fabrica* resists the division between anatomical study and lived experience by integrating its subject into lively scenes.

One man clings to a column and cranes his neck to see over the crowd. Others play with dogs, goats, and monkeys at the peripheries. More than symbolic nods to Galenic animal dissections, these animals may also represent the creatures fated to be involved in the secondary dissections which formed the basis for comparative analysis.[46] The title page of the *Fabrica* yields the most meaning to readings that acknowledge the practical details alongside the conceptual, stylized ideals represented in the symbolism and composition of the image. Andrea Carlino reads the *Fabrica*'s title page as an illustration of accessibility to a broader public. He identifies how "an interest in discovering the organization of the human body has developed beyond the borders of the university, and the academic rigidity seen in older title

[44] Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned,* 63.
[45] Katherine Craik, "Poetry, Anatomy, Presence," *Renaissance Studies* 32, no. 5 (November 2018): 758.
[46] Shotwell, "Animals, Pictures, and Skeletons," 17

pages has been transformed into this lively scene."[47] This outreach beyond the isolation of the academic sphere is a key aspect of the Vesalian anatomy theatre.

This accessibility of corporeal knowledge via Vesalius' publications sets the foundation for popular interest in the workings of the bodily interior. Although the *Fabrica* itself was still relatively limited to dedicated students of Latin who could afford the lavish folio print, the text nonetheless represents a first step which would ultimately usher in the English language vernacular texts more widely available for in-home study. The impact of these vernacular texts will be explored in more depth later in the chapter. For now, it is simply important to acknowledge that the personal notions of the body and self developing outside pedagogical pursuits were sparked in the work of Vesalius and fuelled by the spread of vernacular texts over the course of the century.

While Carlino's reading of the title page as an atmosphere of accessibility is valid, he foregoes the opportunity to read the page as both literal and symbolic in one. He addresses the skeleton as "certainly another of those symbolic elements mentioned earlier for which it is difficult to offer a concrete and convincing explanation."[48] Carlino divides his reading of the skeleton into either a literal "reconstruction of the human frame" for demonstration purposes or "the symbol of death." Beyond this dichotomy, Carlino makes no attempt to reconcile the readings, citing only that the shift from magisterial cane to scythe in the 1555 edition may indicate a leaning toward allusions to death. This reading of the skeleton as exclusively pedagogical object or conceptual *memento mori* ultimately restricts not only the image of the skeleton itself, but also its interconnectivity with the rest of the scene. Rather than isolating

[47] Andrea Carlino, *Books of the Body*, trans. John Tedeschi and Anne C. Tedeschi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 4.
[48] Ibid, 47.

the skeleton to question its validity, it is more productive to consider its relationship with both the cadaver and the anatomist.

Most significantly, the dissected body holds the central focus of the image. Even the skeletal *memento mori*, whose dominion over mortality usurps the position of the pedestaled lecturer, directs the eye back toward the true purpose of the anatomist's work with the staff descending from his right hand to the head of the cadaver. Vesalius himself is depicted as both physician and surgeon, as signified by his hands: one pointing referentially in explanation, the other clearly entering the exposed landscape of the bodily interior with a scalpel at the ready. This depiction reiterates the tactile engagement Vesalius purports as integral to anatomical studies. Neill pinpoints this significant locus of the medical revolution wherein, "the anatomist, whose revolutionary practice required that he wield the knife himself, stands confidently in the foreground, one hand reaching into the very bowels of the corpse."[49] Carlino also addresses this significant depiction of Vesalius as "a product both of practical ability and theoretical elaboration."[50] Again, the value is placed upon the anatomist's simultaneous capacity to dissect, analyse, and explain.

Neill notes that the direction of the lecturer's finger toward the skeleton may be read, not simply as an educational reference to the primary system from which the rest of the body is organized, but also as an acknowledgement of mortality. He argues, "Although the anatomist projects himself as the active hero of this drama, he has lost the central, controlling position occupied by his predecessors as they intoned the ancient texts *ex cathedra*. This place has been usurped by the figure at which the lecturer…points with his left index finger."

[49] Neill, *Issues of Death,* 111.
[50] Carlino, *Books of the Body*, 52.

He goes on to refer to this detail as a "rhetorical stress upon the prominence of the skeleton," thereby recasting the figure from anatomical prop back again to *memento mori*.[51]

By reading the skeleton as both medical object and a symbol of mortality, the three figures form a circle of interdisciplinary checks and balances. The objective skeleton is acquiescent to the body it serves, the cadaver is reinfused with subjectivity by the anatomist's touch, and the anatomist, while confident in his claim over the bodily interior, remains deferential to the mortality he acknowledges looming over his courageous pursuits.

As his work in the anatomy theatre shifted paradigms within the isolated world of the university, Vesalius also began to influence public perception on a broader scale. With the same grounded and logical approach by which he reached into the body, Vesalius also reached out to the society obscured from the knowledge of their own beings by the intellectual gatekeeping of the privileged educated class. Outside the anatomy theatre, Vesalius set his ideas on an international, interdisciplinary, and trans-historical trajectory with the *Fabrica* delivering this new approach to anatomy in both method and content.

By printing this manual for the process of dissection, Vesalius shifted the paradigm not only within universities, but also in the expectations of a new generation of anatomists. As Shotwell notes of the growing propensity for hands-on dissection, "it is certainly true that in the decades after Vesalius, anatomy faculty who neglected this sort of approach were apt to be the subject of student complaints."[52] This expectation for first-hand dissection evidences the dissemination of philosophies printed in the *Fabrica* into the new ranks of the universities generations beyond Vesalius.

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[51] Neill, 111.
[52] Shotwell, "Animals, Pictures, and Skeletons," 7.

Charles Donald O'Malley identifies Vesalius as "the founder of modern anatomy" by virtue of the quality of his contributions.[53] O'Malley explains that, although his work emerged from a vast historical context of Galenic and Aristotelian traditions not to be invalidated by this new paradigm, "it was Vesalius who made the foundation secure by his factual contributions and, more important, by his method of presentation and by the scientific principle he enunciated as fundamental to research."[54] O'Malley makes an important distinction by acknowledging the significance of "his method of presentation" as one of the primary influences of the Vesalian body's textual dissemination. The *Fabrica* and *Epitome* (the former's abbreviated companion) set the precedent for accessible organization, logical categorical structure, and illustrations which achieved scientific detail through precision woodcutting technique.

Illustrating the Anatomized Body in Print

With the *Fabrica*, Vesalius took a step beyond the scientific community and opened the doors of the anatomy theatre to the rest of the world. The meticulously detailed tome made the spectacle of the anatomized body relatively accessible for those skilled in Latin to study in detail. However, even for those without the literacy necessary to follow its thorough instructions on dissection methods and physiology, the real power of the book comes through its comprehensive, precise, and emotive illustrations. The public accessibility of these images came in various forms of textual reproduction, including some instances of plagiarism, which I will address in the next section. Before turning to their broad dissemination, it is crucial to first examine the impact of the images in detail.

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[53] Charles Donald O'Malley, *Andreas Vesalius of Brussels, 1514-1564* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1964), 1.
[54] Ibid.

The second book of the *Fabrica* opens with a series of full-body plates on musculature. In his description of the first plate, a moment of synthesis between art and science occurs as Vesalius ends his otherwise methodical scientific introduction with the declaration, "These plates display a total view of the scheme of muscles such as only painters and sculptors are wont to consider."[55] This acknowledgement of artists amid the systematic indexing of the scientific plates acts as a reminder of the value of art in the study of anatomy as well as a validation of the skill level required of artists approaching the human form.

While modern society tends to pit the arts and sciences against one another, the early modern pre-disciplinary nature of study illuminates the equivalent worth of scientific and artistic knowledgeability. This amalgamation of fields is linguistically embedded in early modern perception via the intimate relationship of the terms *ars* and *scientia*. Rather than representing disparate or opposing fields of study, the terms refer to the specific type of knowledge production carried out in any given field. According to Pamela H. Smith, "'*ars*' possessed a much broader connotation of practice and experience and was used in the case of the mechanical arts to refer to the work of the human hand; 'science' meant theoretical knowledge that could be ascertained with certainty, usually by deductive means."[56] Vesalian empiricism required both the experiential surgical work of the hands and the theoretical work of study, observation, and analysis – early modern medicine was necessarily both art and science in one.

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[55] Vesalius, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*, translated in John Bertrand deCusance Morant Saunders and Charles Donald O'Malley, *The Illustrations from the Works of Andreas Vesalius of Brussels* (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1950), 92.

[56] Pamela H. Smith, "Art, Science, and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe," *Isis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press on behalf of The History of Science Society, 2006) 84.

The images of the *Fabrica* exemplify this pre-disciplinary necessity. Sachiko Kusukawa highlights the interconnectivity of the physical object, descriptive text, and pictorial representations in Vesalius' work, explaining that "pictures assisted understanding of anatomy, for they placed the matter more exactly before the eyes than the most explicit words."[57] In the study of anatomy, illustrations are more than accessories to the concepts set out in words. For many, the paper bodies made available in books and fugitive sheets (single-page paper anatomies) offered accessible stand-ins for real cadavers otherwise limited to those privileged enough to enter the university anatomy theatre.

Whilst the interactive elements of cut-and-paste paper anatomies like those found in the *Epitome* allowed students to participate in their own artistic knowledge creation, the depictions of the bodies and systems nonetheless adhered to a strict aesthetic code. According to O'Malley, the aesthetic theory of the Renaissance, which situated art as a faithful representation of natural phenomena, "required that the artist acquaint himself with the structure and physical properties of natural phenomena in order to insure objectivity … in order to obtain representational correctness." As Vesalius looked to painters and sculptors for their keen perspective on the nature of the body, the artistic philosophies of the period created this interactive space by reciprocating this gaze in a coordinated effort to understand and master nature. Whilst science reached out to art, the artists reached back. As O'Malley succinctly concludes, "Art had gone scientific."[58]

This perception of the body as inherently beautiful by virtue of its natural structure has complex implications when combined with the imperative for "representational correctness" in artistic depiction. The Vesalian codification of the body creates a standard of

[57] Sachiko Kusukawa, *Picturing the Book of Nature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 213.
[58] Saunders and O'Malley, *Illustrations from the Works,* 22.

both health and, by extension, beauty, the quantifiable "correctness" of which inevitably implicates othered, incorrect, unhealthy, and monstrous bodies outside the parameters of the system. Traub translates Vesalius' recommendation for a body intended for public dissection as one "as intermediate in nature as possible."[59] She argues that, in doing so, "Vesalius proposes the purpose of anatomy as the humanist revelation of an ideal measure."[60] From the systematic anatomizing of the "ideal" body within the context of Renaissance naturalness, the standardized notion of the "normal" body emerges.

The *Fabrica*'s exclusion of othered or ill bodies idealizes the human form in context with nature by setting it among scenes of other Renaissance ideals like spring landscapes and classical architecture. In Traub's reading of Vesalian bodies as generalized ideals, she says that "the corporeal schema codified by Vesalius is fantastically devoid of disease, irregularity, morbidity, or the marks made on the flesh through the processes of living, labor, and dying."[61] Vesalius approaches the healthy body with a consistent awareness of its lived experience despite his omission of the damage to the body by "the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to," which Shakespeare's corporeally unstable Danish prince once read as the signs of life. [62]

This critique of the Vesalian attempt to standardize the body highlights the inherent instability of corporeality in an applied sense. For the purposes of the anatomist, the construction of schematic expectation around the body is a necessary control against which the changing variables of illness and injury are tested. However, outside the realm of the scientific method, the notion of the body exists in a much more malleable state allowing for

[59] Vesalius, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica Libri Septem*, trans. in Traub, "The Nature of Norms," 53.
[60] Traub, "The Nature of Norms," 53.
[61] Ibid.
[62] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Neil Taylor and Ann Thompson (London: Arden, 2007), 3.1.62-63.

those illnesses, injuries, and systematically othered structures to be an inherent part of not only the functional existence of the body, but also a factor in the identity it informs.

The exclusionary standardization of the body depicted in the *Fabrica* represents an important taxonomy which ultimately operates in conjunction with other physiological, pathological, spiritual, and literary engagements to allow those bodily variables to find their own meaning in relation to Vesalius' thoroughly established control. Traub's critique of the *Fabrica*'s missing illness somewhat misunderstands the purpose of the book. As an anatomical text providing a detailed dissection methodology, physiological abnormalities would detract from the work's morphological priorities.

Vesalius was aware of the body's many irregularities. The *Fabrica* simply offers a model of what to expect in form whilst his *China Root Epistle* addresses what can go wrong in the more fluctuating realm of the physiological. As previously noted, the physiological body and its relationship to the morphological invites a separate line of questioning to be addressed further in Chapter 4. For the purposes of establishing the early modern perception of body, it is necessary to first focus on the foundational images produced in the *Fabrica* and the legacy of their influence.

Despite its focus on the standardized healthy body, the subtle narrative contexts which arise around many of the full body depictions offer a reading of corporeality as a natural process of existence among nature. O'Malley describes this bizarre intermingling of lively emotions with the cadavers as the result of "the attempt to represent the dissected body in dynamic fashion with greater emphasis on the living than the dead."[63] Richard Sugg pinpoints the start of a tradition in the unique Vesalian écorché as one "markedly continuous with the

[63] Saunders and O'Malley, *Illustrations from the Works,* 92.

human world, in that he is essentially alive."[64] Through this illustration technique, early modern anatomy imbues their dissections with an acknowledgment of the workings inside living bodies. Rather than an afterthought poking around graveyards for remains, Vesalian bodies make anatomy the study of life in its urgent, present existence.

The bodies illustrated throughout the work enact lively emotions and suggest strange whims of narrative context even as the text on the adjacent pages works to scientifically quantify its parts. Skeletons lean casually against stone pillars to gaze across the countryside or contemplate the skull of a fallen brother (see fig 1.2).

[64] Richard Sugg, *Murder After Death* (London: Cornell University Press, 2007), 7.

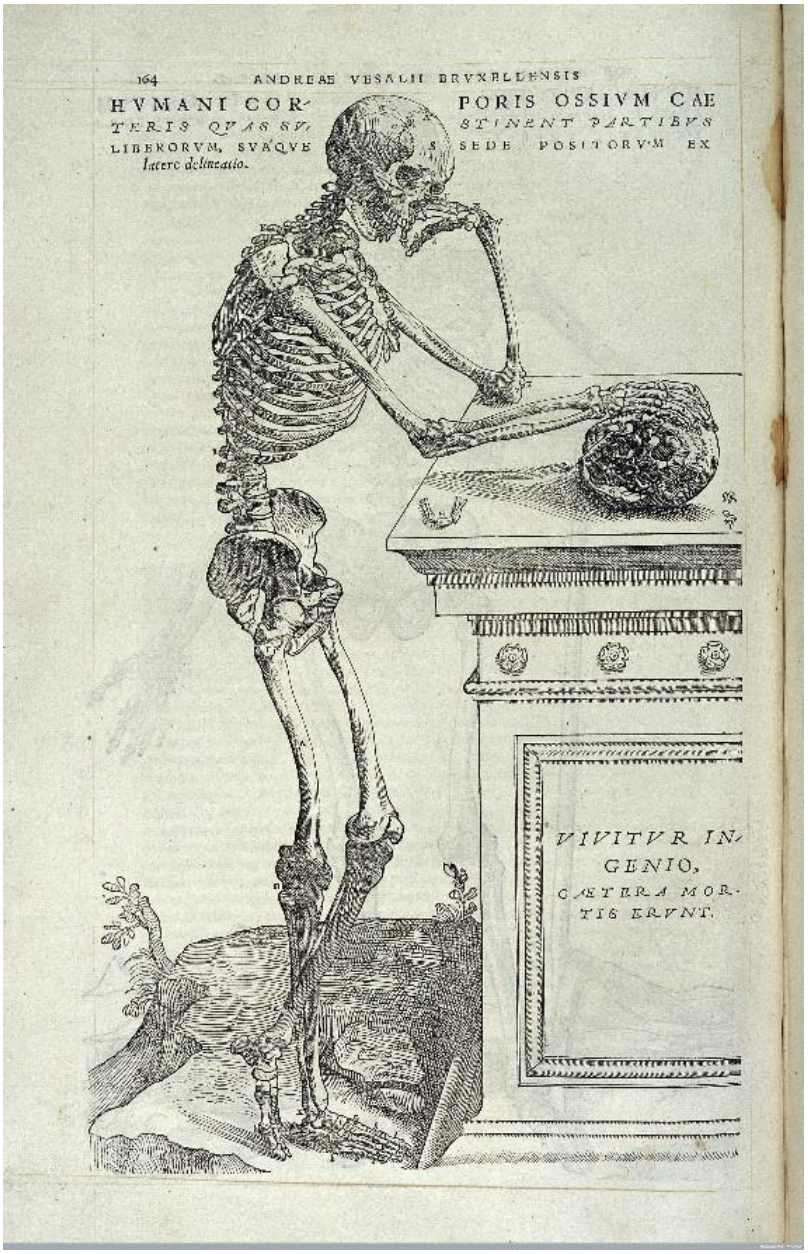


Figure 1.2. Vesalius, *Fabrica* 1543. Lateral skeleton. Courtesy of Wellcome Library, London.

These narrative structures emerging from the serialized plates work with the liveliness of the figures to recast the exploration of visceral interiority as an analysis of the processes of subjective being rather than an act of prying, after the fact of life, into the mechanics of a scientific object. When read chronologically, the series of plates in Book II depicting the layers of musculature provide enough internal continuity to tell the compelling and tragic

story of one man's desperate attempt to walk into town for his groceries before all of his muscles fall off.

Even when the muscle man is stripped down beyond his capacity to stand, Vesalius gives him literal weight as his remains are depicted suspended from ropes threaded through his maxillary sinus and partially supporting his drooping scapula as bits of his arms continue to drip from his increasingly exposed bones (see fig. 1.3-5). The flowers and stones at his feet, the wall against which he struggles to support himself, and the rolling hills beyond it all place the figure in a specific setting, which lends him individual experience. These detailed surroundings invite readers to perceive a continuity from one figure to the next and, therefore, read the plates as a chronicle of one individual's plight over the course of the dissection. This invitation to consider the individuality of the exemplary body shifts the corpse from object to subject, thereby enabling a selfhood to emerge from the purely corporeal.

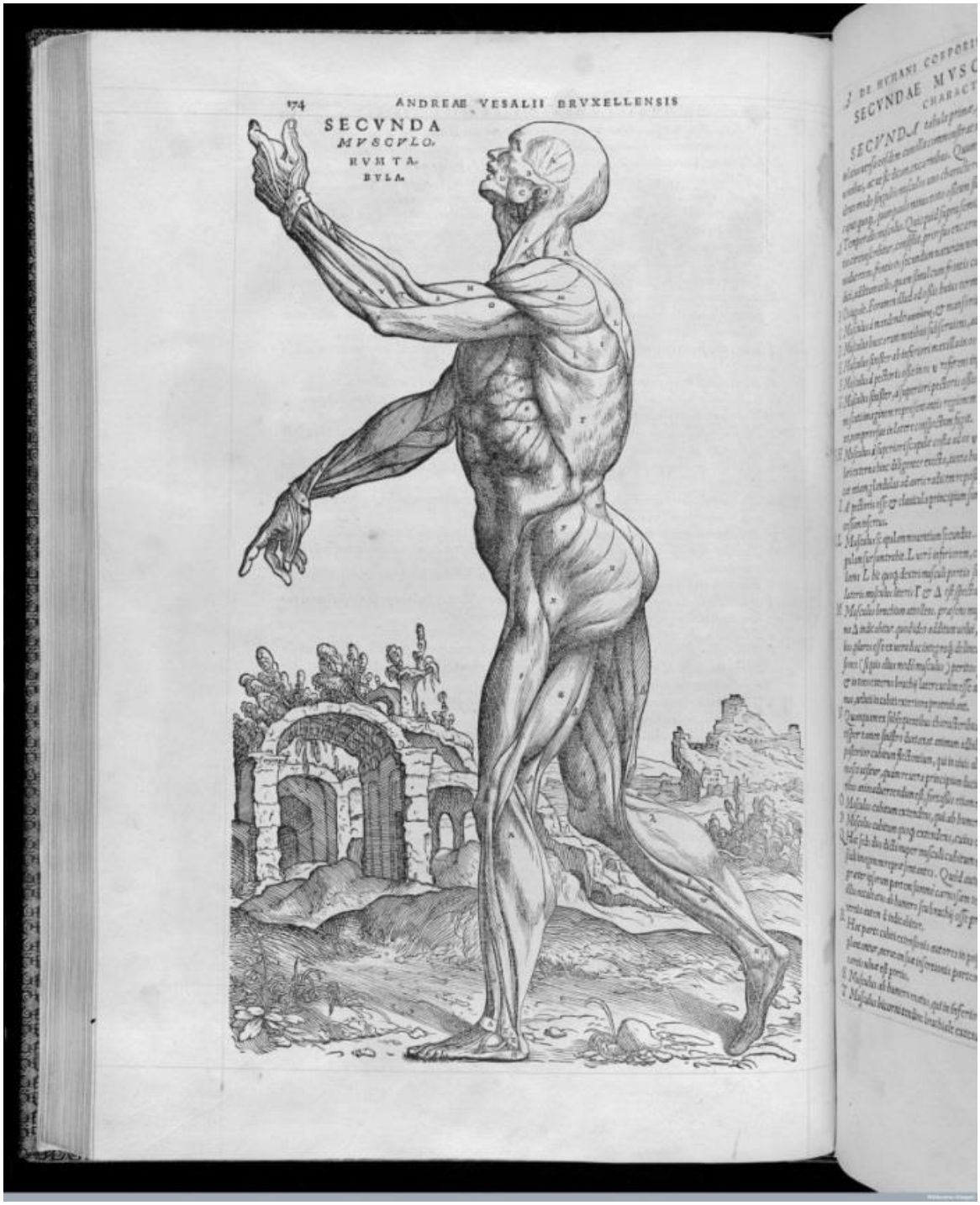


Figure 1.3. Vesalius, *Fabrica* 1543. Second muscle man. Courtesy of Wellcome Library, London.

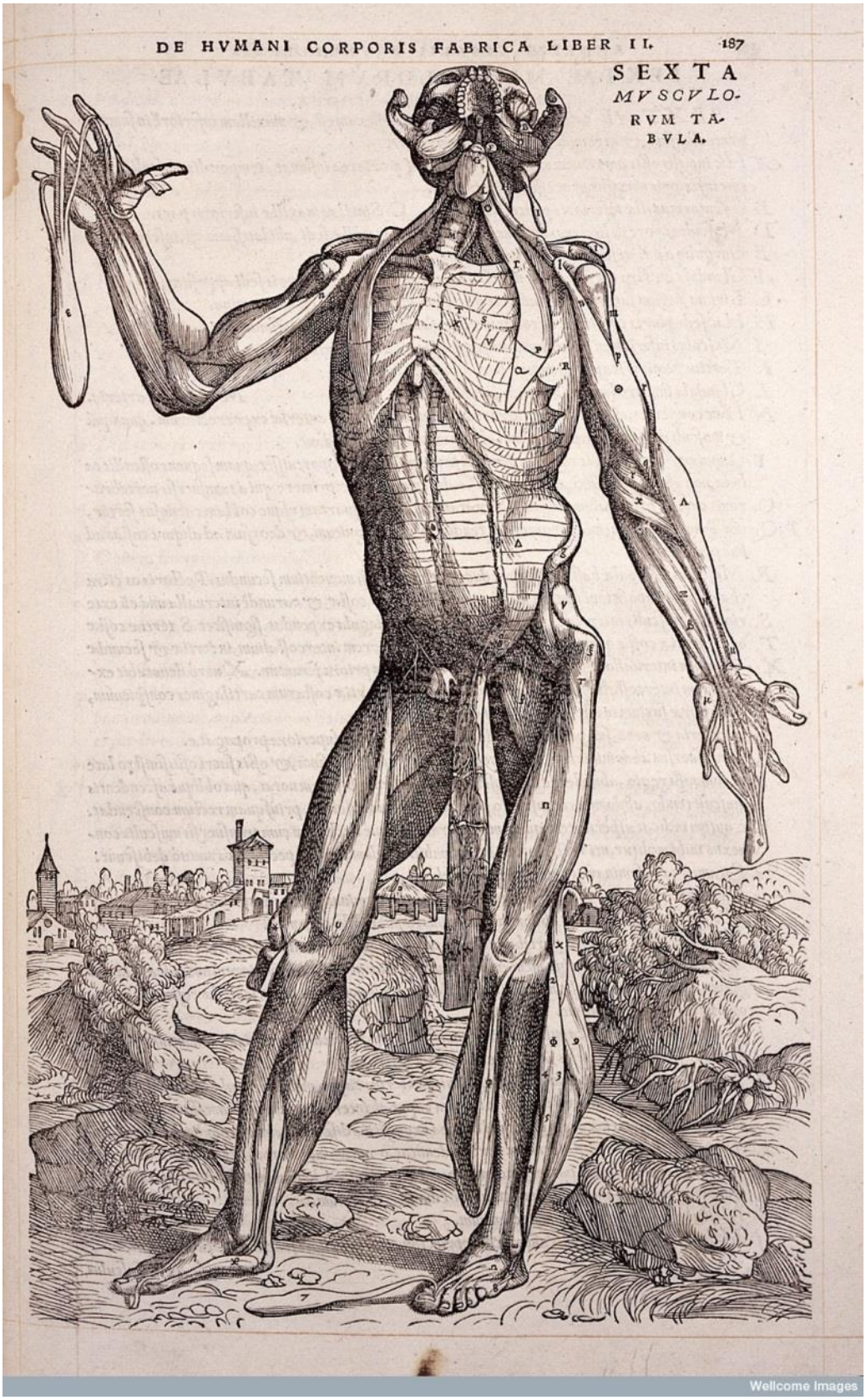


Figure 1.4. Vesalius, *Fabrica* 1543. Sixth muscle man. Courtesy of Wellcome Library, London.



Figure 1.5. Vesalius, *Fabrica* 1543. Seventh muscle man. Courtesy of Wellcome Library, London.

Unlike pre-Vesalian figures floating without substance or individuality in the white space of the blank page, the bodies of the *Fabrica* bridge the gap between the dissected object and feeling subject. In a clinical vacuum, the absence of the figure's mandible in the final image of the musculature series could be read for the practicality of revealing the neck and throat muscles beneath. However, in the context of both the scene around him on the page and the continuity suggested by those prior, suddenly the missing mandible carries with it a suggestion of character development.

The head lolls against the ropes as the exposed roof of the mouth rears back into an anguished scream unmitigated by the clenching of a jaw long lost on his brutal journey (see fig. 1.5). While any narrative legible of the images in the *Fabrica* is ultimately down to the interpretation of the reader, the scenes around the Vesalian bodies seem to reveal a fearlessness in bringing the unsettling and easily denied bodily interior into the light of day. The capacity for readers to find their own meaning amid the factual details of the anatomy makes Vesalius' work a powerful tool in the investigation of the medical humanities and the corporeal self. By fostering this creative space in tandem with the science of the body, Vesalius elevates the bodily interior beyond the allegorical tool for understanding other ideas and allows it to have its own tangible place in the narrative.

Whilst the plates of the *Fabrica* offered readers this valuable insight to corporeal identity alongside practical medical instruction, the great tome was nonetheless restricted to those affluent enough to access it. Instead, the wider value of in-home resources appears in Vesalius' companion text to the *Fabrica*, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica Librorum Epitome*. Published in the same year as the *Fabrica*, the *Epitome* offered students a condensed guide to the more exhaustive seven-volume text with the added bonus of an interactive element in the form of cut-and-paste paper anatomies. More than simply providing a passive representation

of an absent object, the *Epitome* asked the student to create the art in order to fulfil their understanding. The *Epitome* featured a brief overview of each of the main body systems from skeletal to musculature leading up to two nude figures (a male and a female) at the centre of the text. Vesalius suggested that the reader may choose whether to read the text from the beginning and layer the body from the inside or to begin at the surface with the nude figure and work backward into the interior as in the process of dissection.[65]

After the female nude, separate figures were provided of the nervous system, veins and arteries, and the organs of the digestive and reproductive systems in a figure matching the shape and pose of the female nude (see fig. 1.6). Vesalius then provided instructions for the reader to "put them together by their own efforts and industry, on the method of cutting each from the superfluous paper and pasting them on, and then of coloring them according to their ability and desire."[66] This innovative approach to printed anatomy allowed Vesalius to communicate the importance of first-hand engagement with the layered depth of the body via a more accessible medium. As Kusukawa also points out, "Squeamishness might be unbecoming of a physician, but a picture had the advantage of not requiring the actual presence of the object (and all its attendant sensations, such as smell) to teach something about the object."[67] The paper anatomies also circumvented the practical obstacle of acquiring difficult to source real bodies. The *Epitome*'s intricate and precisely organized art situated in a smaller, less expensive format than the *Fabrica* brought the body to a wider audience through print without compromising the hands-on approach.

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[65] Kusukawa, *Picturing the Book,* 211.
[66] Vesalius, *Epitome,* translated in O'Malley, *Vesalius: The Illustrations,* 220.
[67] Kusukawa, *Picturing the Book,* 213.

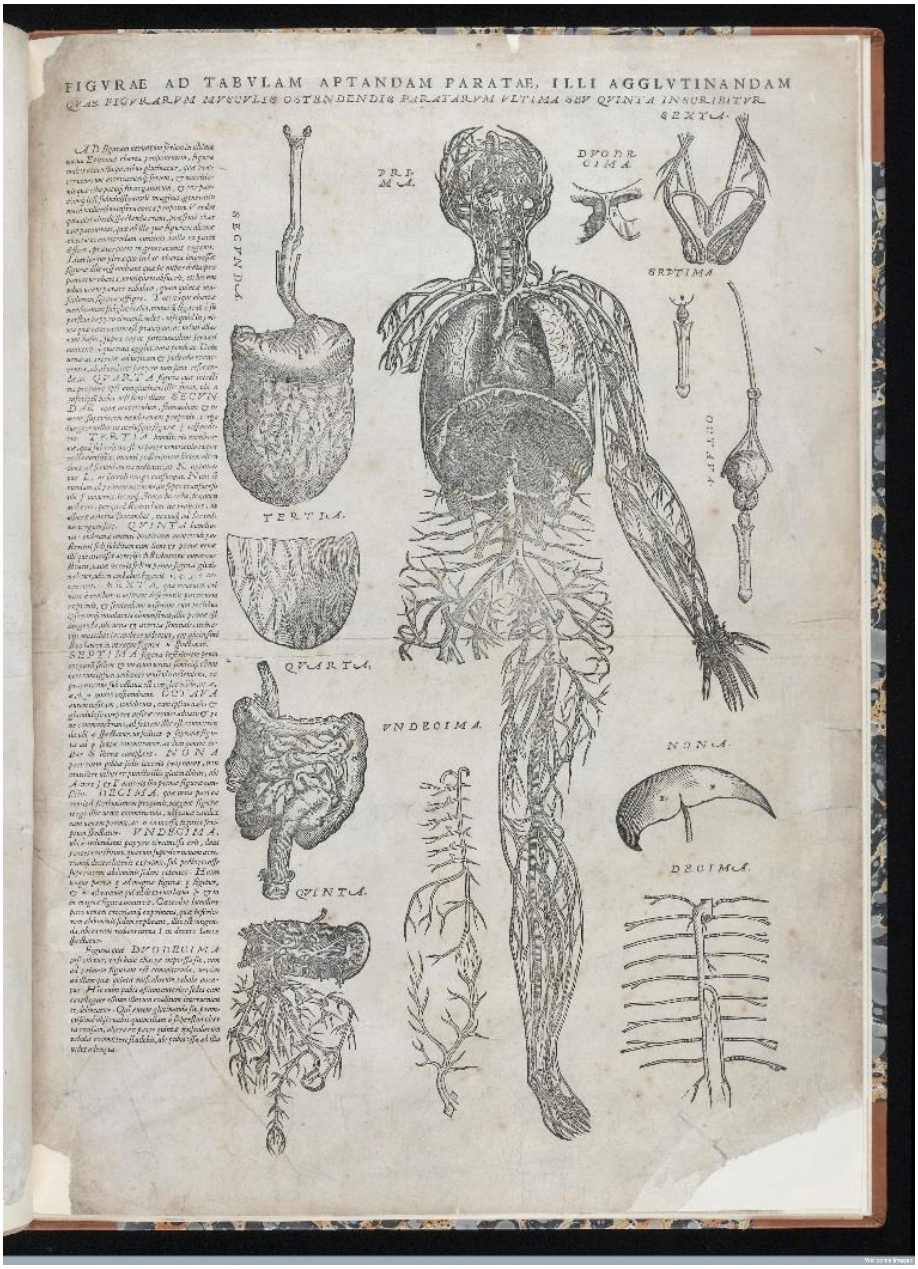


Figure 1.6. Vesalius, *Epitome,* 1543. Page following the female nude with abdominal organs to be cut and pasted into layered figure. Courtesy of Wellcome Library, London.

To identify the unique features of Vesalius' publications which contributed to its revolutionary impact and successful dissemination, Carlino contextualizes the *Fabrica* and *Epitome* within early modern medical print culture:

> The publication of the *Epitomi*, the use of the splendid and detailed illustrations as visual aids, the technique of relating text to images, the subdivisions into books, chapters, and paragraphs, the illuminated initials that open each of these

> sections, the title page and portrait of the author – each of these features was thought out and realized by Vesalius and his collaborators, as an aspect of the whole enterprise; this kind of integral arrangement had no real precedent in previous publications and conventions and often openly clashed with them. The *Fabrica* gives a newfound coherence to pre-existing material.[68]

The utility of art in knowledge production found a strong foothold in the early modern period. As Smith explains, "The rise of naturalism in painting brought about the idea that art can be a model of vision and perception. Thus, art gained importance as it came to be seen as a new mode of investigating reality."[69] Fugitive sheets and illustrated anatomical texts like the *Epitome* emerged out of this prevailing notion of the image as an investigative tool capable of making natural phenomenon observable anywhere.

Vesalian bodies ask students of the anatomical arts to seek knowledge through a science which is emblazoned with those same literary tools of imagery, narrative structure, and character development with which Shakespeare develops his template of human nature. Whether students attended dissections in person, studied the complete *Fabrica*, or constructed their own paper figures from the *Epitome*, the Vesalian method revolutionized medicine by encouraging the prioritization of empirical evidence, first-hand engagement, and accessibility. These traditions in medicine were by no means unique to Vesalius, but his innovations in anatomy theatres and print are largely responsible for their developmental dissemination.

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[68] Carlino, 39.
[69] Smith, 89.

Tracing the Body's Accessibility: Pre-Vesalian Context and Vernacular Dissemination

To approach the medical sciences as a wholly interconnected body of work, it is helpful to situate the social developments of sixteenth-century medicine in relationship to the trajectory of medicine from the pre-Vesalian period. Although it involves a briefly achronological turn, this acknowledgement of the medical landscape from which Vesalian medicine emerged illustrates, in broader social contexts, the incremental nature of scientific evolution and its intimate linkage to its cultural zeitgeist.

Throughout the fourteenth century, perceptions of the body were evolving along with the multitude of arts and sciences benefiting from the renewed spirit of inquiry driving the Renaissance.[70] Inquiries into the body were spurred onward by the first great pandemic of The Black Death in 1348 which killed approximately one third of the population of Europe over the course of three years.[71] The unfathomable disaster of the plague sparked a major paradigm shift, both culturally and medically, in what Andrew Wear refers to as "a European-wide rhetoric of horror."[72]

Physicians responded with a renewed sense of urgency and obligation to their communities. Carlo Cipolla explains, "Both health and disease are social as well as biological phenomena. Correspondingly, the doctor has a duty not only to his patient but also to the community to which it belongs."[73] Medicine saw a major resurgence as the bans on human dissection were slowly lifted for anatomical research in universities. In 1442, the University of Bologna set the tone for medical schools across Italy by installing statutes to regulate the scholarly use of human cadavers. These statutes limited the number of students allowed in

[70] O'Malley, *Andreas Vesalius of Brussels,* 18.
[71] C. H. Talbot, *Medicine in Medieval England* (London: Oldbourne Book Company, 1967), 164.
[72] Andrew Wear, *Knowledge & Practice in English Medicine, 1550-1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 279.
[73] Cipolla, *Public Health,* 10.

attendance (20 for a male body and 30 for a female) in an effort to keep the academic demonstration from turning to spectacle.[74]

This institutional regulation of academic audiences in the anatomy theatres is indicative of the public interest driven not necessarily by scientific pursuits, but by a quite literally morbid curiosity.[75] Public executions and dissections provided an opportunity to witness the spiritually, philosophically, and dramatically charged moment between life and death. To be present at such a complex point in the separation of body from soul had a multitude of implications for all manner of spectators.

For many, it was a carnivalesque entertainment driven by the high-stakes drama of death. For some, it was a chance to validate their own morality against the double-punished body of the dissected criminal.[76] For practitioners of the occult, it was an opportunity to collect intensely charged magical objects like a lock of hair or a cloth soaked in freshly spilled blood for use in protection and healing rituals.[77] Witches stood beside anatomy students to vie for the tools of their respective trades. Whether medicine or magic, the bodily interior and its viscera heighten the experience of humanness in the spectator; the significance of witnessing its exposure ultimately operates on an individual basis informed by personal beliefs, contexts, and motives.

William Kerwin explores the unstable boundary between medicine and culture by way of its social nature. Highlighting the vantage point of drama, Kerwin argues, "Playwrights consistently unmask fictions of medical autonomy, emphasizing that a variety

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[74] O'Malley, *Andreas Vesalius of Brussels,* 14.
[75] Peter Lake and Michael Questier, "Agency, Appropriation and Rhetoric under the Gallows: Puritans, Romanists and the State in Early Modern England," *Past & Present* 153, no. 1 (November 1996): 64-107.
[76] José Van Dijck, "Digital Cadavers: The Visible Human Project as Anatomical Theater," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 31, no. 2 (2000): 271-285. See also Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned*, 54.
[77] Francesca Matteoni, "The Criminal Corpse in Pieces" *Mortality* 21, no. 3 (2016), 198-209.

of social narratives compete in the shaping of medical culture."[78] Framing the field of medicine as a corpus, Kerwin identifies an "internalist" approach in methods which study medicine as a discrete body of scientific knowledge and an "externalist" approach in social narratives which "allow us to consider ostensibly nonmedical cultural processes and link them to both institutional and patient stories of medicine."[79] However, even in the process of identifying these separate modes of approaching the body, Kerwin admits the inevitable exchange between the two: "The boundaries defining what is and is not medicine become blurry, because if all medicine bears the imprint of the social and the political, then there is no clearly delineative 'internal' world."[80] Nothing exists in a vacuum, not even the bodily interior.

The fascination with the bodily interior is a pervasive one by virtue of its inevitable constancy in everyday life. The physical experience of a nauseated digestive tract, an increased heartrate, or a headache is not isolated to the anatomists and physicians with the tools to investigate their causes. Chapter 4 will deal with the particular investigation of physiological vitality in more depth, but it is worth noting here how the vital processes inform the development of a shared medical culture. Especially throughout the early modern period, people sought a clearer understanding of how the body works, not for some abstracted scientific achievement, but in order to gain a better understanding of the nature from which it sprang, the God who pieced it together, and the self it forms. As Wear explains, "By 1550, the attempt of learned, that is university-educated, physicians to reform English medicine was well underway, as was the printing of vernacular medical books which sought to spread medical knowledge widely amongst lay people and practitioners."[81] These fascinations

[78] William Kerwin, *Beyond the Body* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), 1.
[79] Ibid, 5.
[80] Ibid, 7.
[81] Wear, 4-5.

throughout the public sphere helped to drive the popularity of anatomists' works and prompted a more accessible range of anatomical insights in publication.

Vernacular texts were not one-sided indoctrinations of laypersons into the elite knowledge of the universities. Rather, they combined both empirical scientific knowledge and public values, and integrated new evidence into the more folkloric oral traditions of medicine already present in the home. Wear addresses the cross-cultural benefits of the way vernacular medical texts "helped to create a literate medical culture that both recognized popular-elite distinctions and accepted that educated lay people and practitioners could share in a common medical culture."[82]

Vesalius' participation in the tradition of vernacular medical texts was not limited to conceptual impetus. His consideration for the common medical culture is legible in his inclusion of patients into the discourse, as noted in *The China Root Epistle*: "I shall at least put its content as I do into the letters which I send to my friends from time to time concerning my activities or which I write to patients or other doctors about the treatment of certain complicated conditions."[83] Here, Vesalius breaks down the hierarchy separating physicians from patients by providing access to his reasoning. In doing so, Vesalius continues to improve on Galenic traditions by moving away from dictated authority and toward a methodological transparency.

Although he never published what might be considered a strictly vernacular text, the resources he provided to students of medicine in the years leading up to the *Fabrica* and the *Epitome* provided a similar level of condensed, legible guidance to the body. In 1538, five years prior to the publications of the *Fabrica* and its *Epitome*, Vesalius released a series of

[82] Ibid.
[83] Vesalius, *China Root*, 51.

six individual fugitive sheets featuring three on the vascular and generative organs and three on the skeletal system. Although originally printed without a title, these pages came to be known collectively as the *Tabulae anatomicae sex*.

The project began as a single illustration of the vascular system during one of his lectures at the University of Padua which, according to Vesalius, "pleased the professors of medicine and all the students so much that they earnestly sought from me a diagram of the arteries and also one of the nerves."[84] Vesalius goes on to clarify his intentions for the rest of the publications by stating in a letter to a potential patron, "I knew that illustrations of this sort would be extremely useful for those who might attend my dissections."[85] Although these pages were intended as complementary guides to students in attendance of dissections at the theatre, their printed accessibility nonetheless impacted readers outside the university.

O'Malley describes the quality of these more publicly accessible prints in terms of their target market. He explains, "The original market for such sheets was among bath attendants, barbers, and surgeons, not a discriminating group; hence the illustrations were frequently crude and anatomically inexact." He goes on to point out the linguistic implications of such stripped down basics saying, "because of the unlearned audience to whom they were addressed, the language employed was often the vernacular."[86] Although the quality was lacking by comparison to the masterwork of the *Fabrica* that was to follow, the fugitive sheets ultimately illustrate the important path by which Vesalian notions of the body reached a breadth of public consciousness otherwise reserved for high ranking physicians and anatomists in the academic sphere.

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[84] Vesalius, translated in O'Malley, *Illustrations from the Works,* 233.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Saunders and O'Malley, *Illustrations from the Works,* 25.

The dissemination of Vesalian anatomy into the English-speaking world moved swiftly with the help of a Flemish refugee called Thomas Lambert, who began engraving and printing in London under the pseudonym "Thomas Geminus" during the 1540s. Geminus reproduced Vesalius' woodcuts in copper and reorganized the knowledge of the *Fabrica* and the *Epitome* into a condensed format, limiting its contents to the basics of the major skeletal, muscular, nervous, vascular, and reproductive systems.[87] Geminus' *Compendiosa Totius Anatomie Delineato* takes primarily from Vesalius' already condensed work, the *Epitome*, but also includes a selection of smaller plates from the *Fabrica* including the heart and lungs along with the sternotomized male torso (see fig. 1.7).[88]

[87] Peter Murray Jones, "Gemini, Thomas (*fl.* 1540–1562)." in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10513 (accessed March 19, 2017).
[88] Thomas Geminus, *Compendiosa Totius Anatomie Delineation* (London: Nicholas Hyll in Saint John's Street, 1553) Reel position: STC/2458:01 Early English Books online accessed 6 May 2020.

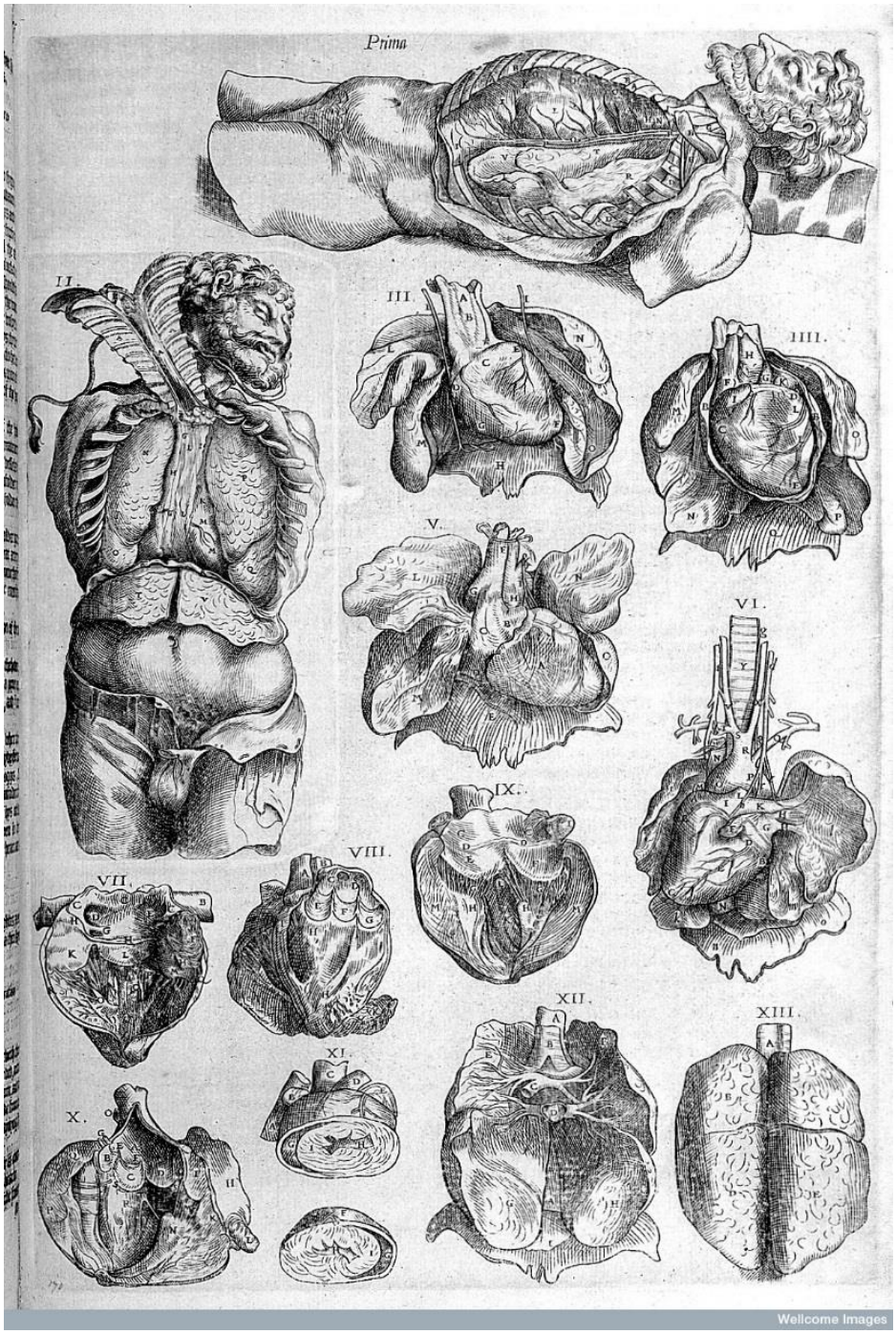


Figure 1.7. Thomas Geminus, *Compendiosa Totius Anatomie Delineation* 1553. The Vesalian plates of Book VI (heart and lungs) of the *Fabrica* condensed to a single page. Courtesy of Wellcome Library, London.

Although Geminus' practical approach abandoned much of Vesalius' original organizational continuity in favour of spatially economized printing, the *Compendiosa* marks a major turning point in the accessibility of Vesalian medicine just two years after the original publication of the *Fabrica* in Basel. After the success of Geminus' Latin

reproduction of 1545, he went on to produce an English translation of the *Compendiosa* in 1553. The bold, legible typeface of this edition adds to the practical public accessibility created by the translation out of Latin.

Even before the publication of the complete book, individual plates of the *Tabulae Sex* had already been reproduced without permission. O'Malley notes a dichotomy in the dissemination of the Vesalian body in his claim that the plagiarism of *Tabulae anatomicae* "was both a compliment to his conception of anatomical illustration and an irritant to the author."[89] Although Vesalius' own statement on the widespread plagiarism of his work remains quite bitter, O'Malley notes the popularity such imitation signifies.

I. M. L. Donaldson summarizes Vesalius' response to Geminus' work, explaining, "Vesalius complained bitterly that his images had been copied incompetently, reduced in size and traduced in a recent English book." Donaldson crucially notes, "The inaccuracy of his comments suggests strongly that he had not himself seen the offending book and was basing his strictures on the reports of others."[90] Although Vesalius may never have personally seen the result of Geminus' reproductions, he nonetheless attacks the idea of the act with vigour, promising to "spare no effort to vanquish those plagiarists who are wont to seize upon the labours of others."[91] The most telling aspect of these statements, however, is not the indignant stance itself, but rather the reasoning behind the rage. Vesalius goes on to say, "I feel compelled to state that I will gladly send my plates to any conscientious printer."[92] In offering to do so, Vesalius seems to clarify that his primary concern was not necessarily with

[89] Charles Donald O'Malley, "Introduction," in *Compendiosa Totius Anatomie Delineation: A facsimilie of the first English edition of 1553* (London: Dawsons, 1959), 9.
[90] I. M. L. Donaldson, "The Compendiosa of Thomas Geminus: Part 1," *The Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh* 44, no. 1 (2014): 85.
[91] Vesalius, translated in O'Malley, "Introduction," 10.
[92] Ibid.

the intellectual thievery, but with the quality of the prints resulting from Geminus' unlicensed efforts.

Although *The China Root Epistle* has no illustrations, it features an introduction by his brother Franciscus which reflects Vesalius' commitment to artistic precision. Franciscus laments, "I wish the *Epitome* had not been spoiled so disgracefully by a certain Englishman…He utterly corrupted what had made it most praiseworthy and so roughly and absurdly copied what had been set forth with elegant drawing and engraving that he preserved no appearance of Oporinus' majestic edition."[93] Though arguably biased by family ties, this conception of Vesalius' plates as "elegant" and "majestic" reinforces the inherent value of the artistry involved in the anatomical work. The scientific accuracy of the plates is understood to be indivisible from their beauty and craftsmanship.

The other intriguing aspect of Franciscus' condemnation of the Geminus editions is the specificity of his attack on the plagiarist as an Englishman. Latin and English have a complex relationship throughout the history of medicine. Latin tends to have precedence as the *lingua franca* which rules the sciences, but English was, in England, the vehicle by which privileged scholarly knowledge disseminates through a relatively wider sect of the public sphere among the literate middle classes. English was, to the university's upper echelon, "peripheral and rude."[94] However, as medical linguists Irma Taavitsainen and Päivi Pahta point out, "in spite of such opinions, medical writing in the vernacular increased steadily from the end of the fourteenth century till the seventeenth century."[95]

Taavitsainen and Pahta illustrate an important factor in textual transmission when addressing Latin to English translations of medical texts. In their introduction, they set out an

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[93] Vesalius, *The China Root Epistle*, 6.
[94] Päivi Pahta and Irma Taavitsainen, "Vernacularisation of Medical Writing in English: A Corpus-Based Study of Scholasticism," *Early Science and Medicine* 3, no. 2 (1998), 157.
[95] Ibid.

important translation policy: "translators strove to polish and enrich the target language and transfer the already established conventions and features of Latin scientific writing into English. They were free to treat the contents fairly liberally so that additions and adaptations of various kinds were not infrequent."[96] Taavitsainen and Pahta's study highlights a unique intersection of textual instability over both time and translation with the innate state of flux by which science naturally progresses.

As briefly touched on before in terms of presentist modes of analysis, the corpus of medical knowledge must constantly evolve and adapt to new discoveries in order to encompass scientific truths as they are more fully understood over time. In this sense, the understanding of the body undergoes an important adaptive evolution by entering the English language. This change may not necessarily be ideal for the precise reproduction of its original sources; however, it does require a fundamental reorganization of how these anatomical and physiological concepts are expressed. Pahta refers to this process in linguistic terminology as strategic "code-switching." This linguistic transition, particularly in "domain-specific language," must account for the terminology by which the discourse operates. As Phata explains, "Terms provide names for the disciplinary concepts and methods by which the professionals operate, and they are vital for the organization and systemization of domain-specific knowledge."[97] The translation process therefore necessitates a new mode of thinking about the body that leaves the principles of scientific standardization in order to find new modes of communicating their core meanings to a wider audience.

What the Latin descriptions of the body may lose in nuanced accuracy is regained through English via a mode of reading the body which prioritizes accessibility. The trade-off

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[96] Ibid.
[97] Päivi Pahta and Irma Taavitsainen, *Medical Writing in Early Modern English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 123.

facilitates a shift from the theoretical *scientia* to the practical *ars* via the translation's wider application to the reality of those affected by chronic illness, pain, and death in their daily lives. Unwell bodies are allowed, by this mode, to make the shift from objects of study to autonomous readers and administrators of their own cures.

The heartfelt lament from Franciscus Vesalius on behalf of his older brother's plagiarized works, combined with Andreas Vesalius' own doubts about quality reproductions of his art reveal in the *Fabrica* and *Epitome* an artistic value perhaps not readily evident in the text alone. On their own, the texts seem to organize their priorities around scientific function with little room for humanist philosophy amid the detailed instructions for a successful dissection. However, the plagiaristic dissemination of the works by Geminus illuminates some insight into the artist's conception of what the book should be. The responses prompted by Geminus' purported wrongdoing bring about a better appreciation for the structural, organizational, and artistically layered triumphs of the originals. In an elegant parallel between the *Fabrica* and the anatomical and physiological human body it explores, the form of each part serves the function it seeks to enact.

Although Geminus' version of the Vesalian originals retains the detail of the body diagrams, the effort to create an abridged copy of the *Fabrica* undermined the original's organizational method. Geminus chose to place the illustrations on separate pages from their corresponding descriptions, as opposed to the *Fabrica* and *Epitome*, in which the images are directly surrounded by their descriptions. Figures which originally appeared clearly spaced apart on separate plates in the *Fabrica* are cramped together on single pages of the *Compendiosa* (see fig. 1.7).[98] Whilst perhaps more economical to print, Geminus' condensed approach to plate organization fractures continuity and compromises clarity. The lack of

[98] Geminus, *Compendiosa*, Reel position: STC/2458:01 Early English Books online accessed 6 May 2020.

space between the figures also prevents annotations which would otherwise have invited engagement from readers of the Vesalian originals.

The compromises in the Geminus editions of the *Compendiosa*, whilst artistically frustrating, are ultimately a fair price to pay for the book's significant influence on a wider English audience. The compacted organization and jumbled descriptions fortunately have little impact on the careful reproduction of the body illustrations. These copper-cuts produced after Vesalius' originals retain the accuracy and uncanny beauty of the bodily interior as explored first-hand by Vesalius. No matter the organizational quality of the textual transmission, Geminus' work plays a key role in the transportation of Vesalian bodies into a world significantly closer to Shakespeare's own.

Galen, Vesalius, and Geminus form a network of influences that shaped the medical minds of the sixteenth century. Galen's work establishes the classical basis, Vesalius forges the hands-on revolution, and Geminus brings it all into the public sphere of late sixteenth-century London. Despite Vesalius' indignation at the plagiarist's efforts, Geminus' *Compendiosa* enjoyed three editions between 1545 and 1559. Geminus even found posthumous retaliation after Vesalius' comments as, "After Geminus's death the anatomical engravings of the *Compendiosa* were used to illustrate two editions of Vesalius's *Epitome*, one Latin in 1564 and one French in 1569."[99] As these modes of thinking emerge in radiuses of time and space ever closer to the world in which Shakespeare worked, one text in particular creates the personal link by which the notion of the Shakespearean body intersects with the history of early modern medical perceptions.

[99] Donaldson, "*Compendiosa* of Thomas Geminus," 87.

Sourcing the Shakespearean Body in Early Modern London

First published in 1583, Philip Barrough's *The Methode of Phisicke, Conteyning the Causes, Signes, and Cures of the Inward diseases in mans body from the head to the foote* is a vernacular text which provides a manual for the medically intrigued layperson of the late sixteenth century.[100] Barrough's text is not unique in the period as a home manual for health. It ranks amongst other popular texts like Thomas Moulton's *Myrour or Glasse of Helthe* which also purports itself "necessary and nedefull for every person to loke in, that wyll kepe theyr body from the syckeness."[101] Particularly around the time of the pestilence, the capacity to personally understand and care for one's own body became a valuable skill.[102]

Vernacular medical texts made it possible to identify and prevent illnesses, create and administer medicines in specific dosages, and even plan the safest and most effective timing for bloodletting according to the provided astrological almanac. These texts differ from dissection-based works like the *Fabrica* in their physiological priorities. Where the *Fabrica* offers primarily morphological details via its posthumous subjects, vernacular texts focus on physiology to guide their readers through the complex functions of their own living bodies. As previously noted, the historical significance and enduring results of this divide between anatomy and physiology will be addressed further in Chapter 4.

The prevalence of vernacular medical books in the mid to late sixteenth century indicates a trend toward engagement with one's own body and the bodies in one's community. The active study of medicine in the home forges a link between the physical body and identity as the pursuit of medical knowledge becomes part of the study to know one's self. Moulton's intimation of personal reflection in the title of *Myrour or Glass*

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[100] Philip Barrough, *The Method of Phisick* (London: Thomas Vautrollier, 1583).
[101] Thomas Moulton, *Myrour or Glasse of Helthe* (London: John Waley, 1560).
[102] Paul Slack, "Mirrors of Health and Treasures of Poor Men," in *Health, Medicine, and Mortality in the 16th Century*, ed. Charles Webster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979) 237-275.

reiterates the idea that knowledge of one's self necessitates an understanding of the bodily interior and its needs.

While the multitude of vernacular medical texts of the time provides some insight into the popularity of personal corporeal engagement on a broader scale, it is most relevant for the purposes of this investigation to focus on Barrough's *Method of Phisick*, given its closeness to spheres of Shakespearean influence as well as its medical improvements. Barrough provides an updated approach in the several decades after Moulton by moving away from some of the astrological mythology and improves upon Moulton's user interface via a detailed table of contents and in-margin quick references. Most significantly, the publication details of *Method of Phisick* bring the text to the forefront of analysis on not just the early modern body overall, but specifically the Shakespearean body born of a union between medical and literary study.

The third edition of Barrough's *Methode of Phisick* was printed by Richard Field in 1596, situating it well within Shakespeare's potential circle of influence during the height of his career in London.[103] This updated edition also fills gaps left by earlier editions as its subtitle declares: "corrected and augmented with two other books newly added by the Author" on the subjects of syphilis and compound medicines.[104] The scientific accuracy delivered with a tone and structure attuned to the general public is made clear in the book's subheading, "which our Physitions commonly use at this day," reinforcing Barrough's work as a user-friendly guide to reputable medical techniques for the home.

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[103] The first edition of *Method of Phisick* was printed in 1579 at Thomas Vautrollier's Blackfriars printing press whilst Shakespeare's Stratfordian friend, Richard Field, was an apprentice there. Vautrollier's wife, Jacqueline supervised the edition as Thomas was attending affairs in Edinburgh at the time. Her familiarity with the text offers a potential link to Shakespeare as she went on to marry Field in the early 1590s. Andrew Pettegree, "Vautrollier, Thomas (*d.* 1587)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28158 (accessed March 19, 2017).

[104] Philip Barrough, *The Method of Phisick* (London: Richard Field, 1596).

What the *Methode of Phisick* lacks in Vesalius-grade illustration, it makes up for in structural accessibility and the physiological discussion absent from the morphological *Fabrica*. Barrough's preface to the reader discusses the duty a physician must have to serve all people. After a brief nod to Galen, he explains the core value at the heart of the publication: "…there is no man which so farre swarveth from common sense, that will not confess it to be verie expedient & needefull for all to know the estate of their owne bodies."[105] This sentiment links the values of scientific pursuits with grounded humanist concerns to illuminate the power of understanding one's body. Barrough's specific acknowledgement of "the estate of their owne bodies" offers a clear insight into the notion of corporeal selfhood emerging from the widening accessibility of medical knowledge during the early modern period.

Where the Vesalian body offers a standardized anatomical structure delivered in an artistically engaged mode, Barrough fills in the physiological gaps left by Vesalius' omission of unwell bodies with a direct address to the layperson. While Barrough's approach to the body in terms of personal wellbeing contrasts with the dissection table purposes of the *Fabrica*, the former nonetheless owes its accessibility and practical engagement to the principles established several decades prior. The anatomical and physiological modes represented by Vesalius and Barrough respectively work together throughout the mid to late sixteenth century to inform a more accurate scientific reading of the bodily interior and its living functions. As they establish the medical body, these approaches to corporeality interact with public consciousness and participate in the humanist construction of selfhood from the inside out.

[105] Barrough, *The Method of Phisick,* vii.

The prevalence of vernacular medical texts across England expanded rapidly during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with the advent of the printing press. As Faye Marie Getz notes, "The increase was nothing less than explosive: it has been estimated that the number of vernacular medical manuscripts in English multiplied sixfold from the fourteenth to the fifteenth centuries."[106] The demand for publicly accessible content portends an expectation for scientific accuracy amid general readers outside university spheres. Getz highlights that "The growth in size of the vernacular medical corpus of texts does not suggest that written voice was being given to folk practice. Instead, it suggests that the audience for learned medical discourse was expanding, as it often had before, from one language into another."[107] The branch of medical understanding that reaches into the vernacular medical texts of Barrough and Moulton stems from the core scientific progress of the university realm, rather than the internal threads of "folk practice" already in the home. As such, the vernacular medical text represents a widening of in-home medical understanding with the authority of practiced scientific methodology.

The bibliographical classification of vernacular medical texts is somewhat unstable. Because medical practice in the early modern period was not a distinct professional classification, writings on health and physic were often included amongst other subjects like astrology, religion, and botany. Although they trouble modern notions of categorical science, the intersections of these subjects illuminate the benefits of a scientific curiosity which acknowledges a wider network of influences from seemingly unrelated philosophical, natural, and cosmic discourses.

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[106] Faye Marie Getz, "Charity, Translation, and the Language of Medical Learning in Medieval England," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 64, no. 1 (1990): 3.
[107] Ibid, 4.

In an effort to calculate a quantifiable statistic, Paul Slack established an admittedly subjective definition of 'medical literature' published before 1605 as "all books and pamphlets deliberately and largely devoted to the description, analysis or treatment of human health and disease."[108] With this framework, Slack traced the popular uses of vernacular medical texts throughout the early modern period. The 153 examples of 'medical literature' uncovered were categorized into eight headings: anatomy and surgery, reflections on theory and practice, herbals, plague tracts, other specific diseases, single or specialized remedies, explanatory textbooks and regimens, collections of remedies.[109] The relative vagueness of several subheadings is again indicative of the ultimately arbitrary pitfalls of attempting to organize the nebulous structure of early modern medical knowledge outside occupational distinction. With this qualification in mind, Slack's findings nonetheless provide a valuable perspective on the dissemination of popular medical knowledge in early modern English homes.

In his calculations, Slack found that publications on anatomy and surgery make up only 15% of English vernacular medical literature from 1486 to 1604. Comparatively, plague tracts alone make up the same percentage of the total range of subject matter. At 21.6% of all titles and 29.3% of all editions, explanatory textbooks and regimens make up the majority of medical literature of the period. This statistic occurs alongside the relatively high percentages also found of collections of remedies at 11.8% of titles and 24.7% of editions. Slack's data seems to indicate a preference among readers for texts that provide direct remedies to specific ailments, rather than practical overviews of the body. Unsurprisingly, the majority claimed by "books giving advice on how to combat a great variety of diseases" suggests that early

[108] Slack, "Mirrors of Health," 238.
[109] Ibid, 243.

modern readers sought medical knowledge for the sake of treatment against illness, as opposed to exploratory curiosity about the homeostatic body. [110]

The dissemination of medical understanding through vernacular publications provides an important historical context to this thesis. The social paradigm for popular medicine in the early modern period is evidenced through the accessibility established within the universities by Vesalius and passed down to the wider audience of the literate public through Barrough, Moulton, and the literature compiled in Slack's study. Thus far, I have traced notions of selfhood throughout scientific texts via the intricate display of dissected bodies in the *Fabrica*, Barrough's invitations to know oneself by recognizing the symptoms of illness, and the personal agency inherent in the popular demand for English vernacular medical publications.

The popularity of vernacular texts is a crucial foundation for the development of corporeal selfhood because it establishes a common medical culture with influence on readers' personal lives. The bodily agency, awareness, and autonomy facilitated without the intermediary of university-trained physicians allowed individuals to build more intimate personal relationships with their bodies founded in medical science. The prevalence of vernacular medical texts especially in late sixteenth-century London situates Shakespeare's corporeal character development in a culture of popular medicine which actively provides the tools necessary to invest identity in the corpus.

As this history of medicine reaches its denouement in the generation after Shakespeare's life and work, it is worth mentioning John Hall's *A Little Book of Cures* and James Cook's translation of his notes into *Select Observations on English Bodies*. Although the works themselves belong to the generation after Shakespeare, Hall's close relationship

[110] Ibid, 245.

with his father-in-law likely culminated in his treatment of the writer during his final illness in 1616.[111]

The Lithotomy of Samuel Pepys: A Case Study in Corporeal Selfhood

In order to pinpoint the interdisciplinary nuances of corporeal selfhood, the focus must shift toward personal applications of bodily understanding in lives outside scientific discourse. For this, it is helpful to consider first how the corporeally inclined reader might hope to foster a personal connection with their own idiosyncratic body when the remedy-based medical literature seeks only to place them in a state of standardized homeostasis. There is a sort of paradox in seeking personal understanding through the study of medicine because, as it reveals the mysteries of one's ever-present yet opaque interiority, it does so by ascribing to the monolithic canon of the healthy body.

For some, the path to anatomical self-actualization takes not a book, but a knife. As Vesalius claims, to truly know his subject, the anatomist must engage with it first-hand by reaching physically into the cadaver. While such a direct route may not be an option for the curious layperson hoping to survive their encounter with interior selfhood, the experience of surgical intervention has the potential to open both body and subject to a unique realm of opportunities for engagement with one's corporeality.

Sawday acknowledges the bodily interior's capacity to signify individuality as distinctly as exterior signs may. He cites New York City's chief medical examiner, Milton Helpern, who observes: "individuality stamps its mark on every part of the anatomy: no two hearts are entirely alike; the shapes of livers are never quite the same; branching vessels

[111] Greg Wells, *John Hall Master of Physicke: A Casebook from Shakespeare's Stratford* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), xvi.

always ramify in a unique way."[112] Whilst not as self-consciously constructed in its performance, the internal organs are nonetheless endowed with "marks of bodily individuality which may be perceived within the interior as much as upon the more accustomed exterior."[113] In this way, the generalization of Vesalian taxonomy which has systematized the bodily interior for centuries is refuted by the revelation of subtle difference otherwise glossed over for the sake of scientific consistency. As previously explored, this divide between the systematic body and the individual one drives a consistent tension throughout medical history. The taxonomy of the former is a necessary constant by which to understand the latter.

Where Vesalius invokes Renaissance naturalness in the *Fabrica* externally via the depictions of bodies among plants, Helpern's language reveals an internal nature which is structurally integral to the "branching" bodily interior. Helpern's use of a verb by which trees grow and rivers divide situates an inherent nature within the structure of internal anatomy. This innate natural parallelism emerges throughout Shakespearean corporeality from Lavinia's body made "bare of her two branches"[114] to Goneril's eroding rivers which "with cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks."[115] Both the anatomist and the poet rely on the structures of nature to underpin their observations on the body with an external frame of reference. Chapter 3 will address the hyperbolic fracturing of the female body onto nature imagery in the elements of blazon traditions engaged throughout *Titus*.

Like the scenes of nature adorning the figures in the *Fabrica*, Vesalian perceptions situate the bodily interior as an object which is only imbued with meaning through the

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[112] F. Gonzalez-Crussi, *Notes of an Anatomist* (London: Picador, 1986), 69 quoted in Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned*, 7.
[113] Ibid.
[114] William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, ed. Jonathan Bate (London: Arden, 2006), 2.3.17-8.
[115] William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. R. A. Foakes (London: Arden, 2018), 1.4.277.

anatomist's external application of it. By contrast, approaches like those of Sawday and Helpern allow the bodily interior to have unique, individual natures which give the bodies inherent meaning before the intervention of the anatomist's taxonomy. In practice, both approaches to the bodily interior constitute effective means of navigating the body in the context of their respective purposes. The Vesalian body must be read into in order to organize a standardized, and therefore quantifiable, scientific system. In the search for interior corporeal selfhood, however, the anatomist must not simply reject the Vesalian template, but also recognize its fallacy by reading the reality of nonstandard bodies against it. The former looks at the body with an objectifying gaze, only allowing subjectivity where the observer creates and instils it. The latter looks into others as a means of looking into himself to find subjectivity already ingrained in the tissue there.

In his response to Helpern's "marks of bodily individuality" manifested inside the body, Sawday notes that "the crucial difference is that these interior marks are largely unknown."[116] In the process of legitimizing the bodily interior as a participant in the unique matter which makes up the individual, Sawday's linkage of individuality with selfhood situates one's interiority as an inaccessible, arguably forbidden, aspect of the self. The bodily interior becomes a paradoxically othered extension of the self, accessible only to surgeons at the expense, whether temporarily through anaesthetic or more permanently in death, of one's corporeal autonomy. Sawday ultimately concludes that, "to know our own bodies, to know oneself in the physiological and anatomical sense, is simply not possible."[117]

While Sawday's assessment that personal contact with one's interiority is merely circumnavigated by empty signifiers in photographs, MRI scans, x-rays, and even mirrors, he

[116] Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned,* 7.
[117] Ibid, 8.

seems to limit the possibilities for corporeal understanding of selfhood by linking it to first-hand witness alone. The submission of the patient's corporeal autonomy to the hands of the surgeon is not a one-way commitment. Although it is the surgeon who witnesses the patient's interior, one's preparation for the operation, the experience of entrusting the physician with one's body, and the potential to foster a relationship with the one who has witnessed its interiority offers the patient a rare opportunity to find a way into that interior selfhood.

The Diary of Samuel Pepys provides, amid its evidence for a great breadth of early modern daily life, a valuable glimpse into the visible shift in selfhood which may take place after a surgical operation. Pepys rejects the Vesalian structures which objectify the displayed body by maintaining his autonomy under the knife. The closeness Pepys is afforded to his own corporeality in the process allows him to integrate his bodily interior into his selfhood after surgery in a first-hand early modern example of Halpern and Sawday's anatomical individuality.

On March 26th, 1658, Pepys attended his cousin Jane Turner's home in Salisbury Court to be "cut of the stone" in one of early modern medicine's most unpleasant waking procedures: the lithotomy. Although "lithotomy" refers to the surgical incision of the bladder for the removal of a stone, the term also lends its name to the patient's specific operative position required for access to the bladder wherein the patient is on their back with the hips and knees flexed and thighs apart. Pepys's surgeon, Thomas Hollier was a specialized lithotomist, having worked almost thirty years performing lithotomies at St. Thomas and St. Bart's in London by the time he operated on Pepys.[118]

[118] G. C. Morris, "A Portrait of Thomas Hollier, Pepys's Surgeon," *Annals of The Royal College of Surgeons of England* 61 no.3 (1979): 224.

Pepys would have been awake for this procedure with no anaesthetic. Hollier depended primarily on speed to minimize blood loss, and, beyond the macroscopic proto-germ theory of miasma, the notion of infection was still to be discovered. The relinquishing of corporeal autonomy to the hands of the surgeon in the case of a waking procedure sheds a different light on surgical consent by involving a level of active participation.

Although no less vulnerable to the surgeon's work, the waking patient is given a more direct awareness of their bodily interior. Unlike Vesalian cadavers displayed to the objectifying gaze of others, Pepys is both subject and participant with Hollier acting as a skilled guide hosting the subject's exploration of his interior self. A significant example of the interpersonal dynamics of surgical consent in Shakespearean text occurs between Titus and Aaron for the hand amputation which will be discussed further in Chapter 3. The waking patient is denied the anxious instinct to displace visceral realities onto the imagined interiorities of medical illustrations which allow abstraction into othered "science" rather than self. Pepys's response to this revelation of his interiority was to claim and integrate it into his identity via the remembrance and celebration of the surgical occasion.

Despite, or perhaps as a result of, being affected by painful kidney stones throughout his life, Pepys regularly took the time to be grateful for his health after the surgical removal of the stone in 1658. More than a thankful reminiscence, Pepys resolved "while I live to keep it a festival"[119] by which he gathered friends and family, as well as the surgeon who performed the cutting, to a great feast in his home. The festival of Pepys' surgical anniversary dinner operates on several levels in terms of both spiritual and secular reflection. At the forefront, each anniversary is heralded in with an acknowledgement of God's hand in his

[119] Samuel Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Robert Latham, XI vols (London: George Bell & Sons Ltd., 1976), vol. 1, 97.

deliverance. In 1664, Pepys writes, "I bless God I do in all respects find myself free from that disease or any signs of it, more than that upon the least cold I continue to have pain in making water, by gather of wind and growing costive, till which be removed I am at no ease, but without that I am very well."[120] Despite immediately carrying on in the same sentence to describe what are clearly symptoms of ongoing bladder stones, Pepys considers his operation a definitive success by simple virtue of his survival.

The remembrance of the specific stone requiring surgical intervention rewrites Pepys' experience of the lesser stones with which he is regularly maligned. His anniversary festival serves as an important reminder more personal and complex than a *memento mori*. Pepys does not simply acknowledge the distant, looming abstraction of death; he is afforded a greater understanding of the subtle complexity of corporeal mortality, the resilience of the flesh, and the extreme degrees of physical pain. The stone's alignment with the internal faculties transforms it into a kind of *memento vivere*, reminding Pepys of the vital functions keeping him alive from within.[121] The visceral details of the surgery recounted in Pepys's anecdotes reinforce his corporeal autonomy. In the years following the procedure, Pepys is the one to "keep it a festival" in his own terms. He instigates, arranges, and hosts the parties himself. That corporeal autonomy which he once surrendered to the surgeon is reclaimed by his prerogative to invite Hollier into his home for an event of his own orchestration.

Pepys sometimes refers to the dinner party as "my solemn feast for my cutting of the stone," diction which casts the event in a more ceremonial light.[122] The feast represents a specific space reserved in life for a full reflection on not only one's mortality, but on the

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[120] Pepys, vol. 5, 98.
[121] See Manuel Dries, "*Memento Mori, Memento Vivere*: Early Nietzsche on History, Embodiment, and Value," *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 48, no. 1 (2017) 29-55 for a closer look at Nietzsche's definition of the modern *memento vivere* as it relates to semantic embodiment via *On the Use and Disadvantage of History for Life*.
[122] Pepys, vol. 5, 98.

reality of one's living interiority. The orchestrated nature of Pepys' annual ceremony shifts the feast into the realm of performance. In order to integrate the notion of his corporeal interiority into his working sense of self, Pepys must bring it forward into the exterior world. In doing so, he turns Sawday's forbidden and unknowable personal interior into a legible aspect of his identity.

The effort Pepys displays in creating and nurturing his sense of self in the aftermath of mortal trauma highlights the beneficial autonomy in the constructivist approach to identity. Theorist Mark Olssen describes constructivism as "a human construction recognizing the active capacity of the cognizing subject."[123] Rather than submitting to a predetermined identity, constructivism holds that one's identity is built up of a series of factors including societal pressures and personal experience. More importantly, it recognizes "the cognizing subject" as a participant in the formation of identity rather than the passive vessel into which an identity is ascribed. Through this "active capacity," Pepys makes his bodily interior accessible to conscious personalization in the same way one performs an identity through clothing choices and mannerisms. The anecdotes he shares from the operation, the almost sacred presentation of the stone, and the celebratory atmosphere he creates around the anniversary all constitute aspects of Pepys' constructed identity.

Whether the performative nature of identity necessitates the presence of an audience or the audience perpetuates the performance, one's notion of self is intrinsically tied to the perceptions of others. By creating a public event around the acknowledgement of his bodily interior, Pepys uses the perceptions of others to solidify the corporeal selfhood he has nurtured in himself. In this sense, Pepys' annual festival also functions as a platform for

[123] Mark Olssen, "Radical Constructivism and Its Failings: Anti-Realism and Individualism," *British Journal of Educational Studies* 44, no. 3 (1996): 275.

introducing his friends and relatives to the post-operative identity he has updated with consideration for its interiority. The anecdotes recollected around a dinner table, populated with everyone from the cousin whose home provided the scene to the surgeon himself, work together to naturalize the surgical exploration of Pepys' corporeal interiority into a part of his external selfhood.

In eleven years, Pepys only forgot his surgical anniversary three times; in 1665 he was especially busy with official meetings, the following year a complication in his accounts kept him up all night on the 25th, and finally in 1668 his focus was more drawn to life in the moment, "to be enjoyed while we are young and capable of these joys."[124] Those joys were namely a trip to the theatre after which he joined his friends for dinner, singing, and dancing. This latter entry comes in the wake of a year's mourning for the death of his mother in 1667, around the time of March 26th. In that year, Pepys finds solace amid his sadness in reflecting on his own health, but admits, "the condition I am in, in reference to my mother, makes it unfit for me to keep my usual feast."[125] It is notable in the 1667 entry that, although he was unable to host his annual feast, the remembrance of his stone cutting is nonetheless recorded.

Alongside his gratitude to God, March 26th is also a regular point of personal reflection for Pepys' on his general health. His thankfulness is not simply for his survival, but also for his ongoing wellbeing. In 1665, Pepys writes, "With thanks to God Almighty, that I am now as well as ever I can wish or desire to be,"[126] an ironic resolution in light of the painful symptoms of gall stones he continues to note throughout his life. Pepys' positivity around his nonetheless poor health in the years following his operation suggests a certain acceptance of inevitable pain in his post-operative paradigm. The notion of a successful

[124] Pepys, vol. 9, 134.
[125] Pepys, vol. 8, 130.
[126] Pepys, vol. 6, 67.

surgery is fraught with caveats about expected pains, infections, or even potential recurrence. Pepys' casual references to his regular pain in the same sentence with which he thanks God for his health signifies an integration of chronic pain into his new post-operative selfhood alongside his new-found personal interiority. The continuous acknowledgement of his health in the years following his operation points to a personal paradigm shift at the point of confrontation with interiority and mortality.

The temporal locus of Pepys' surgical anniversary specifies the otherwise ubiquitous nature of the traditional *memento mori* with a personalizing force. Whether celebrated with friends around "a pretty dinner for them viz., a brace of stewed carps, six roasted chickens, and a jowl of salmon" as he did in the spring of 1662,[127] just sharing a bottle of wine late into the night as in 1660, or in sombre reflection on the poor health of friends and family, Pepys made the understanding of his body an understanding of himself. When his friends "brought some bottles of wine and some things to eat in my cabin, where we were very merry, remembering the day of being cut for the stone,"[128] Pepys did more than celebrate his health. He actively forged a connection, through personal anecdote, with the day his bodily interior was breached and, in doing so, integrated the experience into his notion of self. The participants in Pepys' annual feast are not simply party guests, but witnesses of Pepys' new identity in his personal post-op paradigm.

This bridging of the interior and exterior worlds in Pepys' dinner party performance is also achieved in a more literal sense by the physical bladder stone itself. After his procedure, Pepys not only kept the stone, but also had a special case custom made for it so that he could display it in his home. On August 27th, 1664, Pepys notes, "Thence to my case-maker for my

[127] Pepys, vol. 3, 53.
[128] Pepys, vol. 1, 98.

stone case, and had it to my mind, and cost me 24*s*., which is a great deale of money, but it is well done and pleases me."[129] The special treatment Pepys dotes upon the stone indicates that his interest in it is more than a casual medical curiosity. There is a sort of reverence invoked by the construction of this expensive case which elevates the piece within it from a simple curiosity to a unique brand of personalized *memento mori* and *vivere* combined. The physical token of Pepys' interiority is more than a reminder of mortality, but serves to provide ongoing conceptual access to the living corporeality of its keeper. The stone represents the first-hand experience of the surgery, the bodily interior the event exposed, and the deliverance from death all in one.

To some degree, the act of constructing the stone case may even suggest a self-made, living reliquary. The cultural implications of ceremoniously storing body parts raises questions of inherent and inscribed meaning. Barbara Drake Boehm defends the cultural and religious significance of such relics arguing that, "body-part reliquaries should not be perceived as a deliciously gruesome and gory aspect of the medieval cult of saints. The placement of a skull or other relic in its container was part of a solemn ceremony." [130] Alongside the cultural capital of the enshrinement itself, Boehm also clarifies that the isolation of the body-part relic does not necessitate a notion of dismemberment: "A decision to isolate the skull as a relic was not dependent on the saint's death by decapitation. Nor was the division of relics into other body-shaped reliquaries a function of a saint's tortured dismemberment. The subsequent veneration of the relic was equally reverential in nature."[131] The multifaceted cultural capital of dismemberment and the representative severed body part on stage will be explored in its iterations throughout *Titus* in Chapter 3. Before examining the

[129] Pepys, vol. 5, 255.
[130] Barbara Drake Boehm, "Body-Part Reliquaries: The State of Research," *Gesta* 36, no. 1 (1997): 15.
[131] Ibid.

impact of performative body props, a close reading of Pepys' stone veneration grounds Shakespeare's theatrical corporealities in the real world experiences of early modern English bodies.

Once stripped of its inherent functional meaning through removal from the bodily whole, the fractured body part enters the realm of the representational. Rather than being defined by its physiological or anatomical contribution to a homeostatic system, the part becomes a bodily synecdoche. Its status as an independent object is overwritten by the remainder of the absent body from which it originates, conceptually reversing the literal dismemberment as it continues to participate in the idea of the whole body. By existing in flux between the interior bodily whole and the exterior fractured object, Pepys' stone perpetuates the transference of the interior corporeal self to the accessible external world throughout the year from one anniversary dinner to the next.

Inherent in the notion of a reliquary is the public display of the item. When read as a self-made reliquary, Pepys' stone case grants the revelation of his interior selfhood a saintly reverence. The means of storing the body part participates in the performative aspects of identity previously read in the dinner party event. Unlike the temporally constrained annual reasoning behind the anniversary celebration, the stone case affords Pepys the opportunity to address his interior selfhood to visitors in his home at any given time. Even without a public audience, the presence of the stone on display in his home reinforces Pepys as the audience to his own interiority, as he was the day of the operation.

The strangeness of Pepys' personal reliquary is also compounded by the type of body part involved. Saintly reliquaries tend to focus on corporeal objects like bones or hair. Often, there is an implied reading of the bone in context with how it may have assisted the saint in life. This metonymic reading of the part as representative of its participation in the whole is

arguably the core value of the reliquary. However, in the case of Pepys' secular shrine, the body part in question is not a participant in the working system, but an aberration, the removal of which is a necessary step in reinstating homeostasis. Unlike the arm bone of Saint John the Baptist, outstretched to cleanse and bless, Pepys' stone invokes a history of pain.

Pepys' stone case may resist the traditional definition of a reliquary in so many strange and secular ways that it is arguably the antithesis of a saintly relic. However, regardless of whatever sacrilege may be intimated by the self-made ceremony, what remains significant in Pepys' case is the level of metonymic representation achieved by the heightened status of the fractured part. By creating the air of ceremony and respect around this otherwise inconsequential bit of biological waste, Pepys transforms the object into a token of his interiority. Where the scientific quantification of the body in the Vesalian model would classify the stone as a defect rather than a body part in its own right, Pepys takes ownership of the abnormality and uses it to craft his own corporeal sense of self physically grounded in his bodily interior. [132]

Conclusion

In Pepys' stone, the values of both objective science and subjective personal engagement prove necessary to complete the imperative of *nosce te ipsum* in corporeal contexts. According to Michael Schoenfeldt, "Much of the physiological work of the period arises as an explicit response to the famous injunction of the Delphic oracle, 'Know thyself.'"[133] Translated in Hobbes' 1651 *Leviathan* as the more active call to "read thyself,"

[132] Traub, "The Nature of Norms," 53.
[133] Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 12.

nosce te ipsum drove early modern philosophy to seek knowledge via self-awareness.[134] Vesalius, in his prioritization of first-hand experience, Barrough and Moulton, in their manuals of health, and Pepys, in his celebratory reflections, all facilitate a knowledge of the self achievable through the knowledge of the body. It is ultimately necessary, then, for those who read the body for science and those who read it for selfhood to speak to one another to form a kind of Hegelian dialectic, the synthesis of which may access a more complex notion of health, normalcy, corporeal existence, and the material manifestations of being.

The early modern body established, disseminated, and experienced by Vesalius, Geminus, and Pepys forms the crucial context spanning the entirety of Shakespeare's life and work. It was important to address the centuries prior to and post Shakespeare's window to fully map the development of body knowledge from an isolated ancient doctrine to a personally accessible tool for introspection. With this cultural context in mind, Shakespeare's engagement with the bodies of his characters offers a reflection of the corporeally grounded identity taking shape throughout the medical revelations of the early modern period.

[134] Ursula Renz, "Socratic Self-Knowledge in Early Modern Philosophy," *Self-Knowledge: A History* (Oxford Scholarship Online: Feb 2017) 150-3.

Chapter 2: Locating the Physical Boundaries of the Rhetorical Body in *Coriolanus*

Introduction

Thus far, I have considered the body's interior and exterior in terms of the means by which the anatomist exposes the former to the latter. This dichotomy forms the foundation of partitioning which allows medical science to categorize the body into a workable taxonomy. However, the stringent boundaries of science often prove more useful when they are interrogated, destabilized, and crossed. For the anatomist, the boundary of external flesh represents the gateway to a complex interiority whose organs and interstitial spaces create further microcosms of inner boundaries. Each layer brings the anatomist one step closer to a tangible site of life and death within the corpus; one which Duke Pesta calls "the essential centre … where a person's true self could be ascertained and where no dissembling was possible."[1] This notion of authenticity embedded in the deepest sinews of the material body drives much of sixteenth-century philosophy into anatomy theatres.

Shakespeare crosses as many conceptual boundaries as material ones by engaging in the interdisciplinary work which brings the findings of anatomists to the socio-political and cultural pursuits taking place in literature. Where the readings of Vesalius previously discussed sought subjectivity in the medical body, the next step for this thesis is to bring the medical body to literary characterization in order to reassert the value of the visceral components too often glossed over by emblematism.

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[1] Duke Pesta, "Articulating Skeletons: Hamlet, Hoffman, and the Anatomical Graveyard," *Cahiers Élisabéthains: A Journal of English Renaissance Studies* 69, no. 1 (May 2006): 21-39.

William Slights places the early modern heart on a pedestal as "the defining organ of human identity,"[2] a status it concedes to the brain in the rationality of the late seventeenth century. While Slights' exhaustive history of the heart successfully defends the organ's right to such a title in the early modern period, his focus on the singular part is isolating in its compartmentalization. I begin my search for corporeal selfhood at the outermost boundary of the body to foreground the interconnectedness of the corpus and the importance of reading the body as an integrated and fluctuating organic entity. Corporeality changes with the discoveries of science as quickly as it changes its own material makeup throughout a lifetime. Slights turns to Andrew Cunningham[3] and Nancy G. Siraisi,[4] both previously touched on in Chapter 1, for their critical efforts to replace "the revolutionary model of historical change" with "continuity and incremental refinements of proto-body science."[5] This methodology reflects the continuous increments by which the physical body develops. My goal is to read identity in the body, not in a singular essential point, but throughout the organic material by which humanity experiences life as it breaks apart, heals, and reforms.

During an era wherein the body is a site of discovery for both scientists and artists, Shakespeare does more than cash in on the trend of anatomization. Shakespeare's characters anatomize themselves with a visceral awareness which participates in the conceptual and psychological traditions of John Lyly's *Anatomy of Wit* and Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* but also reasserts the corporeality from which the notion of the anatomy originally arose.[6] *Coriolanus* steps beyond the body and mind dichotomy to form a Hegelian

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[2] William W.E. Slights, *The Heart in the Age of Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 26.
[3] See Andrew Cunningham, *The Anatomical Renaissance: The Resurrection of the Anatomical Projects of the Ancients* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1997).
[4] See Nancy G. Sirasi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).
[5] Slights, 16.
[6] See Richard Sugg, *Murder After Death: Literature and Anatomy in Early Modern England* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2007).

reintegration of self and corpus. Rather than attempting to extract the body from notions of selfhood or soul, this thesis holds that the two must be allowed to intertwine in order to retain a complete subject. The organizing principles of this reading situate the corporeal self along a spectrum of interiority and exteriority. Throughout *Coriolanus*, Shakespeare navigates the strange and evocative boundaries defined by the flesh in ways which reflect on the prevalent contemporary culture of anatomy and dissection, the usurpation of the bodily interior by external analysis, and the corporeal locus of the self.

Early modern notions of the body rely on a balance between seemingly opposing realms of interiority and exteriority to sustain psychological and physical health. Slights explains the boundary-defying fluidity of Galenic psychophysiology: "Just as there was no fixed division between the processes of the mind and body, so too there was none between the inner world of the passions and the surrounding natural world."[7] Rather than a process of separation and partitioning like the work taking place in anatomy theatres, living physiology dictates an integration of these systems. The boundary is significant not simply as a dividing line but as the site of synthesis, exploration, exposure, and renewal. Broken flesh disrupts partitions of the interior and exterior with an impact which reverberates outside medicine to the wavering divisions between self and other.

Anatomy plays a crucial role in the early modern development of selfhood, especially as its secrets are exposed to curious and analytical audiences in public dissection. As each boundary is broken, the compact and distant bodily interior is expanded and illuminated by anatomists, scholars, and playwrights all interpreting the new landscape of visceral humanity. Shakespeare contributes to the interdisciplinary nexus of body discourse by crafting characters whose selfhoods are wrapped up in the fabric of the human body. Coriolanus

[7] Ibid, 27.

negotiates the boundary of his flesh by breaking it open, inverting it, protecting it, and investing his notion of self within its fibers.

Shakespeare's corporeally self-made soldier participates in the early modern movement to "know thyself" which prioritized autonomy and individualism. By not actively constructing his identity out of its visceral materials, Coriolanus takes up the movement's imperative *Nosce te ipsum* as it appears in early modern fugitive sheets like that of Geminus in his 1545 English reproduction of Vesalius' *Epitome* (see fig. 2.1). The hands-on method informs a personal connection to the work of dissection in the home made possible by these paper bodies. The male figure on this particular sheet bears a striking resemblance to Vesalius, intimately personalizing the dissection process by suggesting a conflation between anatomist and cadaver. The interdisciplinary nature of anatomization is reflected in the invitation to study anatomy empirically whilst considering one's own body in the process. The anatomist is explicitly reminded by the sign in the woman's hand that the dissection process is also a process of constructing one's own identity via a notion of self embedded in the fabric of the human body.

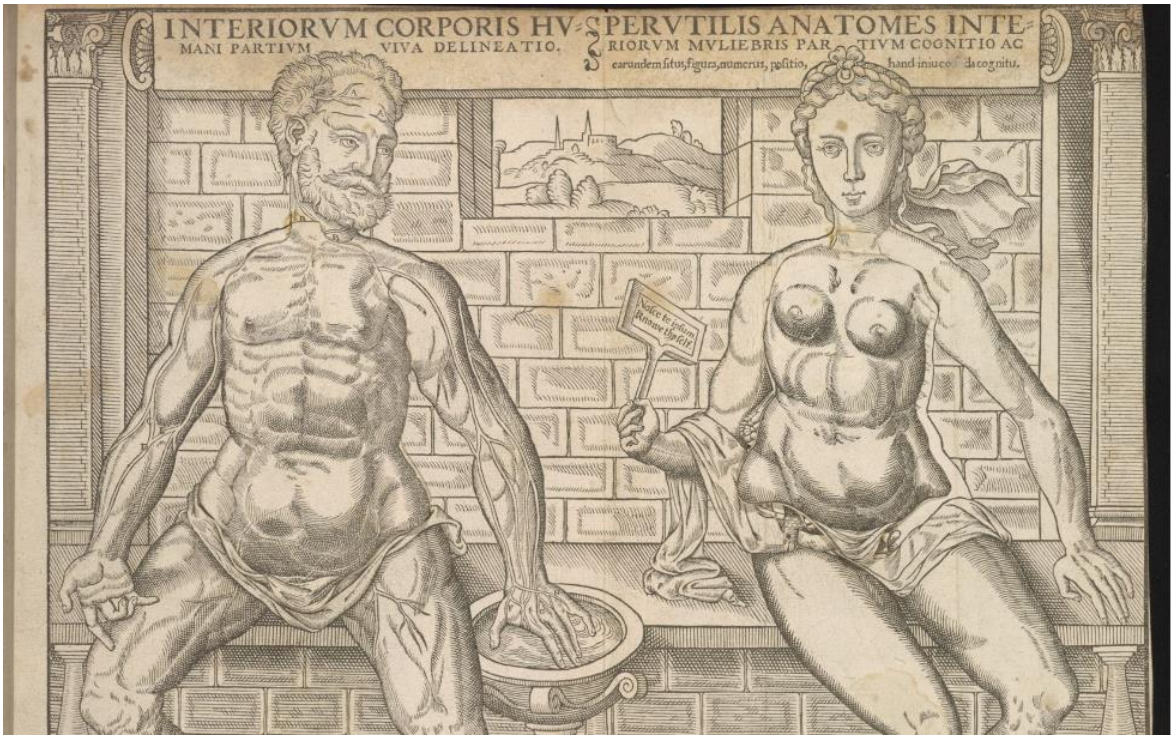


Figure 2.1. Thomas Geminus, *Compendiosa Totius Anatomiae Delineatio* 1559. Courtesy of Cambridge University Library, Cambridge.

Shakespeare uses the boundary of the flesh throughout *Coriolanus* to investigate how its breakage and reconstruction can promote autonomy. For Coriolanus, the knowledge of the self and the knowledge of the body are intimately intertwined. It is therefore dangerously dehumanizing when the body is exposed to rhetorical emblematism and euphuistic manipulation by proponents of the body politic metaphor. The tension between Menenius and Coriolanus foregrounds a critique of the contemporary vogue for satirical anatomization which arose out of the new vocabulary of dissection but which willfully displaced the empirical integrity which set the Vesalian model apart from Galenic tradition. Coriolanus' visceral Vesalian character antagonizes Menenius' politically motivated satirical character to condemn the reductive manipulation of body knowledge by self-serving euphuistic rhetoric. Shakespeare's reassertion of material viscera into a realm controlled by rhetoric reflects a

cultural movement toward Vesalian models of understanding driven by empiricism and the critical reassessment of long-held traditions.

Coriolanus locates this negotiation between visceral interiority and the rhetorical body politic within the skin. Although his fables purport to elucidate the interior workings of the body, Menenius, like Galen, falls behind by failing to back up his claims with the empirical evidence lurking beneath the skin. Like Vesalius, Coriolanus' first-hand engagement with his bodily interior through the breaches of the skin affords him the perspective necessary to refute conceptual anatomization. As I will discuss later in the chapter, non-visceral anatomization is not inherently bad, and the vocabulary and methodological framework born of dissection culture offered poets like Donne and Lyly tools for exploring concepts like mortality, emotion, and human nature. What Shakespeare does in *Coriolanus*, however, is to pinpoint a specific form of authenticity embedded within the material body and investigate how conceptual modes of satirical and rhetorical anatomization erode the empirical authority of the visceral interior and the selfhood invested therein.

Mediation, Sensation, and Protection: The Properties of Early Modern Skin

In 1615, Helkiah Crooke published the first edition of his influential anatomical compendium, the *Microcosmographia*. Elizabeth Harvey introduces Crooke thus: "A writer who mediates between the body's physical architecture and the soul that inheres invisibly in every part, Crooke moves as fluidly between the anatomist's external view of the dissected cadaver and the internal spaces of the lived body as he does between allegorical and anatomical discourse."[8] Harvey identifies early modern anatomy's methods of aligning

[8] Elizabeth D. Harvey, "The Touching Organ" in *Sensible Flesh*, ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 81.

interiority and exteriority with their respective allegorical and anatomical discourses to visualize and engage with the bodily interior. Although published slightly too late to have been a direct influence on the writing process of *Coriolanus*, Crooke offers another point of reference for medical understanding as it functioned in the century following Vesalius.

The *Microcosmographia* classifies skin as a sensory organ unique from the distinct minor organs which house the other senses. Crooke argues that while the other senses are "restrained" in their respective organs, touch is "diffused through the whole body."[9] This notion of sensory reception woven into the fabric of the corpus situates skin as a mediator for the translation of external signifiers into meaning.

Physiologically, contact with sensory flesh is how humanity connects with the world. Farah Karim-Cooper addresses the value Shakespeare placed on touch in relation to early modern standards: "Shakespeare's assertion of tactility as a primary medium of human connection and mutual affection challenges the medieval and early modern hierarchy of the senses which traditionally placed touch at the lowest end of the spectrum with sight or hearing at the highest."[10] Shakespeare establishes touch "as a primary medium of human connection" in its distinct absence from *Coriolanus*. The titular soldier is not only psychologically distanced from society by his wartime trauma and political mistreatment, he is also literally disconnected from the rest of the world by the physiological barrier his scar tissue forms over his dulled sense of touch.[11]

Crooke's observations on the interconnectedness of skin and mind in 1615 are validated in modern neuroscience and psychology when read alongside Didier Anzieu's *The*

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[9] Helkiah Crooke quoted in Elizabeth Harvey, "The Touching Organ," in *Sensible Flesh* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 83.
[10] Farah Karim-Cooper, *The Hand on the Shakespearean Stage* (London: Arden, 2016), 9.
[11] See also Joe Moshenska, *Feeling Pleasures: The Sense of Touch in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014) for the prevalence of touch in questions of human nature and the material world in the early modern period.

Skin Ego of 1985. Harvey translates Anzieu's original French in her summary of the core concepts: "He posits two mutually dependent ideas: that the psyche is intimately bound both to the biological and the social body and that the skin thus contains individuality or subjectivity (the skin ego or *le moi-peau*)."[12] As both social mediator and visceral tissue, skin operates simultaneously on psychological and physiological levels, participating in the identity formation otherwise reserved for the central nervous system.

The physiological awareness of skin appears in Coriolanus' relationships with his wounds. He gives voice to his pain, saying, "I have some wounds upon me, and they smart to hear themselves remembered."[13] Here Shakespeare affords skin not only sensory perception but also hearing and a degree of consciousness. Whether read literally to signify a resurgence of pain by the skin's own autonomous remembrance or as a figurative displacement of a soldier's vulnerability, Shakespeare situates flesh as a sounding board which provides Coriolanus with a dynamic locus for the material negotiation of his identity.

When examining the role of skin in the partitions of the early modern body, it is crucial to acknowledge the natural fluidity between the interior and exterior. In early modern thought, the body is composed of pores which facilitate exchange with one's external surroundings. Effectively a theoretical precursor to germ theory in eighteenth-century microbiological pathology, *miasma* was understood by early modern physicians as corrupted air capable of transmitting disease by carrying particles of decomposed material which, being inhaled, could corrupt the healthy body. While respiration offered a more observable

[12] Didier Anzieu, *Le Moi-peau* (Paris: Denod, 1995) translated in Elizabeth Harvey, "The Touching Organ," 85.
[13] William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus,* ed. R. B. Parker (London: Oxford, 2008), 1.10.28.

passageway into the body, it was not the only locus of exchange. Humoral excesses could also be observed exiting the body in the form of sweat, tears, saliva, and even hair growth.[14]

Jack Hartnell summarizes the Galenic notion of porosity in the context of hair growth: "Medical writers theorized that as certain humoral fumes left the body through pores in the skin they condensed, forming small individual hairs that protruded from the surface."[15] As these foundational notions of "membranous gaps"[16] were passed down along with the ancient Greek texts, a notion of natural permeability was embedded in the early modern body. This concept resurfaces with Crooke's explanation of the permeability of the flesh in his *Microcosmographia*:

> It is an vnseamed garment couering the whole bodie, yet hath it certaine breaches made by Nature for her ease and reliefe, partly manifest, which are not many, and are called *Foramina* or outlets; partly insensible, which are infinite, called *pori*, & of vs pores. Al which serue either for receyuing in or letting out, or both as neede shall require.[17]

The early modern body was not a sealed vessel isolated from the world by a sheath of impervious flesh, but neither was it wholly exposed. The great *foramina* of the respiratory and digestive tracts worked in tandem with the minute and multitudinous *pori* to facilitate exchange according to the body's needs. It is within these selectively permeable boundaries of the flesh that the false dichotomy separating the interior from the exterior breaks down to reveal an embodiment "constituted out of somatic transactions with the world."[18] The early

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[14] See Margaret Healy, *Fictions of Disease in Early Modern England: Bodies, Plagues and Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001) for a close examination of miasmic theory and the impact of miasmic environments on early modern English culture.
[15] Jack Hartnell, *Medieval Bodies: Life, Death and Art in the Middle Ages* (London: Wellcome Collection, 2018) 42.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Helkiah Crooke, *The Microcosmographia: A Description of the Body of Man* (Barbican: William Jaggard, 1616) 72.
[18] Garrett Sullivan, "Subjectivity and the Mind-Body: Extending the Self on the Renaissance Stage," in *Embodied Cognition and Shakespeare's Theatre: The Early Modern Body-Mind*, ed. Laurie Johnson, John Sutton, and Evelyn Tribble (Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2014) 67.

modern body was a microcosmic economy of environmental influences by which the body shared as much with the world as it collected from it as a natural function of its ongoing homeostasis. The properties of homeostasis and its relationship with the environment both micro- and macrocosmically will return in more depth with the exposed bodies of *King Lear* in Chapter 4.

It is productive to bring these ideas about the boundaries of flesh to an example of early modern drama in which notions of identity are explicitly ingrained in wounds. *Coriolanus* places value on broken flesh by both internal and external forces. The honorific glorification of Coriolanus' wounds by Volumnia and members of the court contrasts with the personal meanings the soldier reads within his own flesh. Threatened by the anatomizing eyes of the court and distanced from natural human contact by the layer of scar tissue impeding his sensibility, the corporeal story of *Coriolanus* is one of broken boundaries, human connection, and the fight for bodily autonomy. When skin is read as a fluctuating boundary both encasing the internal body and connecting the external, the contentious wounds of Shakespeare's disgruntled Roman soldier offer a rich opportunity to read identity in the flesh.

The body's environmental permeability is made explicit in the broken flesh foregrounded throughout *Coriolanus*. When the hero is wounded in battle, the otherwise carefully regulated site of exchange is unnaturally expanded to the point of exposure. The soldier's wounds function to make grotesquely visible the otherwise theoretical abstract of humoral exchange. Alongside the vulnerabilities of the breach itself, Shakespeare explores the issues associated with the healing and healed body. Within the political narrative of *Coriolanus* resides a story of the body's recovery in the aftermath of war wounds.

An anxious displacement of the soldier's preoccupation with the unstable boundaries of the flesh occurs in his first encounter with the citizens. He mocks, "What's the matter, you dissentious rogues, that, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion, make yourselves scabs?"[19] In his first lines, Coriolanus weighs in on the body politic metaphor in an unusually visceral way. Immediately after Menenius has finished telling the Belly and Members fable, Coriolanus undermines the impossibly standardized body on which the metaphor relies by breaking its flesh with images of rubbing, itching, and scabs struggling to heal. The failure to heal which Coriolanus here accuses the citizens of perpetuating reflects his own corporeal instability. For Coriolanus, the transformation of his sensory organ into an armor of scar tissue lacking tactility restricts the identity formation otherwise driven by exchange with the outside world to a notion of self constructed internally for himself by himself.

Elizabeth Harvey refers to skin as "that sheath of sensation that both clothes the body and renders its inner spaces secret"[20] and exemplifies her claims via evidence found in Vesalius' portrait at the opening of the *Fabrica* (see fig. 2.2). Harvey argues, "Early modern anatomy involves not only peeling away the body's outward sensory covering in order to discover visually the body's inside, but also subduing and harnessing tactility and displacing its distracting sensuality into the mastering agency of the hand."[21] This reading pinpoints the power dynamics underscoring the dissection process. The skills depicted in the anatomist's working hands operate in contrast to the demonstration of interior workings within the cadaver's hand. To reach this mechanical view, the anatomized body must be stripped of its capacity for touch, a sensation crucial to the anatomist's work. The juxtaposition of anatomist's and cadaver's hands carries a startling reminder that the interior on display is no

[19] *Corio,* 1.1.161-3.
[20] Harvey, 82.
[21] Ibid, 83.

different from the network of sinews and blood operating the living man's hand just below the surface of the skin.

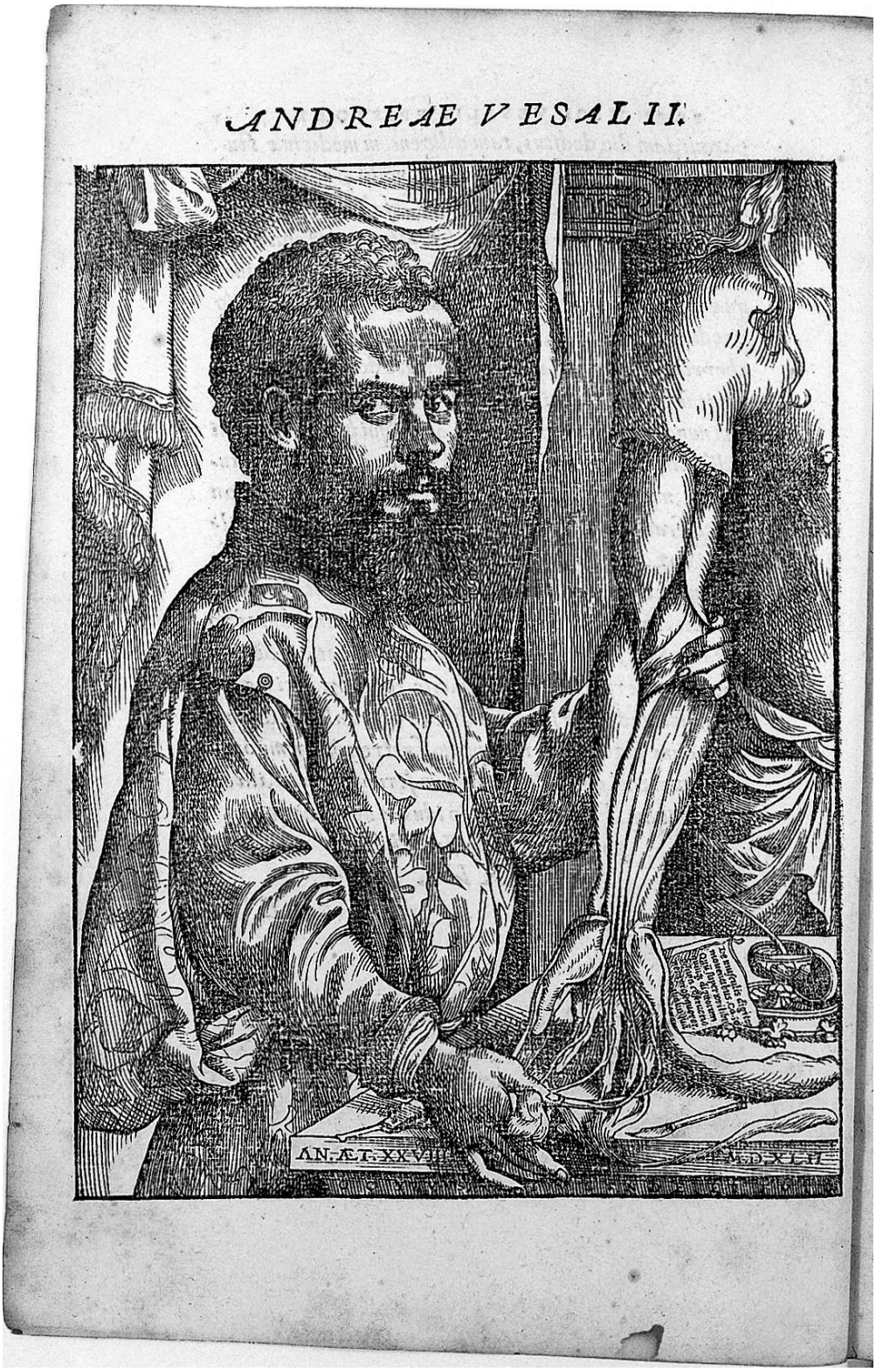


Figure 2.2. Andreas Vesalius, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* 1543. Portrait of the anatomist. Courtesy of Wellcome Library, London.

Removed, broken, and scarred flesh all function in similar ways, though at lesser extremes than the dissected cadaver. Even on a healed body, scar tissue may serve to clothe the interiority, but it also dulls the tactile sense. Scar tissue occupies a liminal space as both an outer covering and an extension of the bodily interior. As the ambassador of sensation, normative skin bridges exteriors and interiors, serving the interpretive powers of the nervous system. Scar tissue, however, replaces sensory connectivity with visceral connectivity, leaving the marks of the interior's regrafted self visible on the surface. The scarred body is not only a reminder of the instability of flesh as a boundary, but it is also a physical manifestation of the body's capacity to rebuild itself from the inside out.

Interior and exterior bodies are subject to bifurcation by readings which situate the body as either visceral or metaphorical. The visceral body encased within the skin is more easily simplified into an allegorical tool when its complex reality is invisible. Then again, where broken flesh may be expected to undermine the metaphor by exposing the gruesome reality of the visceral interior, it may just as easily extend the metaphor by contributing the manifold symbolism of blood to the scene. *Coriolanus* is a play driven by these tensions across metaphorical and visceral readings in both interior and exterior realms of the body. As the titular soldier navigates the murky social norms between solider and politician, the play fluctuates along a dichotomy separating the manipulative psychological rhetoric of the court from the active visceral engagement of the battlefield. This chapter examines the corporeality of *Coriolanus* from subtle turns of speech to explicit violence to map out the elements of characterization and selfhood rooted in the physical bodily interior.

Imagining the Body: Rhetoric of the Body Politic

In stark contrast to the physically active, wounded, and blood-soaked bodies which populate the world of the soldier, Shakespeare situates the bodies of *Coriolanus*' lawmakers as conceptually authoritative whilst viscerally absent. The political sphere is one of calculated constructs wherein the presence of the body is not as important as the words that define it. David Hillman links social reliance on rhetorical structures like the body politic with periods of instability, like the tumultuous riots which frame the socio-political climate of *Coriolanus*. Hillman argues, "The sense of vulnerability inherent to such periods tends to bring with it an urgent desire for a reaffirmation of boundaries, an insistence on the apparently secure contours of the nation, home, or body."[22] This apparent security provided by distinct and unmovable boundaries is only available via the simplified models of the body touted in political rhetoric. The innate instability and uncontrollable organic processes of the visceral body pose a direct threat to the tailored meanings of the imagined body politic. By the same rhetorical power with which the lawmakers manipulate the public's perceptions of their heroes, their enemies, and themselves, the politicians of *Coriolanus* deconstruct the visceral battlefield body and rewrite its fractured pieces to suit their personally motivated narratives.

In the first scene, Menenius tells Coriolanus, "These are all most thoroughly persuaded, for though abundantly they lack discretion, yet are they passing cowardly."[23] His assessment of the citizen's impressionability rests on the culturally and linguistically divisive term, "discretion;" a word which, in the sixteenth century, "became crucial not as a rhetorical

[22] David Hillman, *Shakespeare's Entrails: Belief, Scepticism and the Interior of the Body* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) 6.
[23] *Corio,* 1.1.198-200.

figure in itself, but rather as a *locus standi* for the judging of rhetoric."[24] The term is apt in Menenius' mouth as he attempts to homogenize the individuality of the citizens into a more easily manipulated collective. As Hillman argues, "Discretion coordinates social and mental structures, and in doing so ratifies the collective practices of a group in the face of subjective potentialities. At the same time, in a conflicted society the term privileges a specific group."[25] Shakespeare's use of the word in Menenius' rhetorical reinforcement of hierarchal power structures alludes to the contemporary standard of English poesy set by George Puttenham. According to Hillman, "'Discretion,' both the concept and the word, is the historically specific grounding term used by Puttenham to separate out and exclude these other classes."[26] The strategic deployment of words set out in Puttenham's 1589 *Art of English Poesy* constitutes the early modern standard for a class-dividing rhetoric which invites Shakespeare's satirization in the vacuous speeches of Menenius.

The third chapter of Puttenham's 1589 *Art of English Poesy* covers "How poets were the first priests, the first prophets, the first legislators and politicians in the world."[27] Puttenham praises the skill of crafting poetry for its capacity to move and persuade listeners. He describes that "by his discreet and wholesome lessons uttered in harmony and with melodious instruments, [the poet] brought the rude and savage people to a more civil and orderly life."[28] Although the work is written in prose, Puttenham's efforts to acknowledge the intellectually crafted nature of the written word foreground the biased, constructed nature of

[24] David Hillman, "Puttenham, Shakespeare, and the Abuse of Rhetoric," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 36, no. 1 (January 1996): 76.
[25] Ibid, 75.
[26] Ibid, 79.
[27] George Puttenham, *Art of English Poesy*, ed. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 2007), 96.
[28] Ibid.

his book. Words like "wholesome," "harmony," and "civil" grant the political rhetorician a positive image through Puttenham's specific diction.

Puttenham acknowledges the deceit inherent in carefully crafted language, if only to swiftly justify its usage in the name of art. He argues, "such deceit is not to be allowed to the English maker, who is to be an honest man and not a hypocrite, and who may dissemble only in the subtleties of his art, where sprezzatura may legitimately reign."[29] Puttenham defines the parameters across which dissembling constitutes a skill or a sin. When it occurs as part of a stylistic choice as in sprezzatura, dishonesty and manipulation are permissible, even praiseworthy, components of successful rhetorical craftsmanship.

Leaning on the authority of ancient philosophy, Puttenham argues that "Aristotle was most excellent in vse of this figure… which geues it great credit."[30] However, Puttenham is not invested in authenticity but rather the utility of language for successful persuasion. His pardoned stylistic deceit is neither good nor bad, but useful. Rather than accrediting Puttenham's argument, his reference to Aristotle ironically raises the question of authenticity amid rhetorical manipulation of meaning. In *Coriolanus,* Shakespeare foregrounds this irony by founding his rhetorician's philosophy in the gaps of Puttenham's logic.

In Menenius and Coriolanus, two opposing modes of reading the body are built on two opposing principles of meaning. For changing the meanings of words arbitrarily, Menenius fills the role of the Platonist reliant on conventional signs whereby "meanings are assigned by human beings and can be changed at the whim of the language users."[31] "Belly," and "members," are given no natural connotation or essential grounding so that they may be

[29] Ibid, 4.
[30] Ibid, 228.
[31] Deborah K.W. Modrak, *Aristotle's Theory of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 4.

assigned new meanings within the context of the body politic metaphor according to Menenius' persuasive needs.

Coriolanus uses visceral language to deride Menenius' suggestion that he use artful rhetoric to win the favor of the people, "Plague upon't, I cannot bring my tongue to such a pace."[32] Disease and the corporeal agent of speech anchor Coriolanus' words in the material of the body, reflecting Aristotelian natural signs whereby "the affectations of the soul are the same for all."[33] Words are arbitrary and inauthentic whereas corporeal materialism, in its objective reality, conveys natural meaning immune to the rhetorical musings of others.

Menenius' conventionally arbitrary political rhetoric banks on Puttenham's notions of acceptable dissembling hidden in expertly crafted language, a stance which foils the viscerally grounded, Aristotelian Coriolanus. By instructing Coriolanus how to speak to the citizens in order to beg the consulship, Menenius effectively asks him to set aside his personal notions of truth and participate in the manipulation of the people. When Coriolanus admits his inability to "bring my tongue," his use of visceral language is perhaps not an admission of intellectual shortcomings, but a disavowal of the court's self-pardoned hypocrisy.

This response offers one of many instances in which Coriolanus utilizes reference to his physical body in defense of his choices. In the context of Coriolanus' characteristic viscerality, "tongue" functions in this phrase as more than a metonymic reference to speech. Carla Mazzio describes the tongue's literary duality as "a synecdoche for the body and a metonymy for language."[34] By grounding his argument in the material evidence of his body,

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[32] *Corio,* 2.3.48-9.
[33] Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*, translated in Deborah K.W. Modrak *Aristotle's Theory of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 20.
[34] Carla Mazzio, "Sins of the Tongue," in *The Body in Parts*, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (London: Routledge, 1997) 54.

Coriolanus suggests that his incapacity to lie comes out of not just a principled refusal but a physiological impossibility. The opposition between natural corporeality and constructed rhetoric aligns the body with a sense of authenticity. The authenticity of Coriolanus' body is set against the constructed traditions of the court throughout the play.

Upon receiving his title, Coriolanus is heralded into the court with a flourish and cries of honour, fame, and renown. Coriolanus responds to this introduction by saying, "No more of this, it does offend my heart."[35] Here, Shakespeare foils the crafted pomp of the court against the authenticity of the body. As political rhetoricians rewrite the soldier's identity by wordsmithing his name into an honourific title, Coriolanus exposes the artifice of the ceremony by earnestly reflecting on his physical trauma on the battlefield. The link to Coriolanus' offended heart, as opposed to his nature or temperament, lends his rebuttal corporeal materiality. By infusing the court with Coriolanus' visceral language, Shakespeare complicates the expectations and functionality of dominant modes of political rhetoric.

In the fourth chapter of *English Poesy,* Puttenham addresses the notion of artifice, arguing that "speech itself is artificial and made by man, and the more pleasing it is, the more it prevaileth to such purpose as it is intended for."[36] This intended purpose being "for persuasion of others and aid of themselves."[37] The logic that the man-made, and therefore inherently selfish, nature of language circumvents its capacity for authenticity situates the body at a unique vantage point. If humanity's construction of speech, specifically as a means of manipulation, makes language artificial, then the body, as a product of nature or God, may represent a higher authenticity uncorrupted by man's ambitions. When Coriolanus responds to the court's flagrantly constructed speeches with his heart, he not only condemns their

[35] *Corio,* 2.1.1163.
[36] Puttenham, 98.
[37] Ibid.

artificial speech, but he also does so with the natural, arguably divine, authenticity of the body.

One of Coriolanus' most provocative reactions to the rhetorical onslaught of praise is a line spoken to one of the senators when he asks Coriolanus to sit and "hear what you have nobly done."[38] He replies, "I had rather have my wounds to heal again than hear say how I got them."[39] The line may be read as a dry, if not wholly sarcastic, suggestion that the soldier would rather be freshly wounded than publicly flattered. However, the unusual syntax to "have my wounds to heal again" warrants investigation. The phrase does more than describe a wound; it describes a process. The breakage of the flesh is not a singular moment, but rather the threshold of the ongoing experience of healing. Torn flesh rebuilds itself by clotting blood and integrating new scar tissue until the body becomes whole, though irrevocably altered. By organizing Coriolanus' response around the healing process rather than the moment of the wound's infliction, Shakespeare offers a reading which privileges the aftermath of growth and transition over the incipient moment of injury. In response to Cominius' prepared, and therefore artificial, speech of praise, Coriolanus urges that he would rather experience his body viscerally changing of its own organic volition than hear his identity changed by the words of others.

In the next section on the legibility of meaning in the flesh, I will return to Coriolanus' scars in terms of their public reception and definition. First, however, it is important to turn away from Coriolanus for a moment to address its cultural and literary contexts. The rhetoric of the body and its tension with viscera throughout the play arises from an interdisciplinary cross-pollination of terminology during the early modern period.

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[38] *Corio*, 2.2.66
[39] *Corio*, 2.2.67-68

The infusion of corporeality into literature is common throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. William Kerwin pinpoints the word "anatomy" as a transformative term which reaches across disciplines and inserts medical ideology into literary modes of thought. He explains that "'anatomy' became a catchword for close examination, and the language of surgery became a cultural shorthand for exposing inner structures."[40] The concept of anatomization underwent a semantic mutation as it entered social and political discourse during the early modern period. Its usefulness in encouraging detail-oriented exploration into systems of government, social order, psychology, and the fate of the soul is evident in the ideological platform it provides to works like Lyly's *Anatomy of Wit* and much of Donne's poetry on death. While its effectiveness in non-medical discourses is significant, the compression and displacement of meaning for "shorthand" and "catchwords" nonetheless threatens to unseat the visceral corpus from the unmetaphorical heart of anatomy.

In 1578, John Lyly was the first to use the term "anatomy" outside a strictly medical context in his first work *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit*.[41] In his dedication to Lord Delaware, Lyly draws parallels between a portrait artist, himself as a writer and philosopher, and a surgeon to illustrate how each is an anatomist in their given field. He posits, "For as every painter that shadoweth a man in all parts given every piece his just proportion, so he that deciphereth the qualities of the mind ought as well to show every humour in his kind as the other doth every part in his colour. The surgeon that maketh the anatomy showeth as well the muscles in the heel as the veins of the heart."[42] For Lyly, the defining feature of the anatomist's occupation is not only the in-depth analysis of his subject's inner workings, but

[40] William Kerwin, *Beyond the Body* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), 104.
[41] Andy Kesson, "They That Tread in a Maze: movement as emotion in John Lyly," in *The Renaissance of Emotion*, ed. Richard Meek and Erin Sullivan (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), 184.
[42] John Lyly, *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit*, ed. Leah Scragg (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 28.

the revelation and display of those otherwise hidden treasures. By situating the author as anatomist, Lyly borrows the invasive, exploratory process from medicine and applies it to an embodied psychology.

In a satirical apology for any "unseemly terms" which may cause offense, Lyly addresses the issue of his own credentials as a writer. In his characteristic style, he sets up several antithetical parallels: "For if the butcher should take upon him to cut the anatomy of a man because he hath skill in opening an ox, he would prove himself a calf…"[43] Right away, Lyly's linkage of the butcher and the anatomist reflects a pervasive anxiety around the necessary skills required to cut open a body during a time when barber-surgery began to face official review and licensure. Lyly continues, "or if the horse-leech would adventure to minister a potion to a sick patient in that he hath knowledge to give a drench to a diseased horse, he would make himself an ass."[44] The qualifications of butchers and the tenuously labeled horse physicians which predate the distinct veterinary care of the eighteenth century are equated as base practices against which legitimate anatomists and physicians are measured.

This dichotomy between animal bodies and human bodies also illustrates a literary engagement with the development of medicine which acknowledges post-Vesalian models in their disavowal of Galenic errors arising from the anatomizing of pigs and dogs. Lyly's specific invocation of butchers and horse-leeches in this passage does more than qualify his own capacity for wit. By addressing issues of comparative anatomy and the emergence of surgeons and physicians as discrete occupations, Lyly quietly defends his own qualifications

[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.

to co-opt medical language by demonstrating his familiarity with prevalent points of scientific contention.

Despite these nods to contemporary medical discourse, however, Lyly's bodies remain dematerialized into metaphor. By borrowing medical terms in aid of romantic pursuits, he replaces the visceral body with conceptual stand-ins for emotional and psychological interiority. Lyly's romantic lead, Euphues, at once praises man's unique capacity to be afflicted by lovesickness and bemoans the incapacity for humanity's medical intellect to cure it. Euphues laments, "And can men by no herb, by no art, by no way procure a remedy for the impatient disease of love?"[45] The illnesses of the physical body are relegated to the position of antithetical baseness against which man's higher intellect may be measured by diseases of the soul. Lyly's *Anatomy of Wit* represents a significant step in the growth of corporeal modes of thinking by transplanting the notion of anatomization into non-medical contexts. However, by abandoning the blood and tissues of the bodily interior in the process, Lyly nonetheless perpetuates the anxious dislocation of the visceral body from intellectual pursuits.

Several decades after *The Anatomy of Wit* and several years after *Coriolanus*, John Donne's 1611 *The First Aniversarie*, originally titled *An Anatomy of the World*, utilized the body as a microcosmic tool for interpreting humanity's fleeting mortality in the universe. Contrasting, Lyly's nods to contemporary medicine, Donne focuses more on the human corpse as an ideological locus for the presence, passage, and absence of the soul. Upon the sight of a young girl's corpse, Donne investigates humanity via posthumous analysis of its mortal remains. He offers:

> But though it be too late to succor thee,
> sick world, yea dead, yea putrified, since shee

[45] Ibid, 55.

> Thy'ntrinsique Balme, and thy preseruatiue
> Can neuer be renew'd, thou neuer liue,
> I (since no man can make thee liue) will trie,
> What we may gaine by thy Anatomy.[46]

The girl's visceral corpse is completely analogized by Donne in order to utilize the cadaver as a generalized representation of life throughout the entire "sick world." The result of Donne's anatomy is a bleak revelation of life's fragility in which the body simultaneously serves as evidence and warning. "Shee, shee is dead; shee's dead: when thou knowest this,/ Thou knowest how poore a trifling thing man is./ And learn'st thus much by our Anatomee,/ The heart being perish'd, no part can be free."[47] Donne tends to write the body as an antagonist to the soul, keeping it trapped in a weak secular state before allowing it to ascend into Heaven in death. The metaphorical anatomy of the metaphorical body reveals a heart which has perished not for its mortal failure to purify and distill vital spirit throughout the body, but for its moral failure to expunge sin from the soul. Shakespeare brings this moralizing anatomy to the living body in *Lear*, to be further explored in Chapter 4, as the titular monarch demands Regan be anatomized to reveal "what breeds about her heart."[48]

Whilst embracing the prevalent notion of death as liberation from secular imprisonment, Donne is unique in his reassertion of the corporeal body as a complex partner to the soul rather than its prison warden. Ramie Targoff asserts that Donne's works illustrate "his belief in the fundamental unnaturalness of separating soul from body" contrary to the liturgy of the Church of England which instead reasons that "the soul should feel nothing but liberation at the moment of leaving the body."[49] While Targoff's exploration of the

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[46] John Donne, "An Anatomy of the World," in *The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne*, ed. Gary A Stringer (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995) 55-60, 8.
[47] Ibid 183-186, 11.
[48] William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. R. A. Foakes (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1997), 3.6.73-4.
[49] Ramie Targoff, *John Donne, Body and Soul* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008) 80.

reciprocity between body and soul throughout *The Anniversaries* is an important illumination of Donne's progressive union of the two, the language she uses to refer to anatomists and the corporeal body still seems to support a dichotomy which negates the value of the visceral corpus.

In her analysis of the same passage from *An Anatomy of the World*, Targoff summarizes Donne's dealings with the corpse as "clinical detachment" compared to the "sympathy for the body when it loses the soul" expressed throughout *The Second Anniversary* or *The Progress of the Soul*. Targoff's assessment of the secular corpse in *The First Anniversary* still leaves the physical body in a state of baseness when separated from the soul. She concludes of *Anatomy of the World*, "Far from pitying the suffering of the corpse, Donne assumes the role of a cool, dispassionate anatomist."[50] The insinuation that the anatomist feels neither pity nor passion toward his work or the body leaves a gap in Targoff's analysis of *The First Anniversary*.

If Donne's endeavor is to illustrate the interconnectedness of body and soul, then the work of the anatomist is not to be underestimated. Targoff contrasts the tone of the *First* and *Second* anniversaries by referring to the latter as "an extensive and probing exploration of a soul – the spiritual equivalent of the early 'anatomie' in *The First Anniversary* – a task that would be difficult to perform on even an intimate friend, let alone on someone he had never met." The notion of the "anatomie" as an intimate process of exploration which may be applied to both body and soul elevates the role of the corporeal anatomist to the same height as soul-searching philosophers and poets. If the term is allowed to retain its meaning in both secular and spiritual realms, then "anatomie" reserves a crucial place for the corporeal body in the pursuit of the spiritual self.

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[50] Ibid, 89.

The tendency within early modern intellectual and literary discourses to shame the body, whether symbolically or literally, contrasts with the boldness of Coriolanus' unabashed viscerality in the court. Although not always explicitly addressed, the body appears throughout Puttenham's *English Poesy* as a subtle undercurrent to highlight the benefits of using well-crafted speech to cover the vulgar body. Shakespeare's craftsmanship of Coriolanus may be read as not only a critique of corrupt politics, but also as an elevation of the visceral corpus to a more valued standing among the intellectual elite.

In the third book, "Of Ornament," Puttenham draws a parallel between poesy and beautiful clothing: "Even so, cannot our vulgar poesy show itself either gallant or gorgeous if any limb be left naked and bare and not clad in his kindly clothes and colors, such as may convey them somewhat out of sight."[51] The focus is not on the beauty of the clothes, but on their capacity to cover the body. More than ornamentation, these metaphorical clothes serve a specific purpose in obscuring the naked body from view. The argument hosts an implicit anxiety around the exposed body, as though any cracks in the man-made artifice of language may inadvertently reveal an unregulated truth beneath. Puttenham's poesy is a linguistic tool for the construction of one's identity, specifically in opposition to the identity otherwise revealed by the unclothed body.

Coriolanus' tendency toward corporeality-based constructivism may therefore be read as a reaction to Puttenham's linguistic constructivism. In Puttenham's logic, a limb left bare is a piece of oneself uncontrolled by a linguistically and intellectually constructed personal narrative. By crafting a notion of himself built on the alterations to his physical body made in the process of living, Coriolanus effectively refutes the notion that the body represents an antithetical weakness to Puttenham's manipulative intellectualism. If poesy is ornamentation

[51] Puttenham, 222.

meant to obscure the bare body, then Coriolanus, in his avowal of visceral corporeality, stands in direct opposition to the superficial rhetoric of the court.

When he declines Menenius' urgings to participate in the court's traditions, Coriolanus consistently returns to his own unpolished, grotesque language of the body with claims like, "I had rather have one scratch my head i'th' sun,"[52] argued in defense of his corporeal autonomy "for my wounds' sake."[53] By rooting his notion of self in his visceral corpus, Coriolanus resists the manipulative court's attempts to redefine his body as a concept, title, or symbol. In the context of the marketplace scene, this use of clothing as a rhetorical tool meant to obscure corporeal authenticity manifests itself in The Robe of Humility. I will return to this idea in a close reading of the marketplace scene later in the chapter. Before diving into the readings of Coriolanus' visceral body, however, it is important to first examine how the rhetorical bodies of *Coriolanus* operate.

The contemporary audiences of *Coriolanus* between 1608 and 1610 would have been familiar with the integration of corporeality into political ideology. As Slights describes, "Extended comparisons of the human body and the macrocosm were commonplace in the early seventeenth century … they were generally accepted as true representations of the unity of physiological, civil, and cosmological governance."[54] Menenius, an expert rhetorician whose polished public image is as influential as it is archaic, is guilty of this tendency to co-opt the body into rhetoric. In the first scene of the play, Menenius responds to the complaints of the starving citizens by redefining their stomachs. He boasts of his power over the bodily interior, "For, look you, I may make the belly smile as well as speak."[55] As he tells the fable of the Belly and Members, Menenius undermines the validity of the peoples' actual starvation

[52] *Corio,* 2.2.74-6.
[53] *Corio,* 2.2.137.
[54] Slights, 90.
[55] *Corio,* 1.1.106-107.

by turning their stomachs into a metonymic representation of the conglomerate responsible for their hunger.

> MENENIUS
> Note me this, good friend;
> Your most grave belly was deliberate,
> Not rash like his accusers, and thus answered:
> "True is it, my incorporate friends," quoth he,
> "That I receive the general food at first
> Which you do live upon, and fit it is,
> Because I am the storehouse and the shop
> Of the whole body. But, if you do remember,
> I send it through the rivers of your blood
> Even to the court, the heart, to the' seat o'th' brain;
> And through the cranks and offices of man
> The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
> From me receive that natural competency
> Whereby they live.[56]

As a discrete allegory, the metaphor is certainly apt. Its comparisons are logical. However, in context with the circumstances in which it is told, the use of the body as a tool for defending food distribution by the senate takes on a cruel irony. As Michael Schoenfeldt puts it, "One would not normally think of defending a voracious aristocracy in a subsistence society by likening it to the organ of digestion."[57] The belly, taken from the starving citizens along with its vacuous contents, is fractured from the visceral corpus and handed over to the senate as a symbol of its wealth and power. The citizens are then consigned to the status of the body's lowest members as Menenius addresses their leader, "the great toe of this assembly."[58] Schoenfeldt points out that "Aggrippa strategically replaces a hierarchy based on the distinction between low and high with a hierarchy based on the distinction between center and periphery,"[59] which casts the peripheral citizens as easily amputated distal parts. In

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[56] *Corio,* 1.1.124-137.
[57] Michael Schoenfeldt, "Fables of the Belly in Early Modern England," in *The Body in Parts,* ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (London: Routledge, 1997) 248.
[58] *Corio,* 1.1.152.
[59] Schoenfeldt, 248.

doing so, Menenius fractures the whole suffering bodies of the citizens into disjointed fragments, which he can then reorganize into a metaphor that reasserts the power of the senate.

The metaphor of the body politic is a long-held tradition with roots closer to Galenic medicine than Vesalian. The earliest descriptions of what would come to be known as the "Belly and Members Fable" date back to the early twelfth century. Jack Hartnell recounts John of Salisbury's concept of the body politic circa 1115-1180: "Peasants, Salisbury wrote, were presented as the feet of this state-body, toiling over the soil in service of its upper members. Registrars and treasurers formed the stomach, busily digesting the state's bureaucracy and finances."[60] Shakespeare's use of the fable therefore situates Menenius as a remnant of an outdated mode of conceptualizing the body. His resolute regurgitation of an almost five-hundred-year-old social framework reflects the desperation of traditionalists in the face of evolving knowledge. By placing Menenius in conversation with the empirical Coriolanus, Shakespeare foregrounds the ideological tensions surrounding the body as centuries of medical doctrine were overturned by the empirical observations of early modern anatomists.

Quoting the belly within the narrative of the fable, Menenius' use of the phrase "my incorporate friends" refers to the collective body of the citizens with a double-edged irony. The phrasing foregrounds the unified nature of the public whilst the context of the corporeal discussion literalizes the term. Both the Oxford and Arden editions of the play text refer to the turn of phrase in footnotes as "here comically literalized"[61] and "made comic because used literally."[62] Although the comedic effect is no doubt present in the inherent double

[60] Hartnell, 44.
[61] *Corio* (Oxford), 166, note 127.
[62] *Corio* (Arden), 160, note 125.

meaning, the diction of Menenius' speech mixes lighthearted storytelling with serious political turmoil to detract from the needs of the people.

To read the address to the people as "incorporate" purely for comic value disregards its cruel irony in the context of a debate on visceral homeostasis overwritten by manipulative body-based allegory. The citizens are no more Menenius' "friends" than their deliberate demotion from complete, autonomous subjects into inferior, objectified bodily fragments makes them in any way "incorporate," unless that prefix may be read to signify an undoing. By redefining the bodies of the citizens with the rhetoric of the senate, Menenius ascribes politically motivated external meaning onto the people's bodily interiors. In doing so, he manipulates not only their argument, but also their corporeally linked sense of self.

Ever the rhetorician's pupil, Coriolanus echoes Menenius' sentiment by explicitly referring to the citizens as "you fragments!"[63] However, the conceptual body Menenius preaches clash with the visceral corporeality of the soldier. Coriolanus' attempt to participate in the fragmentation of the citizens oversteps the bounds of bloodless rhetoric and begins to manifest in the familiar physicality of violence. Coriolanus asks Menenius to allow an excess of force: "Let me use my sword, I'll make a quarry with thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high as I could pick my lance."[64] Where Menenius uses a purely conceptual idea of the body to manipulate power dynamics, Coriolanus refuses to separate the physical body from the imagined one. His offer to visceralize the dismemberment Meneninus perpetrates rhetorically not only foreshadows his own fate, but also exemplifies his misunderstanding of political manipulation.

[63] *Corio,* 1.1.220
[64] *Corio,* 1.1.195-7

Having characterized the belly as the righteous leader and the limbs as ignorant and ungrateful subjects, Menenius goes on to catalogue the remainder of the body, fracturing and redefining as he goes. His description begins in line with classic Galenic humoralism, which perceives the liver as the originator of the blood, but goes on to obscure the distinctions between the roles of the heart and brain in physiological terms.[65] Since the ancient Greek discovery of the nervous system by Alcmaeon of Croton, references to "court" and "seat" are not unusual terms in physiological descriptions of the brain and heart.[66] However, Menenius glosses over the specific duties associated with each.

The early modern heart is understood as the court or hearth of the body. Slights explains, "Galenic physiology and humors theory specify that the heart is the body's furnace."[67] It was responsible for lighting and distributing the fire of life. The heart's primary function was to distill air from the lungs into vital spirit and combine it with blood before distributing it to the rest of the body. The vital spirit which entered the hollow nerves of the brain then became responsible for consciousness, sensation, and muscular action.[68] As a result, although they technically served different purposes, the heart and brain were both often associated with reason.

If the heart was the "court" of refinement, the brain was the "seat" of intelligence which utilized the vital spirit supplied by the heart to enact thought and the functions of the nervous system. Alcmaeon was the first to classify the brain as the locus for cognition and seems to have established the diction which echoes throughout medical history. In the pre-Socratic period of ancient philosophy, Alcmaeon wrote, "This power of the brain to

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[65] Slights, 82.
[66] Konstantine P. Panegyres, "The Ancient Greek Discovery of the Nervous System: Alcmaeon, Praxagoras and Herophilus," *Journal of Clinical Neuroscience* 29, (2015): 22.
[67] Slights, 59.
[68] Charles Donald O'Malley, *Andreas Vesalius of Brussels, 1514-1564* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1964), 1.

synthesize sensations makes it also the seat of thought."[69] The ancient mind's "seat" reaches forward into the early modern period just as the early modern notions of "good humor" reach into the present. The persistence of somatic language which outlives the obsolescence of the theories from which it originated evidences the integrated evolution of medicine and culture through time.

Shakespeare's political rhetorician cashes in on the perceptions of the human body which directly benefit the governing body. Menenius exemplifies what Slights refers to as "textualized bodies" and their heavy reliance on "strategically deployed metaphors" in an effort to reap rhetorical ethos from the perceived natural authenticity of physiology.[70] The syntax of Menenius' speech generalizes the heart and brain from complex organs serving many functions into a series of catch-words describing the blood's movement "even to the court, the heart, to th' seat o'th' brain."[71] This shallow summation of the body's vital functions participates in a tradition of emblematism throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which analogizes the body in order to create moralistic meaning out of its mechanical reality.

Jonathan Sawday describes the rift between the metaphorical body and the visceral one during the seventeenth century by exploring an incident in which metaphorical windows to the heart of man were literally opened in one Irish nobleman. In 1640, cardiologist William Harvey was introduced to Hugh Montgomery, third Viscount of the Ards, by King Charles I. Montogomery had suffered an accident in his childhood which left an improperly healed abscess in his left side exposing his heart. Harvey was invited to reach his fingers into the opening and hold the apex of Montogmery's beating heart. Sawday describes the encounter

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[69] Charles Gross, "Some Revolutions in Neuroscience," *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* 25, no. 1 (2013): 4-13.
[70] Slights, 83.
[71] *Corio,* 1.1.133

as a dissolution of metaphor in the visceral bodily interior and argues, "Peering into the human body, we encounter an organ (the heart) disrobed of its former majesty, unfeeling and blindly pumping." Again, metaphor is understood as an ornamental adornment to the body. He goes on, "The dense web of allegory, resemblance and metaphor which had surrounded the heart in Galenic and Aristotelian physiology has collapsed."[72] Sawday sees the exposed bodily interior as one "disrobed" not only of externally ascribed meaning, but also of the "majesty" those destroyed metaphors once imbued in the imagined body.

Slights, however, reads Harvey's record that "the heart is deprived of the sense of feeling"[73] more literally. Where Sawday uses the description to back a claim that the visceral bodily interior is devoid of emotional impact without metaphors, Slights reads Harvey's words as an observation that the cardiac tissue does not have the same sensory receptors as the skin. He refutes Sawday's claim that the body lacks majesty without the infusion of metaphor and cites proof from Harvey's own amazement. Slights writes, "What we can safely conclude from Harvey's narrative is that the heart's majesty remained 'amaz[ing]' even in the hands of potential Doubting Thomases reaching into a living human body."[74] Significant as metaphor and moral emblematism are to the multi-faceted early modern heart, Harvey's powerful experience of the living bodily interior at his fingertips evidences the body's capacity to carry majesty and amazement within its viscera without metaphorical intervention.

This intervention is repeatedly perpetrated by Menenius throughout *Coriolanus* in order to manipulate the body's meanings to his own purposes. By including recognizable

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[72] Jonathan Sawday, "The Transparent Man and the King's Heart," in *The Arts of Seventeenth-Century Science: Representations of the Natural World in European and Norther American Culture*, ed. Claire Jowitt and Diane Watt (Routledge: 2016), 20.
[73] William Harvey, *Exercitatio Anatomica*, quoted in Sir Geoffrey Keynes, *Life of William Harvey* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 155-6.
[74] Slights, 3.

medical diction in his description of the "court" and "seat" organs, Menenius affords himself the illusion of scientific credibility without having to reconcile his convoluted metaphors with the not so easily categorized anatomical reality of the bodily interior. The syntax of the phrase "th' seat o'th' brain" is especially intriguing from the standpoint of comparative anatomy. After Alcmaeon's declaration around 500 B.C., anatomical discussions of the brain continued to rely on his diction to clarify location and function. In the fourth century, a primary founder of human anatomy called Herophilus of Chalcedon referred to the brain as "the seat of intelligence."[75] These writings went on to shape much of the Galenic philosophy which influences early modern medicine. As a result of the standard set down by one of the first anatomists over two thousand years prior, sixteenth-century notions of the brain continue to rely on Alcemaeon's unique phrasing to communicate the importance of location to function in the study of anatomy.

This linguistic trope embedded in medical discourse led sixteenth-century anatomists to understand certain organs as the "seat of" its given function. When Menenius makes the brain the indirect object, a space opens in which to read "th' seat" as a separate feature which serves the brain, rather than the brain itself. By choosing to structure the phrase as "seat o'th' brain" rather than simply "the brain" as with "the heart" just before it, Shakespeare provides an opportunity to read the line as a reference to an accessory of the brain. In such a reading, a contentious fable of anatomical history surfaces: that of the mythological *rete mirabile*. The *rete mirabile* is an intricate network of capillaries stretching across the floor of the cranium surrounding the pituitary gland. Both structurally and functionally, the *rete mirabile* could be interpreted as the seat in which the brain sits.

[75] O'Malley, *Andreas Vesalius of Brussels,* 4.

The *rete mirabile* was first described by Herophilus of Chalcedon during the fourth century B.C. and adopted into Galenic neurology as a system for producing animal spirit used in the brain for motor skills and coordination.[76] The crucial mystery of the *rete mirabile*, however, is that, despite garnering descriptions by anatomists for almost two thousand years, the structure was never actually found in a human cranium. Vesalius depicts the plexus structure in the *Fabrica* with the caveat that the feature is "commonly observed in the heads of cattle and sheep" and that it was necessary to address this Galenic error within the context of human anatomy, "lest anyone should think we have concealed the fact that differences exist between these animals and man."[77] Berengario de Carpi, a significant predecessor to Vesalius, also denied the existence of the structure, claiming to have never encountered it despite opening over a hundred human heads.[78] Although this network of blood vessels cradling the base of the brain is not wholly fictional, the *rete mirabile* represents another instance in which Galen was led to false assumptions about human anatomy due to his use of non-human subjects in dissection.

The ambiguous syntax of Menenius' reference to "th' seat o'th' brain" rather than citing the brain itself as the seat of intelligence might therefore suggest a reference to Galen's imaginary *rete mirabile*. Although most of Galen's physiological theories about the makeup and movement of the humors remained prevalent, his errors in gross anatomy like the *rete mirabile*, were overturned by empirical anatomists like Vesalius and John Banister in the sixteenth century as well as Helkiah Crooke in his *Microcosmographia* of the early seventeenth century. The linkage of Menenius' constructed notion of the body with outdated

[76] Ibid, 5.
[77] Vesalius translated in O'Malley *Vesalius: The Illustrations*, 198.
[78] R. K. French, "Berengario da Carpi and the Use of Commentary in Anatomical Teaching," in *The Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Andrew Wear (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 51.

Galenic error is not only syntactically feasible, it is also characteristically appropriate in terms of the rhetorician's propensity for eclipsing the real body with the imagined.

A politician of tradition, Menenius is quick to construct excuses and false narratives to justify outdated, self-serving systems. His insistence on custom at the cost of honesty is made apparent during Coriolanus' refusal to don the Robe of Humility. Despite Coriolanus' hesitation to present himself disingenuously, Menenius defends the history of the tradition saying, "Pray you, go fit you to the custom and take to you, as your predecessors have, your honour with your form."[79] By using the compliance of predecessors as justification for the custom's continuation, Menenius reflects the same dogmatic authority by which Galenic doctrine held court over medical advancement for centuries despite repeated studies exposing his errors.

As a several-hundred-year-old error reinforced by hierarchal indoctrination, the *rete mirabile* takes on its own allegorical significance within the narratives of medical history. For any science to progress, it is crucial that mistakes are made, acknowledged, and their resolutions integrated into a growing body of knowledge. The *rete mirabile* is a significant example of one such mistake. To embrace Menenius' metaphorical body, the allegorical *rete mirabile* may represent the blind spots of pre-cadaver-based empiricism in anatomical studies and serve as a rallying point for the validity of human dissection. The "net of wonder" illuminates the instability of medical tradition when it is driven by authority rather than empiricism. Although the strange vascular plexus may not hold court with the human brain, its counter-point contributions to human dissection earn the *rete mirabile* a special seat in humanity's ever-evolving notions of the body.

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[79] *Corio*, 2.2.140-3.

It is productive to bring the *rete mirabile* to *Coriolanus* because the two constitute a potentially fruitful intersection of literary arts and medical sciences. In the search for corporeal selfhood, the capacity to recognize and interrogate those who would dictate the contents of the bodily interior is a critical skill. Galen's assumptions were perpetuated by a culture of authoritative indoctrination to define the standard body. When Shakespeare puts that power to define into the context of the allegorical body, Menenius' standardization of the body politic becomes a power over personhood. When Menenius declares, "The senators of Rome are this good belly, and you the mutinous members,"[80] he uses the body to dictate to the citizens not just the meanings of the parts which compose them, but to define who they are as individuals and members of his body politic. The subtle nod to the *rete mirabile* in Menenius' speech calls upon a tradition of fictional anatomies to populate his fictional bodily interior in order to usurp the unsymbolic corporeality of Rome's citizens. The obscurantism in his opaque syntax, whilst invoking a false body part, nonetheless manifests itself in the form of real alterations to public perceptions.

Defining the Body: Externally Ascribed and Internally Maintained Meaning

In their introduction to *The Body in Parts*, David Hillman and Carla Mazzio discuss the early modern body's reorganization into a complex system of partitioning and unification. While the individual organ itself is whole, the isolation of the organ from the whole body (whether by anatomical illustration, surgical amputation, punitive dismemberment, or representational synecdoche) evokes the anxieties about the distant bodily interior with a greater impact and urgency. The anatomical understanding of the body arising in the early modern period brings with it an ironic tension as the attempt to index the complete body

[80] *Corio*, 1.1.145-6.

inevitably requires the meticulous sectioning of its parts. Hillman and Mazzio refer to an ongoing "dialectic of unity and partition" throughout early modern anatomy.[81]

This effort to dissect and unify the body reached beyond the anatomy theatre into a wider cultural consciousness. As Hillman and Mazzio explain, "The spatially imagined body was perhaps the most common vehicle for the making of social and cosmic metaphors in early modern Europe."[82] The opened body offered more than scientific evidence to anatomists. It also provided a new playing field for writers and thinkers of the early modern period to explore as both a literal site of selfhood and a rich metaphor to be applied across disciplines from geographical exploration to cosmic philosophy. Although Coriolanus and Menenius are seemingly opposed as respective proponents of the visceral body and the metaphorical one, metaphors and imagination nonetheless play an integral part in the formation of body knowledge. In "an age of synecdoche," the metaphorical body is part of what gives the visceral body meaning.[83]

Like the tension between the part and the whole, metaphor and viscera work together in opposition to produce meaning in the body. Shakespeare situates Coriolanus at the fulcrum of these tensions in the marketplace scene. Although he is forced to confront his bodily interior via wounds earned on the battlefield, Coriolanus nonetheless returns home anatomically whole. The demanding physicality of his role as a fighter links Coriolanus' corporeality to his identity in that his notion of self is dependent on his successes as a soldier. To bleed both himself and his enemies on the battlefield is to prove his self-worth. Coriolanus refers to the blood he drops as "rather physical than dangerous to me,"[84] aligning the wounds

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[81] David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, "Introduction: Individual Parts," in *The Body in Parts,* ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (London: Routledge, 1997) xv.
[82] Ibid xvi.
[83] Ibid xv.
[84] *Corio,* 1.5.18.

he earns and those he inflicts on others with the practice of bloodletting. This parallel situates the soldier as unwell and seeking medicinal remedy in the injuries of war. Coriolanus' self-prescribed curative method of battlefield bloodletting reinforces his corporeal autonomy over the mediation of his bodily care by a would-be surgeon.

Coriolanus emerges from an unstable period in medical practice. Physicians followed carefully charted reasoning with so much precision that even "the time of day, the season of the year, and the geographical region" was taken into consideration for preparing the safest and most effective bleed.[85] However, many factors contributed to negative public perceptions of the physician and surgeon. The tumultuous relationship between licensed physicians from the universities and their unlicensed barber-surgeon counterparts split medicine into a dichotomy of life-saving scientific achievement and shady mutilations in dangerous workshops.[86] By linking medicinal bloodletting to battlefield injuries, Shakespeare engages with the unsettling process by which the body must be broken in order to heal.

The public shaming of criminal bodies by dissection also aligned early modern anatomists with judges and executioners. Sawday places the criminal body within the Foucauldian theory of punishment: "In the spectacle of execution is enacted what Michel Foucault has analysed as the demands of the law, which result in an attempt at inscribing on the body of the felon the full weight of the wronged sovereign's displeasure."[87] His specification of the act of inscription not as a success, but as "an attempt" highlights the

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[85] Peter Brian, *Galen on Bloodletting: A Study of the Origins, Development, and Validity of his Opinions, with a Translation of the Three Works* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) 131.
[86] Eleanor Decamp, *Civic and Medical Worlds in Early Modern England: Performing Barbery and Surgery* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) 11-15.
[87] Jonathan Sawday, "The Fate of Marsyas: Dissecting the Renaissance Body," in *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, c. 1540-1660,* ed. Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, 1990) 116.

disconnect between allegorical workings of the body politic and their visceral enactment upon the physical body.

The inscription of meaning into Coriolanus' wounds when the citizens "put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them"[88] enacts an exchange of power comparable to public execution. The law demands that he begs the consulship in the Robe of Humility, a bodily spectacle which transforms Coriolanus into what Foucault refers to as "the anchoring point for a manifestation of power."[89] In Foucault's terms, the "manifestation of power" evident in the marketplace scene is effectively the transformation of Coriolanus into a tool of the state as a corporeal embodiment of the body politic.

However, when Foucault situates the body as an anchor, he falls victim to the materialist temptation to solidify theory in the apparently stable structures of human anatomy. His reliance on the illusionary constancy of the body disregards its natural fluctuations, especially when it has been broken. As the image of Coriolanus morphs from weapon, machine, and trophy to symbol, spectacle, disease, and fragment of the body politic, Shakespeare problematizes the drive of conceptual anatomization by exposing the paradoxical inconsistency of the standardized metaphorical body when confronted by the grotesque and non-normative viscera of the individual bodily interior.

The treatment and ultimate breakage of Coriolanus' body may be read as a navigation of the clash between the interpretation of the body and the physical dissection of it. From the outset, the subject is interpreted via topical surface observation. Volumnia recounts the number of scars on her son's body and cites them as evidence of the worthy deeds defining him. The broken flesh is situated as honorific ornamentation, its value made apparent in

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[88] *Corio*, 2.3.7.
[89] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon, 1979) 55.

Volumnia's exclamation, "O, he is wounded, I thank the gods for't!"[90] As Volumnia expresses gratitude that her son has been blessed by injury in battle, Menenius further objectifies Coriolanus by suggesting, "the wounds become him."[91] The syntax of this phrasing creates a useful intermingling of body and self. On the surface, Menenius is simply perpetuating the glorification of the wounds as medals of honor by suggesting that they suit the soldier's body well. However, casting the wounds as ornamentation to the body dissociates them from their physiological reality as integral parts of the body.

Volumnia and Menenius see Coriolanus' wounds as external additions to his person rather than visceral alterations to his corpus. The perception of the soldier's scar tissue as an award earned in battle undermines his bodily autonomy because it displaces the wound from the corpus. Doing so disregards the tissue's integral status as a part of the body made by the body in preservation of the body. Menenius' claim that Coriolanus' body is improved by injury also suggests that the soldier is most himself when physically broken. When read as a comment not only on the suitability of the wound to the landscape of Coriolanus' body, but on the suitability of Coriolanus' body for the integration of wounds, the verb by which "the wounds become him" carries with its suggestion of aesthetic appropriateness a connotation of synthesis and transformation. The wounds become the man insomuch as the man becomes his wounds.

Such a reading creates a direct correlation between the body and its participation in characterization and personhood. *Coriolanus* asks who is qualified to interpret the body when doing so is also a process of defining the person. As his mother and political advisor index his battle scars, Coriolanus is transformed into a collection of corporeal fragments which are

[90] *Corio*, 2.1.118.
[91] *Corio*, 2.1.120.

conceptualized and redefined as soon as they are identified. The quantification of Coriolanus' body takes place in an exchange between Menenius and Volumnia:

> MENENIUS (*To Volumnia*): Where is he wounded?
>
> VOLUMNIA: I'th' shoulder and i'th' left arm. There will be large cicatrices to show the people when he shall stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin seven hurts i'th' body.
>
> MENENIUS: One i'th' neck and two i'th' thigh – there's nine that I know.
>
> VOLUMNIA: He had before this last expedition twenty-five wounds upon him.
>
> MENENIUS: Now it's twenty-seven. Every gash was an enemy's grave.[92]

The enthusiasm shared by Volumnia and Menenius over Coriolanus' latest wounds looks forward to the symbolic currency they will provide when he reveals them for the consulship. Quantifying his scars prepares them for the exchange of honour and respect expected from Coriolanus and the citizens. As they discuss, Volumnia's familiarity with the history of her son's wounds begins to set her apart from the purely political Menenius in their shared concern for the state of his body. Although she participates in the system which politicizes the soldier's body, Volumnia's recollection of her son's "hurts" quietly exposes her maternal compassion. For a moment, Shakespeare reminds us that Volumnia remembers every wound not because of her meticulous political tally, but because a mother could never forget a single harm done to her son.

These fragments of Coriolanus' body only occupy the visceral realm during the brief window between the moment the blood congeals and the subsequent cataloguing of the site

[92] *Corio*, 2.1.142-51.

for political quantification. This almost mechanical process of identification and redefinition by others drives Coriolanus to seek himself in the visceral reality of his corpus. If he is to be a "thing of blood"[93] and scar tissue, the preservation of his corporeality is Coriolanus' primary defense against conceptual anatomization.

Without witnessing the breach of flesh, Volumnia and Menenius extrapolate meaning from the scars via analysis. They compare data and catalogue Coriolanus' scars to quantify his military successes. Their distance from the violence by which the wounds were acquired allows both mother and politician to romanticize the corporeal fragments without acknowledgement for the circumstances of their acquisition and, to a lesser degree, their impact on the corporeal whole they make up.

Menenius even goes so far as to dissociate Coriolanus' mortality onto imagined enemies. When the wound count reaches twenty-seven, Menenius imagines, "Every gash was an enemy's grave."[94] The claim carries a physiological irony in which the implicit threat of death evidenced by Coriolanus' visible gashes is removed from the physically breached body and applied to the abstract image of slain enemies. Coriolanus undergoes a subtle ascension to immortality for Menenius and Volumnia as any injury to his seemingly indestructible body immediately bypasses any suggestion of his own mortality to instead represent the mortality of others. Mareile Pfannebecker describes the theo-cybernetic image of Coriolanus as "a sentient being more resilient than the dead metal of his sword,"[95] attributing his perceived immortality, not to superhuman godliness, but to the dehumanizing mechanical objectification which renders him already dead.

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[93] *Corio,* 2.2.107.
[94] *Corio,* 2.1.151.
[95] Mareile Pfannebecker, "Cyborg *Coriolanus*/Monster Body Politic," in *Posthumanist Shakespeares,* ed. Stefan Herbrechter and Ivan Callus (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 115.

Menenius' grave metaphor also operates on the shared depth of both the wound and the grave. The parallel aligns Coriolanus' opened bodily interior with opened earth receiving the dead left in his wake. Even as Menenius pontificates on the honors represented by the wounds, his words nonetheless point toward the trauma inherent in killing as the metaphor acknowledges each death's impact on the soldier's physical being. The gash does not simply represent a dead enemy; it houses the corpse within the bloody tomb of the wounded victor. Menenius' metaphor places the deeds against which Coriolanus defines himself as a soldier within his physical corpus.

Volumnia idealizes the bloodied brow of a good soldier as a signifier of glory which "more becomes a man than gilt his trophy."[96] Her interpretation of visceral matter as decoration objectifies Coriolanus in thought throughout a scene from which he is distinctly absent. Whilst Volumnia's reading prioritizes the blood on his face as a material enhancement to his outward appearance, his own understanding of the blood as medicinal and protective is a factor in his reclamation of his visceral bodily interior. Physiologically, early modern blood was not the passive, inert object Volumnia's decorative interpretation implies, but rather innately vital. As Karin Sellberg explains, "Blood was not merely a substance circulated around the body; it was animate in itself."[97] Coriolanus uses blood in its active vitality to obscure his visceral body from ideological redefinition by those seeking to usurp his body and its meanings. Before exploring this notion of viscera as a protective barrier, a closer reading of the degree to which Coriolanus' body is conceptually claimed and rewritten by others first illustrates the barrier's necessity.

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[96] *Corio,* 1.3.40-41.
[97] Karin Sellberg, "'Bloody Business:' Passions and Regulation of Sanguinity in William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *King Lear,*" in *Fluid Bodies and Bodily Fluids in Premodern Europe,* ed. Anne M. Scott and Michael David Barbezat (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2019), 117.

Upon his return from battle, it is unclear to his fellow Romans whether the blood obscuring Coriolanus' face is that of his enemies or himself. It is only in an exchange with Aufidius that Coriolanus declares, "'Tis not my blood wherein thou seest me masked."[98] In clarifying this to his enemy, Coriolanus invites Aufidius to perceive his terrifying visage as empirical evidence of his defeat. In this context, the coat of blood provides a fresh slate on which to craft the identity Coriolanus chooses to present his rival. As evidenced in the rhetorical manipulations propagated by both Menenius and the citizens, the legibility of blood is fluid in more than its literal viscosity. The body, its interiors, and its parts offer multitudinous meanings which shift according to the context in which they are perceived, the audience to whom they are presented, and the speaker in control of the narrative.

Throughout *Coriolanus*, the body presented by Coriolanus to his soldiers and enemies on the battlefield means something different, and decidedly more visceral, than the body paraded before the court and citizens by Menenius. The same body is also read in a unique dimension by Volumnia, at once displaced from the visceral reality of the battlefield, but nonetheless tethered to the subject by the primacy of the womb. The power of Coriolanus as a character rests in his capacity to reclaim his personal body from the imagination of interpreters and instead use his corpus to frame his own notion of self.

Kerwin pinpoints the face as a locus of activity for both the subject's agency and the surgeon's craft. Kerwin writes, "This emphasis on outer appearance included a special concern with the face, as part of a new sense of personal value created by the individual."[99] The crucial point Kerwin brings to the forefront is not limited to an acknowledgement of medicine's role in this growing personal subjectivity. What is more significant is the way in

[98] *Corio,* 1.10.9.
[99] Kerwin, 98.

which barbers and surgeons afford individuals the capacity to actively create one's own value by making personal choices about their external appearance.

The blood on Coriolanus' face is a unique instance in which the bodily interior participates in coloring outer appearances. Phrases like "this painting wherein you see me smeared" situate this blood as a component of his artfully constructed identity over which he asserts control by clarifying its interpretation.[100] Lucy Munro argues that, because paint was often used to represent blood in early modern practical effects, Shakespeare's use of the word 'paint' in this context carries "a metatheatrical edge."[101] Kerwin refers the trend of face painting during the early modern period as a form of "self-creation." He links cosmetic painting "usually portrayed in print as a female practice" with the more visceral manipulations executed on male bodies by barbers to create a parallel which acknowledges the role of medical practice in the personal craftsmanship of the body.[102] Without the presence of a surgeon, *Coriolanus* nonetheless engages with readings on manually reconstructed corporeality via the injuries of war. A man may as easily go to the barber as to war in search of assistance in enacting a physical transformation.

Eleanor Rycroft identifies the early modern beard as both "cultural item" and "body part," produced by the dual forces of "the body which creates its matter and the society which recreates its form."[103] In their socio-politically constructed meaning as ornamentation and their literal status as corporeal matter, Coriolanus' scars and blood masking engage a comparable mode of self-fashioning to the dichotomous "cultural asset" of the early modern beard. Like the corporeally manifested, but culturally defined beard, visibly smeared blood

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[100] *Corio,* 1.7.69-70.
[101] Lucy Munro, "'They Eat Each Other's Arms': Stage Blood and Body Parts," in *Shakespeare's and the Effects of Performance*, ed. Tiffany Stern and Farah Karim-Cooper (London: Arden, 2014) 80.
[102] Kerwin, 107.
[103] Eleanor Rycroft, *Facial Hair and the Performance of Early Modern Masculinity* (London: Routledge, 2019) 7.

also "blurs the boundary between subject and object, marking it out as a particularly potent tool for self-fashioning."[104]

The painted face Coriolanus flaunts operates similarly to a trimmed beard or concealed pock in that the alteration of his visage participates in autonomous self-constructivism by which the subject strategically directs attention toward (or away from) aspects of the exterior self with which they prefer to identify. Coriolanus' bloodied brow is, therefore, a significant example of "the outer layers by which people crafted an identity to present to the world"[105] because of its externalization of the visceral bodily interior. Coriolanus controls the identity conveyed in his visage by claiming the blood smeared across it as a part of his wearable image. Beyond the self-aware craftsmanship inherent in his ownership of the visceral mask, Coriolanus' role in creating it himself situates him not only as a conscious constructivist, but as his own surgeon. The personal agency of the barber's clientele is mediated by the necessity to call upon the expert skills of the barber to execute the desired physical change. By personally wielding the sword responsible for letting the blood which adorns his face, Coriolanus literally takes the exposure of the bodily interior into his own hands in the process of creating his visceral identity.

Back home far from the fight, external interpretations of Coriolanus' valor and the quantification of his worth are forged in his superficial image without regard for the physiological reality behind the striking presence of the blood. For Volumnia, the owner of the blood never mattered so long as it was smeared on her son's face. Her fearlessness at the prospect of losing a son in the honorable death of the battlefield negates the physiological

[104] Ibid, 8.
[105] Kerwin, 105.

implications of blood-loss. The blood is not important diagnostically, but rather because it implies a backstory of violence.

As Munro argues, conventional stage blood operates as "a combination of physical object and oral narration" which work together to represent a wider narrative of violence and its lasting impacts.[106] The unstaged acts which bloody Coriolanus' face are nonetheless viscerally present because, as Munro explains of the similarly omnipresent blood flow throughout *Julius Caesar*, "Stage blood addresses the eye and, if animal blood was used, the nose, while a consistently developed rhetoric of blood addresses the ear; together they create a multi-sensory impression of violence and bloodshed."[107] Particularly when understood in the context of the intense sensory impact of real animal blood on the early modern stage, Coriolanus breaks down the boundaries separating visceral battlefield bloodshed from its rhetorical tokenization in the court. It is this disparity between the traumatic reality of the fight in the soldier's physical and psychological memory and the safely distanced romanticizing of its aftermath which divides the man Coriolanus is from the man his mother wants him to be.

Although the presence of blood takes a step closer toward the visceral reality of the body, its displacement and ambiguous origin disqualifies it from the realm of empirical evidence. By adorning Coriolanus' face without specific association to any wound or body, this blood serves as a signifier of the bodily interior rather than a participant in it. This is a critical juncture in tipping the balance of metaphor and viscera in *Coriolanus* because, instead of the blood surfacing to ground interpretive metaphors in physical matter, the metaphor succeeds in dissociating the viscera from its corporeality. The interpretation of the exterior

[106] Munro, 92.
[107] Ibid, 84.

body in this scene is so far removed from the anatomist's empiricism that the question of whether the blood even originated from the subject is completely absent.

Coriolanus' body is valued more highly for what it has the potential to represent than for what it actually is. This effort to overwrite Coriolanus' visceral reality with a political ideal comes to its disastrous culmination in the events of the marketplace in Act 2, Scene 3. Even before he has entered, the citizens begin to anatomize Coriolanus: "For, if he show us his wounds and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them."[108] The citizens pick apart the hypocrisy inherent in a custom which creates the illusion of choice but dictates the peoples' appropriate response on the basis that "ingratitude is monstrous."[109] As they criticize the political body governing their lives, the citizens make use of Coriolanus' personal body to vent their grievances.

Mazzio locates this exchange corporeally in the tongue: "The member that gives 'vent' to voice and subjectivity, that bridges the individual and the collective…" and identifies its moral ambiguity as both "malevolent and benevolent discursive agencies emerge from one and the same bodily organ."[110] Shakespeare's inclusion of the tongue in this exchange turns that bridge between collective and individual into a path for invasion by an unpredictable agent of as much evil as good. In the process, the evocative intermingling of gruesome, somewhat sexual language of tongues and wounds with political strife shifts the body politic from metaphor to material.

This visceral new body politic constructed by the people foils the rhetorically controlled metaphorical body Menenius attempted to force on them at the play's start. But this material body politic is not just any body. It is not a representational body or a medical

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[108] *Corio,* 2.3.5-7.
[109] *Corio,* 2.3.9.
[110] Mazzio, "Sins of the Tongue," 53.

standard of health like those ideals set out in the *Fabrica*. The citizens are talking about specific wounds they plan to see on the specific body of Coriolanus. Whilst the imagery objectifies and fetishizes Coriolanus for his battle-wounded body, the notion that the citizens must "speak for them" situates the wounds as empty metaphors awaiting the ascription of meaning by spectators. At this point, Coriolanus' material body ceases to signify the personhood of Coriolanus and enters the realm of the symbolic. By speaking their own meaning into the breach in flesh between the market air and the soldier's bodily interior, the citizens perform the same rhetorical redefining of body and personhood which Menenius once enacted upon them. The citizens are trained by the example of their leaders to rhetoricize the body even as they demand to witness its visceral material firsthand.

Shakespeare constructs a battlefield for the defense of corporeal autonomy in the marketplace. The soldier's body is situated at the center of Hillman and Mazzio's dialectic of unity and partition as he struggles to retain the visceral meaning of his whole being despite the citizens' metaphorical fracturing of his body into corporeal fragments. Far from the ironically "wholesome manner"[111] Menenius urges him to take on, Coriolanus is forced to offer up pieces of himself: "I have wounds to show you which shall be yours in private."[112] Even as he attempts to shield himself from the public display, Coriolanus relinquishes ownership of his body by admitting his wounds "shall be yours."

The fragmented body makes for a more effective metaphor due to its specificity. Hillman and Mazzio argue that it is the specificity of the fragment which creates "a remarkable density of implication."[113] As meaning is condensed in isolated parts, the fragment is liberated from its complex ties to homeostatic purpose and takes on broader

[111] *Corio,* 2.3.58.
[112] *Corio,* 2.3.72-3.
[113] Hillman, "Introduction," xii.

social and cultural implications. Although Coriolanus remains whole throughout the marketplace scene, the intense focus on his unrevealed wounds in the effort to give them external meaning effectively destabilizes his body's unity. The sectioning of Coriolanus' body into a collection of metaphors for valor, bravery, nationalism, and political achievement participates in Hillman and Mazzio's dialectic without the literal removal of parts because its multiplicity of meaning is split amongst the citizens through speculation.

Rather than showing his wounds, Coriolanus shifts the focus to the agents of the metaphors: "I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices."[114] The refrain of "your voices" returns throughout the scene to become the focal point of the citizens' distrust as they contemplate, "Here was 'I thank you for your voices, thank you. Your most sweet voices. Now you have left your voices I have no further with you.' Was not this mockery?"[115] Coriolanus returns the incessant call for his wounds with an equally overwrought address to the voices invading his metaphorical body with rhetoric and the breath invading his literal body with miasmic air.

The infectious nature of the citizens' voices is made explicit when Coriolanus' failure in the marketplace results in his banishment. Coriolanus condemns the crowd, "You common cry of curs, whose breath I hate as reek o'th' rotten fens, whose loves I prize as the dead carcasses of unburied men that do corrupt my air: I banish you!"[116] Shakespeare's fusion of voices and breaths situates Coriolanus as an open, vulnerable body exposed to the fatal infection of public opinion. For a transhistorical perspective on the significance of the publicly exposed body in performance, I now turn briefly to modern feminist performance artist, Karen Finley, whose provocative piece, *The Constant State of Desire*, addresses the

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[114] *Corio,* 2.3.105.
[115] *Corio,* 2.3.167-9
[116] *Corio,* 3.3.121.

female body's constant vulnerability to the male gaze. Finley's work reflects similar power dynamics to those between Coriolanus and the citizens in this scene as she simultaneously exposes herself to public voyeurs whilst fighting against their consumption with aggression and grotesque corporeality. As performance analyst Erin Striff interprets, "Finley's performances are a study of the Bakhtinian grotesque body, not the classical, clean and proper body, but the body as a source of waste."[117] Finley's focus on natural waste production, especially as it resists modest containment, reflects Coriolanus' use of bodily fluids as a defense mechanism against objectification.

In Striff's description, "Finley opens *The Constant State of Desire* by telling the audience that before each performance she shakes, sometimes vomits, smokes, fasts, and does not bathe. She sums up by telling the audience that 'you make me sick.'"[118] The parallel of this contagious exchange between the exposed body and the voyeur links Finley's modern feminist performance with Coriolanus' early modern hypermasculine display, illuminating the vulnerability of male bodies to consuming gazes built on gendered expectations. Both retreat to the genderless authenticity of their bodily fluids in an effort to assert that "[the] body is not meant to be seen as mere decoration, and it is difficult to idealise a body when we are constantly reminded of its functions."[119] In the case of Coriolanus, the functions of bleeding and healing are foregone by citizens and politicians eager to idealize an erroneously static notion of his wounds.

The idealization of Coriolanus' war wounded body is a political process of rhetorizing the individual body into a component of the body politic. Showing his scars to the citizens in the marketplace would not be an act of honour or humility, but one of great personal

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[117] Erin Striff, "Bodies of Evidence: Feminist Performance Art," in *Critical Survey* 9, no. 1 (January 1997): 8.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid, 9.

sacrifice. The tradition which once functioned as a means of humanizing the politician by dissolving social hierarchy has descended into a self-perpetuating systemization of the strictly orchestrated relationship between politician and citizen. As a result, the revelation of wounds which might once have communicated a vulnerability meant to elicit trust between equal peoples becomes another choreographed step in the political machine. Coriolanus implies an awareness of the corruption inherent in this system when he confesses to his mother, "I had rather be their servant in my way than sway them in theirs."[120] His refutation of the time-honored tradition is motivated by faith in himself over a reliance on outdated political gesturing. When he is nonetheless thrust into the marketplace in the Robe of Humility, the imperative to show his scars asks him to relinquish not only his principles, but his physical body to the machinations of political progress.

Considered in terms of Hillman's "density of implication," the potential value of Coriolanus' scars in the hands of the political system helps to explain the soldier's desperation to keep them to himself.[121] Coriolanus' refusal to reveal his wounds may be read as a means of preserving his corporeal unity. Because his body is still physically whole, the relinquishing of his battle scars to the whims of the analytical citizens would turn him into a living synecdoche made up of parts too densely packed with the multitudinous readings of the crowd to reintegrate into a singular being. As Elizabeth Harvey argues on the integrity facilitated by the skin, "flayed, the body is in danger of losing its coherence."[122] For Coriolanus, the preservation of unity via his refusal to bear his naked body to the crowd situates his selfhood within his battle-breached corporeality. His bodily autonomy allows him to construct his own notion of self amid a Rome set on fracturing and redefining him. After

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[120] *Corio,* 2.1.199-200.
[121] Hillman, "Introduction," xii.
[122] Harvey, 90.

addressing rhetorical dismemberment, the significance of unity and physical integrity in Roman notions of honor will return in the analysis of Coriolanus' literal dismemberment in the final section of this chapter.

The representational value which overshadows Coriolanus' body is amplified by the readings of the citizens as he is exhibited in the marketplace. Objectified by tradition's commandment to don the Robe of Humility and seek public approval, Coriolanus is again subjected to observational analysis. The judgement by citizens who perceive him as a political pawn rather than an individual prod at his vulnerability. As such, Coriolanus hides the wounds whose passages into his bodily interior might expose the last frontier of his uninterpreted self. The corporeal selfhood in Coriolanus is exceptionally deep and acutely personal because his pounding heart, aching wounds, and churning stomach are the final sanctuary hidden from political rhetoric and public interpretation.

Furthermore, Coriolanus has his identity literally rewritten by the court's imposition of his honorary cognomen. Victory in Corioles becomes the name written in stone just as his victims become the identity written in his flesh. But amid the layers of manipulation and interpretation redefining Coriolanus in body, name, and deed, one detail of his new identity refuses to relinquish the corporeal soldier to the whims of rhetorical metaphor. Embedded within the name of the town for which the soldier is renamed, a single syllable preceding all others preserves the heart of Coriolanus.

The anatomical connotations of the Latin root for heart in "*cor*" might have implicitly influenced Shakespeare's development of the character. Although Shakespeare did not name the Roman general upon which the play is based, he seems to have made strategic use of the title as a foundation for interpreting the character. A similar process is legible in Shakespeare's characterization of his ill-fated version of the youngest Lear daughter.

Although physically absent through much of the play, Cordelia sets the anatomical tone for *King Lear* with a heart-felt solemnity that defies speech. Carol Chillington Rutter describes Cordelia's love as one so imbedded in her heart that to quantify it, "requires a kind of vivisection or grotesque anatomy" to achieve Lear's demands for "the heart made visible."[123] The extent to which vivisection takes place throughout *Lear* reaches far beyond Cordelia's heart and will be explored further in Chapter 4. For the purposes of her shared cardiac nomenclature with Coriolanus, one particular instance is worth addressing here.

Cordelia confesses "I cannot heave my heart into my mouth"[124] to speak love in earnest. Coriolanus resists dishonesty when he asks of his mother, "Must I with my base tongue give to my noble heart a lie that it must bear?"[125] Shakespeare focuses both arguments on the distance between heart and mouth as the material displacement of authentic feeling and the shortcomings of easily manipulated or misinterpreted speech. Whether or not the Latin root for the heart embedded in their names explicitly influenced Shakespeare's development of the characters, both Cordelia and Coriolanus locate their most authentic selves within the tissue of the *cordis*. In the case of Coriolanus, the earned, or perhaps imposed, nature of his cardiac title keeps the sinews of his visceral identity entangled in the rhetorical control of politicians.

Obscuring the Body: Scar Tissue and Blood as Barrier

The shift from the readings imposed by others to the notion of selfhood Coriolanus builds for himself is a shift from the bodily exterior to the bodily interior. In its visibility, the former is more vulnerable to manipulation by interpreters. As previously explored, these

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[123] Carol Chillington Rutter, *Enter the Body: Women and Representation on Shakespeare's Stage* (London: Routledge, 2001) 15.
[124] *Lear*, 1.1.91-2.
[125] *Corio*, 3.2.99-101.

readings are primarily driven by aspects of the body's surface either exposed, like Coriolanus' bloodied brow, or hidden under garments, like his scars in the marketplace. From within the bodily interior, however, these features of surface viscera are only snapshots of the more complex viscera below the boundary of the skin.

Utilizing the binary of interiority and exteriority invoked by the notion of skin as a boundary requires some theoretical deconstruction. Before settling on discrete notions of inner and outer planes, a note on fluidity defends against the simplification of corporeal space into a codified binary. Maggie Kilgour draws on Derrida's notion of antitheses, arguing, "As a spatial metaphor, this opposition has the illusion of stability and substance, but it is in fact totally relative, as it depends on where one is standing."[126] When applied to notions of the body, this underscores the disparity between one's experience from within the personal corpus and the perceptions of others.

This division is readily apparent in scenes which literally foreground the blood coating Coriolanus' exterior visage. When he is officially honored with the title of Martius Caius Coriolanus, the soldier retreats inwardly to a corporeal vantage point secured by the bloody obstruction across his face. Upon the collective cheer, Coriolanus simply responds, "I will go wash, and when my face is fair you shall perceive whether I blush or no."[127] The unwashed visage of blood "wherein thou seest me masked" allows the politicians and citizens to revel in symbolism whilst simultaneously providing a shield to mask Coriolanus' internal experience.[128] As Andrea Stevens argues, "his blood grants him precisely the bodily privacy, the refuge from the gaze, that the ritual of the gown demands he surrender."[129]

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[126] Maggie Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990) 4.
[127] *Corio,* 1.10.68-70.
[128] *Corio,* 1.10.10.
[129] Andrea Stevens, *Inventions of the Skin: The Painted Body in Early English Drama* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 50.

To fully underscore the transformative power of externalized blood, it is crucial here to touch on the physical presence of Coriolanus' body in modern performance. As Fernie argues, "Shakespeare makes his own way into the present only inasmuch as his characters come alive here." Fernie calls for a "revivified character criticism" grounded in the presentist link between "dramatic character and 'real' human being."[130] In the endeavor to visceralize corporeality, the presence of the physical actor is as crucial to literary analysis as the cadaver is to the anatomy. The body's transhistorical persistence links not only the actor's body to the dramatic character, but the modern body to the early modern one.

Without addressing the bodies of actors and representational viscera on stage, any claim staked on the value of corporeality in characterization stands incomplete, if not downright hypocritical. As Carol Rutter puts it, "Discursive bodies in criticism may disappear, get erased. Material bodies in the theatre remain in view."[131] The textual groundwork embedded in the dialogue previously discussed allows the literary analysis of corporeality to retain its own value. Nonetheless, it is crucial to apply these theories of corporeal selfhood to the character physically embodied in performance. For this physical application, I now turn to modern performance and the embodiment of Coriolanus in the modern actor.

During a performance of Angus Jackson's 2017 *Coriolanus* at the Royal Shakespeare Company, lead actor Sope Dirisu had a startling moment on stage when a drop of blood left in his beard from the previous battle scene found its way onto the cheek of Hannah Morrish's Virgilia. Sope recalls, "That was terrifying for two reasons. As an actor, I thought, 'I've got

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[130] Ewan Fernie, "Shakespeare and The Prospect of Presentism," in *Shakespeare Survey,* ed. Peter Holland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 177.
[131] Rutter, *Enter the Body*, quoted in Jim Casey, "Shakespeare's Spirits: Staging the Supernatural," in *Stage Matters: Props, Bodies, and Space in Shakespearean Performance,* ed. Annalisa Castaldo and Rhonda Knight (Vancouver: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2018), 36.

blood on her fair complexion – everyone's gonna see that.' But also, as Coriolanus, it was like I'd brought war home."[132] The moment offers an example of blood's capacity for communicating authenticity as well as a glimpse into the complexities of the actor/character divide from an embodiment standpoint.

Dirisu's on-stage split between self and character at the unexpected sight of blood highlights the authenticity of identity and emotion carried by the elements of the bodily interior. Even the fake signifier of blood still holds the power to engage natural instincts in the beholder. Whilst sharing a corporeal form with the idea of Coriolanus, the natural shock of witnessing blood became a catalyst for Dirisu which engaged awareness on both sides of the actor/character divide. For the actor, a flash of panic at the sight of blood disrupted his engagement with the diegesis and translated into concern for performance continuity. At the same time, the drop of fake blood retained its meaning as a signifier of war and personal aspect of Coriolanus' life.

Dirisu and Coriolanus experience the impact of the blood simultaneously on material and symbolic levels. The capacity for fake blood to elicit this multitude of emotional and rational responses is testament to the value of viscera as an authentic communicator and a participant in the material exchange between actor and character. Hillman's "density of implication" bypasses the tendency to compartmentalize the visceral and conceptual readings of blood and allows a more productive dialectic to emerge between the two. [133] This singular drop of blood is a microcosm for the actor's whole body as both self and character. The conceptually rife but physically problematic notion of the two-in-one body will be explored further with regard to Lear's sovereign body in Chapter 4.

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[132] Sope Dirisu, interviewed by author, Stratford-upon-Avon, September 28th, 2017.
[133] Hillman, "Introduction," xii.

Exterior blood is static and its unnatural presence outside the body invites an anxious displacement of the unbounded blood into a spectacle as a defensive dissociation from the mortality the spilled blood threatens to signify. However, Coriolanus reveals that his primary concern is not for the mask he has yet to wash off, but for the blood below the mask still contained within his body. To blush would allow his own blood to expose his internal feelings through an involuntary physiological act. In what has the potential to be the most emotionally charged moment of the soldier's life, Coriolanus utilizes the blood of his enemies to disrupt the communication between his interiority and the outside world.

The political structures attempting to control and categorize Coriolanus as soldier, victor, political pawn, and traitor form an apparatus of assimilation. Reflecting on Freud's "infantile" foundation of oppositions, Kilgour warns against too heavy a reliance on what she refers to as "a crude system of values in which what is 'outside' the territory of the self is bad, and what is 'inside' is good."[134] In the case of Coriolanus, this "territory of the self" is neither good nor bad, but vulnerable to the drive for assimilation which Kilgour pinpoints as the basis for the tendency "to view what exists beyond themselves as evil … different, separate, and unassimilated."[135] Coriolanus' prerogative to dissolve the interior/exterior binary with masks of blood and scar tissue threatens the system on which the body politic thrives.

Shakespeare's foregrounding of the scarred and wounded body does more than cross a boundary to reinforce a binary. The acutely personal process by which Coriolanus' characterization is organically embedded in his healing flesh problematizes the static notion of the skin as a neutral barrier and recasts it as a functional participant in homeostasis and the

[134] Ibid, 4.
[135] Ibid, 4.

construction of corporeal selfhood. Through these wounds and scars, Shakespeare reaches below the skin and pulls it inside-out to invert and destabilize the spatial dichotomy defining its delineation of interiority from exteriority.

The insensible scar tissue also undermines the free-flowing exchange between body and environment central to humoralism, physically isolating Coriolanus from both medicinal and malicious influence. Coriolanus' coat of blood functions, not only as the gilding his mother sees, but as a means of limiting exposure of the interiority sealed beneath the scar tissue. Where the blood and scar tissue thus far discussed by citizens and politicians forms the visceral component of the manipulated body politic, that same blood read by the subject from which it spills takes on new meaning as a protective sheath, a veil, and a synecdochic representative of corporeal selfhood embedded in the recesses of the bodily interior.

The continuity of the deep bodily interior with the outer epithelial surfaces is evidenced in early modern medicine throughout Crooke's *Microcosmographia.* Crooke describes the skin as rooted to the rest of the body by major vessels. He observes, "It cannot without extreame paine bee separated from the flesh, because the extreamities or ends of the vessels do determine in it; whence some have thought, that it proceedeth from those extreamities of the vessels dilated or spread into a superficies or smooth plainnesse."[136] By Crooke's account, the skin is an extension of the bodily interior. Rather than an isolated sheath marking outer parameters, the skin constitutes the same material as the interior vessels.

This early modern body works on the same principles as Anzieu's Skin Ego theory insofar as it fulfils "the doubling that is inherent in tactile sensations"[137] as a result of the

[136] Crooke, 72.
[137] Anzieu, translated in Harvey, 85.

simultaneous stimulation of interior and exterior planes by the skin. Anzieu's theory integrates these planes by conceptualizing the skin as both an external product of interiority and a tactile mediator for the incorporation of the two. According to Anzieu, "A person's own body and above all its surface is a place from which both external and internal perceptions may spring. It is seen like any other object, but to touch it yields two kinds of sensations, one of which may be equivalent to an internal perception."[138] Anzieu locates simultaneous perceptions on both sides of the skin allowing central and peripheral awareness to communicate within the body system. His specification of one's "own body" focuses these communications on an individualized microcosm of corporeal experience, thereby situating the body as a locus for the production of self.

Crooke's version of integrated skin also invites the epithelial production of self to invoke a moral lesson. After his description of the connection between skin and internal flesh, Crooke clarifies the purpose of such a powerful line of communication: "It is soft and of exquisite sense, by which it forewarneth the inward parts of the approaching euill before it overtake them."[139] Sensation affords the skin the capacity to perceive and warn the active agents of the body against danger. But Crooke's diction does not limit these dangers to physical attacks on the body. His depiction of skin as a defender against "euill" affords the flesh a morally discerning awareness. This pervasive interconnectedness between science and moral philosophy remains a powerful undercurrent throughout early modern perceptions of the body, lending a spiritual payoff to the more visceral imperative of *Nosce te ipsum* driving the culture of anatomy in the period.

[138] Anzieu, translated in Harvey, 34.
[139] Crooke, 72.

The significance of skin and touch throughout early modern anatomy is apparent in the tradition of the écorché. In the works of Vesalius and Crooke, these lively and emotive flayed bodies displayed interiority whilst affording its readers a creative space in which to speculate on the autonomy of the cadaver and read the figure as a reflection of one's own corporeal form. The title page of the 1631 edition of the *Microcosmographia* features a particularly troubling écorché. The self-demonstrating figure holds the deflated suit of flesh proudly aloft. His flayed body is at once displaced from and paralleled to the shell of his external self, still featuring his peeled off beard and empty eye holes (see fig. 2.3).

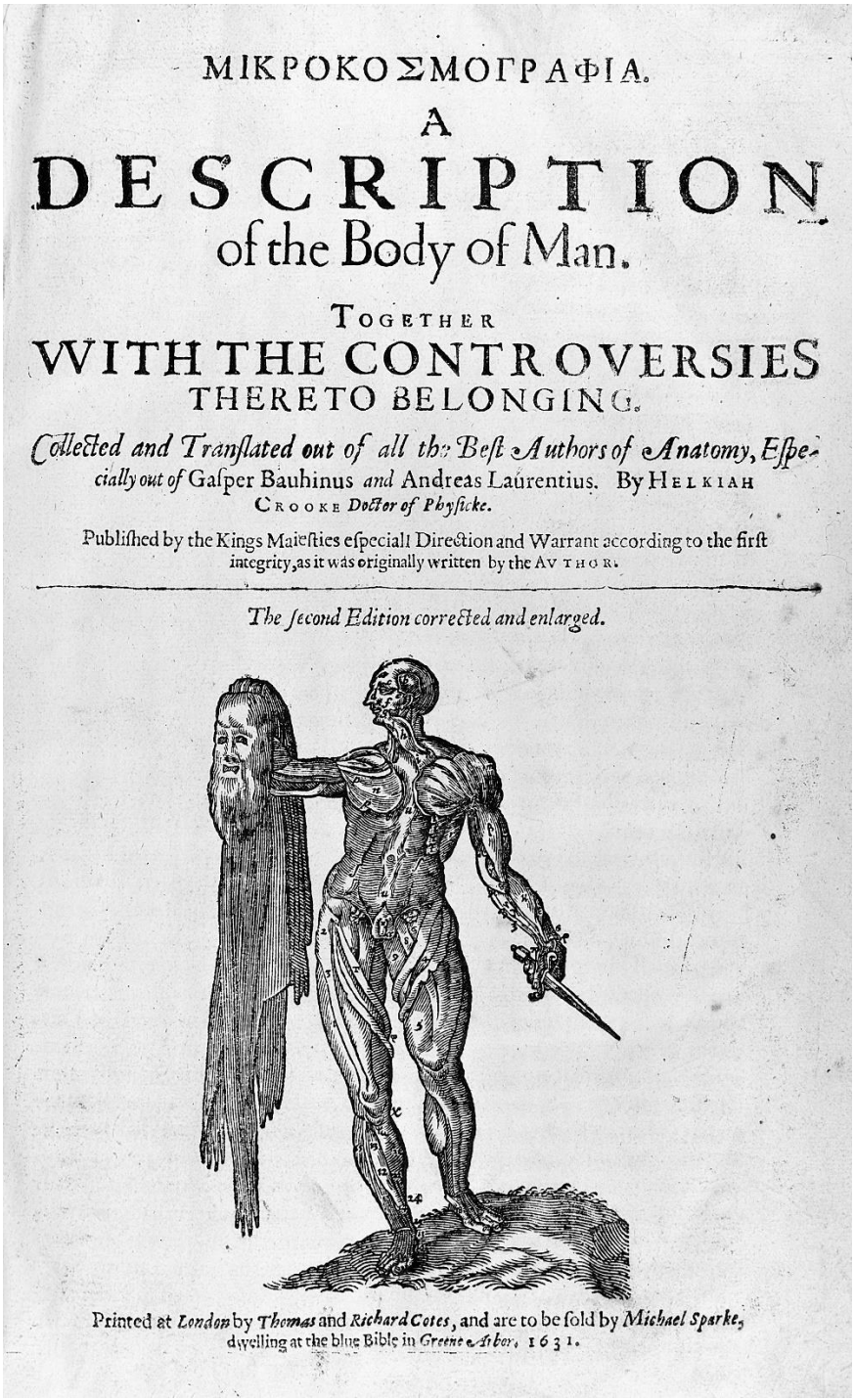


Figure 2.3. Helkiah Crooke, *Microcosmographia* 1631. Courtesy of Wellcome Library, London. The image in the *Microcosmographia* was reprinted from Juan de Valverde's *Anatomia del corpo humano* 1560.

This particular écorché is significant because, unlike most figures which situate the skin as a barrier devoid of meaning to be removed before the anatomy can begin, the self-demonstrating man's insistence on keeping his skin after its removal reasserts the epithelium

into the canon of body systems. The figure's agency is also demonstrated by the knife clutched in his left hand, suggesting that the figure has actually flayed himself. This self-inflicted vulnerability echoes back to Coriolanus' imperative to remove the Robe of Humility and expose his broken flesh to the objectifying gaze of the crowd. Coriolanus refuses to submit himself to the passive role of the living écorché. Through scar tissue and bloodshed, the soldier transposes his bodily interior onto its outer surfaces, transforming his epithelial sheath into a bridge between the interior and exterior, rather than the barrier it is wont to represent. With so much of his bodily interior infused into his most outer layer, removing the Robe of Humility obscuring his wounds is tantamount to publicly flaying himself to satiate the prying curiosity of strangers.

It would not be the first time Coriolanus was conceptually flayed by onlookers. Before his body was encased in scar tissue, those scars were fresh wounds. On the battlefield, the viscera coating his exterior and blocking the sensory functions of his skin is a layer of blood. When Coriolanus enters, his features are so obscured by blood that Cominius initially fails to recognize him.[140] But Cominius' error is not simply a failure of facial recognition. The shape of Coriolanus emerging from battle is so drenched in the glistening scarlet of the bodily interior that Cominius is momentarily convinced he has seen a living écorché.

He responds to the haunting vision, "Who's yonder, that does appear as he were flayed? O gods!"[141] The invocation of the gods at the sight of an apparently flayed man may have called to the minds of Jacobean audiences the homophonic counterpart to Caius Martius: Marsyas, the victim of hubris recounted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Marsyas was an

[140] On the practicality of staging significant blood coverage in early modern practice, Lucy Munro explains, "a character normally enters with blood already applied to an object, body part, or item of clothing" due to the "highly staining" nature of the substances including animal blood, vermilion, and ink, which were used to produce the bloody effect. Munro, 81.
[141] *Corio.* 1.7.22.

expert aulos (double oboe) player whose divine gift was passed onto him when he discovered the instrument abandoned by Athena. Skilled as he was, Marsyas sealed his fate by arrogantly challenging Apollo to a musical competition. Upon failing, Marsyas is punished by being flayed alive at the hands of his divine victor. The grotesque inversion of man into wound is depicted in visceral detail in Arthur Golding's 1567 translation of the *Metamorphoses*:

> For all his crying ore his eares quight pulled was his skin.
> Nought else he was than one whole wounde. The grisly bloud did spin
> From every part, the sinews lay discovered to the eye,
> The quivering veynes without a skin lay beating nakedly.
> The panting bowels in his bulke ye might have numbered well,
> And in his brest the shere small strings a man might easly tell.[142]

The cautionary tale of the flayed body rings familiar warnings throughout the early modern period from Ovid's story to the punitive display of criminal bodies in anatomizations. Vesalius even includes a depiction of Apollo flaying Marsyas in the historiated "V" which opens the fifth book of the *Fabrica*. As a deity associated with both music and medicine, the inclusion of Apollo destroying a body in a book of anatomy is perhaps a counterintuitive choice. Alongside his collection of putti enacting the often grotesque work of anatomy students boiling skulls or tying down pigs, Vesalius calls upon Apollo's transformation of his opponent from body to wound to introduce his lessons on musculature. Book V of the *Fabrica* is illustrated with arguably the most humanized écorchés in the series because, lacking only the outermost skin, the first few musculature plates depict the most whole bodies in the book.

These complete flayed bodies resist the distancing afforded unfamiliar internal fragments of the dissected corpse. Without the option to compartmentalize the gruesome

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[142] Ovid, *Shakespeare's Ovid: Being Arthur Golding's Translation of the Metamorphoses*, trans. Arthur Golding, ed. W. H. D. Rouse (London: The De La More Press, 1904) 128.

details as scientific objects, anatomists must face the radically humanized écorchés. This is perhaps why the presence of Apollo punishing the arrogant Marsyas is a crucial addition to Vesalius' lesson. As anatomists learn to flay cadavers in their pursuit of knowledge, Apollo warns against deifying their powers over mortality lest they suffer the same fate they inflict on their own subjects at the omnipotent hand of the *Opifex rerum*, "designer of all things," to whom Vesalius repeatedly refers.[143]

Ovid's "one whole wound" is reflected in Shakespeare's descriptions of Martius through the words of both the tribunes and patricians alike. After ceremoniously emblematizing him into the physical embodiment of the body politic, the tribunes perceive Coriolanus' traitorous turn to the Volsces as a malignancy infecting the state of Rome. In a rhetorically inconsistent destabilization of the body politic metaphor, Coriolanus' body goes from the pride of Rome made up of wounds which entomb the souls of their enemies to one whole "disease that must be cut away."[144] The same language by which Menenius built up the ideological body of Rome in Coriolanus' visceral corpus is inverted, transforming the corporeal whole into an entire tumor.

When Menenius attempts to defend Coriolanus by suggesting, "O, he's a limb that has but a disease; mortal to cut it off, to cure it easy,"[145] he pivots the soldier's role in the metaphorical body again: neither the macrocosmic body of the city nor the wound itself, but a fragmentary limb afflicted with the disease of treason. In a matter of lines, Shakespeare exposes the malleability of the body when it is subjected to self-serving political rhetoric. Coriolanus' inconsistency forces Menenius to re-cast the roles of his Belly and Members fable, a turn which exposes the lack of empirical evidence underscoring the body politic

[143] Slights 41.
[144] *Corio,* 3.1.297.
[145] *Corio,* 3.1.298-99.

metaphor. In harkening back to Ovid's flaying of Marsyas, Shakespeare uses an ancient literary text to question the ancient notions of the body being tested by Vesalian empiricism during the early modern period.

Lartius also echoes the themes of hubris and mutilation retold in the story of Marsyas. After witnessing Coriolanus shame his soldiers and proceed alone through the gates of the city in an act of arrogant "foolhardiness,"[146] he mourns his general's inevitable death by memorializing him as "a carbuncle entire."[147] Even as Shakespeare's Martius recalls Ovid's Marsyas in both characterization and syntax, the former nonetheless complicates the traditions of the classic Greek myth by playing with the visceral diction. The word "carbuncle" carries two distinct, but interrelated meanings. In a visceral context, a carbuncle refers to a swollen, often infected boil. It is the sort of wound that might be incurred by a careless disregard for one's vulnerabilities. Although the microbiological causes of infection were unknown to seventeenth-century physicians, the observable growth of inflammation when a breach in the flesh is neglected would have been understood as needing purgative intervention. For a character entrenched in the valorization of wounds and scars, this gesture toward the consequences of failing to properly treat the body invokes the detriment inflicted by the rhetorical body politic when it neglects the visceral.

The secondary meaning of "carbuncle" as any precious red gemstone is where Shakespeare's retelling of the classic hubris moral diverts. Rather than telling a cautionary tale foregrounding the gruesome fate awaiting the rashly overconfident, *Coriolanus* twists the flayed body into a celebrated image of courage and strength. The fearful écorché is transposed from a reminder of divine retribution to a symbol of nationalistic power: a source

[146] *Corio,* 1.5.17.
[147] *Corio,* 1.5.28.

of pride for its people and terror for its enemies. This pride is made evident in Shakespeare's explicit reinforcement of carbuncle's secondary meaning when Lartius continues, "A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art, were not so rich a jewel."[148] The shimmering veil of blood streaming down Martius' face is not a sign of danger, but the aura of a prized gemstone. For his courage, the soldier is transformed into one more precious than the ruby he now resembles.

Blood's signification of the bodily interior paradoxically situates Coriolanus' body as simultaneously obscured and exposed. Made unrecognizable by the blood coating his face, Coriolanus is displaced from the conceptual identity carried in his title and transformed into what Cominius later triumphantly calls "a thing of blood."[149] As he is praised for his post-human efficiency on the battlefield, Coriolanus' identity is again crafted by others. However, unlike the rhetorical pawn sculpted by Menenius, Coriolanus is pared down to his physicality so intensely by his fellow soldiers that he reaches the other extreme of the conceptual to visceral spectrum as blood and scar tissue consume and define him.

Returning to Anzieu's Skin Ego theory, the notion of subjectivity embedded in the skin emerges from a paradoxical breakdown of the partitioned body by which "the centre is situated at the periphery."[150] According to Harvey, "Neurophysiological research suggests that the skin and brain of the human embryo are both formed from the ectoderm; the difference between the brain and skin is neither originary nor definitive."[151] From the early seventeenth century to the late twentieth, the interior spaces of the mind and the outermost flesh have been perceived as both interconnected tools for sensory reception and components of identity formation. Shakespeare's craftsmanship of Coriolanus as an identity located

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[148] *Corio,* 1.5.28-9
[149] *Corio,* 2.2.107.
[150] Anzieu, translated in Harvey, 85.
[151] Harvey, 85.

within the fibers of his broken flesh endures in similar notions consistently supported in early modern anatomy by Crooke and modern neurophysiology by Anzieu. Though its connection persists throughout a lifetime, the primary embryonic link between self and flesh invokes the generative body of the mother.

Creating the Body: Maternal Interiority and the Womb of the Body Politic

As the physical, maternal creator of Coriolanus' body, Volumnia's bodily interior renegotiates the partitioning of inward and outward flesh along with the Lacanian divide between self and other. The *Microcosmographia*'s entries on the development of flesh locate the primary formation of the sensory organ within the womb: "When the Infant in the wombe yet liveth only a vegetative life, hee is first of all endued with the Sense of Touching; whereby he is cherished, nourished, and increased."[152] The fetus possesses skin and the sensation it engenders as a tool for growth in both the physical sense by which it is "increased," and the empathetic sense via its capacity to be "cherished" within the maternal body. Crooke's description of physical and emotional traits developing in unison keeps corporeality intertwined with the development of selfhood from the earliest stages of gestation.

Coriolanus' closeness to his mother is linked to his sense of touch by virtue of its gestational primacy when his fetal body was wholly internal. When Volumnia approaches the Volscian base, Coriolanus refers to his mother as "the honoured mould wherein this trunk was framed."[153] The inwardness of the touch sensation between mother and son is established before his own body could be said to have an exterior. This depth inverts skin's default role

[152] Crooke, *Microcosmographia,* 648.
[153] *Corio,* 5.3.22-3.

as the mediator of human contact and situates empathetic maternal touch internally. This primacy of in-utero touch enables Volumnia to effect change on her son regardless of the layers which separate him externally because their connection originated from within the bodily interior.

The corporeal autonomy with which Coriolanus initially withstands Menenius' rhetoric re-emerges with rejuvenated viscerality in the final act. Facing Volumnia, this corporeal autonomy reaches back to an acknowledgment that his body is a product of his mother's body. Janet Adelman argues of Coriolanus' "exaggerated masculinity" that "the son is never more the mother's creature than when he attempts to escape her."[154] Such a reading situates mother and son as antagonists composed of two separate bodies, limiting "maternal origin" to the bloody division of birth. However, when read in context with the play's unmaking of interiority and exteriority, Coriolanus and Volumnia's reunion is not about the separations of geographical banishment or political betrayal, but rather about the corporeal continuity of mother and son's visceral matter. The connection between mother and son is materialized in Coriolanus' eyes as he weeps. Like the personal truths hidden behind the Robe of Humility at the marketplace or the blushing skin obscured by his bloodied brow, Coriolanus' body communicates authenticity in a world of crafted rhetoric and strategic political stoicism.

When he admits, "It is no little thing to make mine eyes to sweat compassion,"[155] Coriolanus concedes the power of his involuntary bodily response. Where barricades of blood and scar tissue afforded him internal sanctuary, the maternal bond built on interiority is unaffected by his exterior layers. Despite his efforts to shield his selfhood from others,

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[154] Janet Adelman *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays, Hamlet to the Tempest* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 130.
[155] *Corio*, 5.3.196-7

Coriolanus cannot hide his corporeal self from the maternal body of which he is an extension. Coriolanus and Volumnia have both staked their identities on the visceral realities of their corpus. He has done so by creating scar tissue and she has done so by creating him.

Volumnia's maternal body, though an honoured precursor to Coriolanus' body, does not wholly define her. Even as she addresses her son, "Thou art my warrior, I holp to frame thee,"[156] the acknowledgement of her active craftsmanship in framing Coriolanus distinguishes her from a passive vessel for the creation of warriors. Volumnia's real power comes from her manipulation of the body politic metaphor to foreground the role of the mother in a country perpetually defined for and by men.

In her appeal to Coriolanus, Volumnia says, "thou shalt no sooner march to assault thy country than to tread…on thy mother's womb that brought thee to this world."[157] She does not simply choose a powerful organ to identify with as Menenius does in the Belly and Members fable. Neither does she deign to participate in patriarchal structures of political anatomization which rely on convoluted partitioning of both body and state. Instead, Volumnia asserts her distinctly female anatomy into the body politic metaphor and claims the whole of Rome as her singular womb.

After five acts of violent masculinity touting honor in scar tissue and blood, Shakespeare sends in the mother of warriors to remind them all of the first wound to which they owe their life. The blood spilled by soldiers in battle and manipulated by rhetoricians at court is engulfed by Volumnia's uterine reclamation of the complete body politic into the part of her visceral interior responsible for the creation of Rome's most powerful warrior. Shakespeare gives Volumnia more than motherly compassion and a cold, sedentary female

[156] *Corio,* 5.3.63.
[157] *Corio,* 5.3.124-6

body. He gives her a fiery wit and passages of violence and viscera more exquisite in gruesome corporeal imagery than the words of soldiers who have seen the battlefields firsthand.

In a world of rhetoricians distanced from the bodies they make into metaphors and soldiers too close to the visceral bloodshed to speak eloquently of their deeds, Volumnia bridges the gap to fearlessly count her son's scars as both medals of honor and evidence of cruelty. When Coriolanus stands with the enemy, Volumnia accuses her son of, "Making the mother, wife, and child to see the son, the husband, and the father tearing his country's bowels out."[158] The brutal viscerality of Volumnia's appeal translates violence into pathos by forcing the otherwise desensitized soldier to imagine his bloody deeds performed to an audience of his innocent family. She calls upon the gruesome corporeality with which the soldier is familiar and works it seamlessly into the body politic metaphor. The specific use of the verb "tearing" actualizes the clean and conceptual partitioned body into the forceful destruction of the subject practically required of dissection. In this moment between mother and son on the cusp of metaphor becoming viscera, Shakespeare foreshadows Coriolanus' necessary fate.

Volumnia's image of the torn body politic is echoed in the voices of the people demanding that the conspirators, "Tear him to pieces!"[159] The death is specifically choreographed at the victim's own request, "Cut me to pieces, Volsces."[160] By visceralizing the body politic in Coriolanus, Shakespeare subjects it to the physical destruction wrought on the anatomized body. The dismemberment of Coriolanus returns the conceptual anatomization of socio-political structures to the Vesalian dissections from which the rhetoric

[158] *Corio,* 5.3.102-4.
[159] *Corio,* 5.6.121.
[160] *Corio,* 5.6.112.

borrows its language. The weak and manipulative Belly and Members fable with which the play begins is disemboweled by the mother whose womb crafted the embodiment of the state and his final dismemberment executes the rhetorical fracturing inherent in the fable in a sacrificial *reductio ad absurdum.*

Conclusion

The integrated body is significant in the Roman play as a key component of a soldier's honor. As Marlena Tronicke explains of Roman suicides, "The notion of honorable death is closely connected to the integrity of the body because the deceased were believed to continue their afterlife in the same physical form they left this world in."[161] This belief resonated with long-running Christian debates originating in the medieval period on the technicalities of bodily reassemblage in full-physical resurrection. Secular anxieties feared that the dissected corpse would be precluded from entrance to Heaven by the dissolution of their physical vessel come Judgement Day.[162] Whether or not Coriolanus' submission to the Volsces may be read as a suicide, Roman standards dictate that the physical dismemberment of his body constitutes an attack on his immortal fate.

Coriolanus' journey from metaphor to viscera passes him from the hands of conceptual interpreters to those of physical anatomists. His ultimate dismemberment is a critical denouement to the tension between the metaphorical and the visceral body. This resolution is multiform. It is a reclamation of the body from the manipulation of political rhetoric. It is a destabilizing confrontation between the metaphorically fractured body and the

[161] Marlena Tronicke, *Shakespeare's Suicides: Dead Bodies That Matter* (New York: Routledge, 2018) 4.
[162] See Caroline Walker Bynum *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

literally fractured one. It is the decimation of the corporeal frame necessary to reach the preserved selfhood contained within.

For its establishing notions of bodily boundaries and the rhetorical structures underscoring visceral bodies, *Coriolanus* has provided a necessary starting point for this thesis' analysis of Shakespearean corporeality. With its chronological succession in mind, Coriolanus' fractured body left slain at the late play's end reflects on the non-fatal dismemberments with which Shakespeare began his career. Where *Coriolanus* resolves into dismembered parts at its end, our next play, *Titus Andronicus*, survives and invests meaning into its removed body parts. As the anatomization process of this thesis moves deeper into the Shakespearean body, we now turn from the epithelium of *Coriolanus* to the isolated parts of *Titus*.

Chapter 3: Interpreting the Fragmentary Body in *Titus Andronicus*

Introduction

The search for selfhood embedded within the visceral flesh calls into question the parameters along which the body is sectioned. For the taxonomical pursuits of anatomists, the body was most usefully partitioned by systems which could be more easily studied in isolation. Shakespeare's focus on wounds and scar tissue in the characterization of Coriolanus traces the boundary of self and other at the front lines of the flesh, dividing the body along interior and exterior planes. *Coriolanus* offers a response to the anxieties ushered in by Vesalian anatomy's standardized medical body by reasserting the individual autonomy of the visceral subject in the face of conceptual anatomization. For all its visceralizations and critiques of rhetoric, *Coriolanus* nonetheless relies on a body politic-centric lens. Christopher Forth and Ivan Crozier argue that the political and metaphorical abstraction of the body disregards the literal viscerality that might be "available to a doctor's scrutiny," locating the problem within contemporary theoretical work "where the discursive body seems to be of prime importance."[1]

While the discursive body plays an important role in corporeal analysis, its prioritization over viscerally grounded readings limits body discourse to the standard at the center of body politic metaphors. To address the nuance of the individual body, as opposed to the systematized model in Vesalian medicine, it is necessary to examine non-medical and non-metaphorical bodies. Notions of the body throughout Shakespearean text tend to fall into

[1] Christopher E. Forth and Ivan Crozier, *Body Parts: Critical Explorations in Corporeality* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005), 2.

metaphorical categories as frameworks for the body politic, but one approach in particular refuses to be abstracted: dismemberment.

From the internal layering of Vesalian taxonomical systems to the division of surfaces negotiated throughout *Coriolanus*, the next crucial partition of the body is the dividing line which separates the body from itself. The body discourse of *Titus Andronicus* offers more than an excessive bloodbath; there is nuance and purpose in the specific modes by which bodies are broken throughout the play. The specific removal of body parts on stage shifts and extends the meanings associated with them. The continued presence of limbs without bodies and bodies without limbs creates a valuable space in which to examine the corpus as both whole and part. Although written and performed significantly earlier in Shakespeare's chronology than *Coriolanus*, *Titus* serves as a logical next step for the purposes of this analysis as its corporeal dealings extend ideas touched on in the concluding dismemberment of Coriolanus.

This chapter shifts the anatomical point of view from one of layering to one of sectioning, foregrounding wholeness not as a conceptual element of the interior as in *Coriolanus*, but as the natural state of the body as a precursor to its violent unmaking. Methodologically, the dichotomy of part and whole is a helpful starting point as a mode of conceptualizing the body in terms of subjectivity where the severed part is the object and the whole body is the subject. However, I argue that this is a false dichotomy and that subjectivity can still be found in the otherwise purely visceral object of the severed body part as well as the incomplete mutilated body. Shakespeare invests character-specific meaning and emotional value into severed hands and heads throughout *Titus*. He also resists the tendency to read the incomplete body as one lacking agency and, by extension, identity by reinforcing the mutilated body as a present subject.

The primary flaw in the part/whole dichotomy is the instability of wholeness. When Aristotle describes the form of the hand, he notes its capacity to be both whole and part in one: "For it is divided and has many digits, and it is possible for something in a divided state also to be composite, while it is impossible for something in a composite state to be divided."[2] The hand constitutes a composite whole made up of further partial subdivisions. The body is not an inherently complete whole, but rather a collection of interconnected parts. It is therefore impossible to divide the body from itself, even in physical amputation, because doing so must first suppose the body was ever a homogenous whole. Just as the fingers reveal that the hand is necessarily made up of individual parts in order to execute its function, the entire body relies on its heterogeneous makeup to exist. The body is therefore a whole only inasmuch as it collates a complete assortment of parts.

David Hillman and Carla Mazzio theorize on this interplay of parts and the corporeal whole arguing, "While the part may often succeed in displacing the whole, it never quite manages to replace it; if there is always a tension between part and whole, it is because neither can do without the other."[3] In the context of *Titus*, the tension between part and whole is manifested in the presence of severed heads and hands on stage which simultaneously displace and remain linked to the character from which they were removed. The tokenization of body parts in *Titus* bifurcates their meaning into both individuated object and synecdochic displacement of the subject. Shakespeare's characterization invests meaning in the body not only as a whole, vital entity, but also in its peripheral parts.

The division of the body into parts reflects a conceptual and empirical reorganization taking place throughout the early modern period. As anatomists endeavored to unify the body

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[2] Aristotle, *On the Parts of Animals*, trans. James G. Lennox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 99.
[3] David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, "Introduction: Individual Parts," in *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe*, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (London: Routledge, 1997), xxiii.

through the counter-intuitive process of breaking it into parts, the contemporary philosophies of selfhood and corporeality surrounding these anatomical efforts found new meaning in the objects removed from the fractured body. Hillman and Mazzio refer to the "floating and the firmly contextualized" in terms of their effects on autonomy and meaning. Rather than situating the severed body part as a remainder without purpose, Hillman and Mazzio hold up the isolated body part as a unit of condensed meaning. In terms of early modern physiology, "Because corporeal parts have individuated functions, locations, and differentiated relations to the body as a whole, they can become concentrated sites where meaning is invested and often apparently stabilized."[4] This seeming stability of meaning often circumvents the messy bodily interior and its organic resistance to structured categorization.

Without the rest of the body inconveniently intertwining blood vessels and nerves across systems, the isolated body part offers a more constant and self-contained locus for the inscription of meaning. Hillman and Mazzio's notion of density, previously applied to the scars of Coriolanus in Chapter 2, must be reiterated here: "While the invocation of a specific body part may generate the illusion of a narrowed sphere of reference, it is in fact precisely this specificity that creates, in the corporeal fragment, a remarkable density of implication."[5] The mutilations, dismemberments, and amputations of *Titus* do more than litter the stage with gore. The acts of violence which specifically dislocate the body from itself result in a collection of corporeal fragments all capable of carrying their own concentrated multiplicity of meanings.

Shakespeare's use of the disembodied hand within a narrative of family loyalty, revenge, madness, and grief expands the body part's encyclopedic layers of physiological

[4] Ibid, xii.
[5] Ibid.

meaning to incorporate social and cultural implications. It is crucial, however, that this invocation of cultural meaning within the corporeal fragment does not overwrite the hand's visceral meaning. The fragment is conceptually dense not only because of its relative size compared to the whole, but also because of its capacity to carry a diverse multiplicity of meaning without a particular reading emerging as a dominant truth.

The severed hand is both a symbol of Titus' sacrifice to save his sons and a unit of flesh. It is no more a bond with his mutilated daughter as it is a collection of blood, bone, nerves, cartilage, musculature and tendons. The implications of Titus' hand in text and performance will return later in the chapter along with the context of Lavinia's distinct dismemberment. Through these close readings, this chapter investigates body parts, instances of dismemberment, and their aftermaths throughout *Titus* to unpack the part's density, identify its impacts on characterization, and locate identity within the visceral body.

The tendency to read the body as strictly either metaphor or viscera undermines the complex reality that the body's meanings, both inherent and ascribed, are as resistant to categorization as its interwoven internal systems. The visceral body of anatomists and surgeons and the conceptual body of philosophers and poets work together to create meaning. To label the severed hand a symbol alone is to remove the nerves and still expect the muscles to contract. To condemn it as an object devoid of cultural implications is to send a signal through a nerve without a destination.

Titus extends the question of selfhood beyond the tricky materialization of one's "essential centre" out to its peripheries.[6] The treatment of the severed body part on stage illustrates the persistent identity which remains tied to the limb even when the sinews of the

[6] Duke Pesta, "Articulating Skeletons: Hamlet, Hoffman, and the Anatomical Graveyard," in *Cahiers Élisabéthains: A Journal of English Renaissance Studies* 69, no. 1 (May 2006): 21-39.

corporeal whole are not. The removed fragment enters the realm of object, extending prop status to the body and further deconstructing the corporeal subject/object dichotomy. As Annalisa Castaldo and Rhonda Knight note of the actor's body, "The written language of the play and the unwritten conventions of playgoing become the new 'culture' for object and bodies, which in turn shift their meaning from their own cultural milieu to product of spectacle, often at the intersection of body and object."[7] Even in acknowledging its fluid role in the theatrical space, Castaldo and Knight nonetheless skew toward an oversimplification of the body part as a "product of spectacle" rather than a locus of meaning capable of retaining subjectivity.

The spectator's suspension of disbelief converts the prop into both a vessel for symbolic meaning and a synecdochic reminder of the whole person from which it was harvested. The resulting incomplete bodies also intensify the link between corporeality and selfhood by integrating the absence of parts into personal experience and identity formation. In later sections, this chapter will return to the influence of audience expectation on theatrical convention with regard to body props via performance analyses.

Before delving into close readings of the play, it is first necessary to address some formal concepts around corporeal discourses within linguistics and medicine. Most relevant to this discussion are the notions of syntactical connectivity and the relationship of form to function. As Chapter 1 set out in the distinct developments of anatomy and physic, the connection between form and function is a critical undercurrent throughout medical discourse. Corporeal syntax, linguistic dismemberment, and form/function relations inform

[7] Annalisa Castaldo and Rhonda Knight, *Stage Matters: Props, Bodies, and Space in Shakespearean Performance* (Vancouver: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2018), 8.

discussions of the body throughout history from the early medical writings of Helkiah Crooke and Thomas Geminus to modern literary criticism.

Corporeal Linguistics: Connecting the Body to Itself

The visceral reorganization of the body alongside rhetorical and poetic deconstructions throughout *Titus* reflects on and participates in the interconnectedness of language and medicine in the early modern period. As Gionata Liboni argues, "philology and medicine were joint fields of learning which existed in a continuous, productive interaction."[8] The textual and the corporeal work together for more than taxonomical purposes. In early modern concepts of both language and corporeality, the articulated skeleton provides a conceptual framework for the investment of meaning through the connecting and disconnecting of parts.

Paul de Man warns that "One should avoid the pathos of an imagery of bodily mutilation and not forget that we are dealing with textual models, not with the historical and political systems that are their correlate."[9] In a purely semantic theory of linguistics, perhaps this disavowal of bodily pathos is a reasonable rule of the proverbial thumb. However, Marjorie Garber responds to de Man's rule by building an emphatic case for pathos born of mutilation imagery in early modern drama. Garber argues, "Pathos is not an incidental affect of theatrical representation; it is a key element of theatricality, ultimately inseparable from the words that produce it. What is torn is both body *and* words."[10] Her defense of emotive rhetoric as a component of dramatic function is located within the sinews of corporeal

[8] Gionata Liboni, "Humanist Post-Mortems: Philology and Therapy," in *Pathology in Practice: Diseases and Dissections in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Silvia De Renzi, Marco Bresadola and Maria Conforti (London: Routledge, 2018), 35.
[9] Paul de Man, *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 287.
[10] Marjorie Garber, "Out of Joint" in *The Body in Parts*, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (London: Routledge, 1997), 45.

materiality through her linkage of musculoskeletal articulation to the syntactical framework of language. She concludes, "The materiality of the body and its vulnerable articulations not only exemplifies but constitutes the semantics of performance. Dismemberment is the hard connective tissue of drama, the skeleton beneath its scrim."[11] If language is understood as an articulated skeleton whose syntax is "modeled on the body and, quite specifically, on its 'connexions' or joints," [12] then dismemberment is the means by which arbitrary signifiers are reorganized into meaningful sentences capable of eliciting the emotions integral to drama.

As a play historically undervalued specifically because of its propensity for dismemberment, *Titus* requires further investigation into its bodily pathos. Shakespeare's early revenge tragedy constitutes arguably the most apt example of the theatre to which Garber refers when she claims, "to avoid the pathos of an imagery of bodily mutilation is, in effect, to avoid the theater and its peculiar power."[13] In the case of *Titus*, this power is forged in the emotive and, not only for want of a tongue, linguistically challenging moments of dismemberment linking the motion of the plot along a trajectory of strategic syntactical disarticulation.

When Titus first witnesses Lavinia in her mutilated state, he engages in a syntactical reorganization of meaning. Marcus offers a statement driven by a past tense verb: "This was thy daughter."[14] The relationship of the verb "was" to the object "daughter" creates the meaning that Lavinia has lost her subjectivity as well as being lost to her father. Titus responds by disarticulating and restructuring Marcus' syntax into a new meaning. He replies, "Why, Marcus, so she is."[15] By converting the past tense verb into the present "is" and

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[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.
[14] William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, ed. Jonathan Bate (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006), 3.1.63.
[15] *Titus*, 3.1.64.

situating "she" as the subject of the sentence, Titus reasserts his daughter's subjectivity and reclaims her present standing as his daughter. The syntactical joints of these lines are the points at which meaning is made, not by the content of individual words, but by their relations to one another.

As Garber explains of Saussure's theory of modern linguistics, "It was the point of articulation itself, the relation, the joint that gave meaning."[16] Lavinia's identity and personal autonomy – her meaning – all shift in two sentences depending on whether she is linked to the past or present verb for being. In this brief exchange, Shakespeare mirrors the disarticulated body with disarticulated language to foreground the process by which meaning is created by the systematic arrangement of parts.

Linking linguistic structure to the framework of the body was not uncommon in early modern medicine. Crooke explicitly defines the skeletal system in shared linguistic terms throughout the *Microcosmographia*: "The universal compage of coagmentation of the bones is called a syntax, and the back of bones so fitted together is called a Sceleton."[17] Crooke's "syntax" refers to a system of conjoined parts forming the whole skeleton via the same organizing principles which govern the arrangement of words to form language. The disarticulation of bodies throughout *Titus* therefore participates in not only the anatomical partitioning of the body, but also in the dominant modes of conceptualizing language in the early modern period. Shakespeare's corporeal reorganizations in *Titus* are strategic, culturally aware, and inextricably linked to interdisciplinary engagements with both body and self.

The body's utility as a conceptual stand-in for grammatic flexibility brings linguistic and medical theory together under the shared methodological framework of form and

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[16] Garber, 37.
[17] Helkiah Crooke, *Microcosmographia, A Description of the Body of Man*, 2nd ed. (London: M. Sparke, 1631) 930, quoted in Marjorie Garber, "Out of Joint," 34.

function relations. Crooke's description of skeletal shape as a means to coagmentation and Garber's location of meaning within the corporeal points most suited to movement both rely on the linkage of form to function. The suitability of the body's shape to the execution of its functions is not coincidental, but integral and cooperative. Garber's articulated bodily syntax does not simply map linguistic meaning over the convenient shape of human anatomy. It utilizes a core logic critical to the study of anatomy and physiology to illuminate the interconnectedness of language and science rooted in the same methodological foundation.

The form or shape (morphology) of any given body part is precisely reflective of that part's function or purpose (physiology) such that the physiological duty can be carried out with perfect efficiency due to its precise anatomical shape. Like Aristotle, Andreas Vesalius evidences this perfection in his description of the hand: "It is not difficult to discover why five digits were fashioned if we consider for what functions the fingers are useful. If they were fewer, they would undertake a great many actions less perfectly, while there is no reason we would require more."[18] Vesalius explicitly links the shape of the hand and its parts to their utility. In relation to *Titus*, states of dismemberment offer opportunities to read form/function relations via the former's complete isolation from the latter. In Chapter 4, these concepts will return with *King Lear* via the nuances of integrated forms and functions in full system homeostasis.

Farah Karim-Cooper uses Vesalius' scientific foundation of form/function theory to link morphological anatomy and operational physiology to notions of subjectivity. In her reading, "Vesalius asserted the significance of the hand as an agent ('doing') and as a subject/object ('being') to be examined and interpreted."[19] The hand is given a multilayered

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[18] Andreas Vesalius, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*, trans. Daniel Garrison (North Western University, 2003), chap. 27, http://vesalius.northwestern.edu/, quoted in Farah Karim-Cooper, *The Hand on the Shakespearean Stage* (London: Arden, 2016), 15.

[19] Farah Karim-Cooper, *The Hand on the Shakespearean Stage* (London: Arden, 2016) 15.

duality: the anatomist's hand is the skilled agent of dissection and the cadaver's hand is the exposed subject of analysis which is also made into an object through its dismantling. The latter's capacity to engender both focal subject and passive object illuminates how the body's layers of meaning deconstruct binaries of being. These dichotomies of active subject and passive object also reflect the divide between *ars* and *scientia* underscoring the parallel developments of surgery and physic in what Pamela Smith refers to as "terms of 'making' and 'knowing.'"[20] Although Smith's use of the terms focuses on artisan work in scientific illustration, her identification of the active and passive methodologies of *ars* and *scientia* respectively maps onto the equally matched hands of the active anatomist and passive cadaver.

Alongside these dichotomies, morphological form aligns with the passive object whilst physiological function drives the active anatomist. Form/function relations have guided medicine throughout history, originating out of the initial necessity for anatomy and physiology to be distinct fields of expertise. When analyzing the dead body to understand the living, anatomists rely on the evidence of shape in the absence of movement to speculate on internal operations. Zoologist Ingrith Deyrup-Olsen identifies this obstacle in early modern medicine as the dividing point of anatomy from physiology. Deyrup-Olsen writes, "Morphology – the study of structure per se – emerged as a valid discourse long before it was possible for observers to obtain real understanding of function. Thus there came to be a working practice dividing these two aspects between different disciplines – morphology (anatomy) and physiology."[21]

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[20] Pamela H. Smith, "Art, Science, and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe," in *Isis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press on behalf of The History of Science Society, 2006) 85.
[21] Ingrith Deyrup-Olsen, "Five Examples Illustrating the Study of Form and Function," *Integrative and Comparative Biology* 28, no. 2 (January: 1988), 587.

From this expectation was born the principle which persists into modern medicine that the specific shape of an organ, tissue, or cell dictates its function. The red blood cell is a concave disc because the increased surface area maximizes its capacity to carry oxygen. Sickle-cell anemia is an affliction of the blood in which erythrocytes fail to efficiently carry out their purpose as a direct result of their deformed shape.[22] This modern observation is, of course, predicated on the late seventeenth-century development of microscopic technology. Nonetheless, macroscopic gross anatomy observable to early modern anatomists also adheres to the form follows function theory.

As previously addressed in Chapter 1, Thomas Geminus' 1559 *Compendiosa* offered to English readers "The Anatomie of the inward Partes of man," including translations of Vesalius' Latin. Geminus' descriptions reveal sixteenth-century roots beneath the modern perception of morphological and physiological interdependence. In his description of the lungs, Geminus explicitly relates the shape of the lung to its pulmonary function.

> B Signifieth the Lunges…and it is called the bellowes of the bodye, for it draweth & sendeth fourth again the ayre, with the which the harte & other membres are tempered: wherfore the Lunges be full of holonesse, even like a sponge and emptie, opening it selfe to the receavinge of ayre, and gathering it selfe together, to expel it again, as dothe apayre of bellowes: fasheoned muche after the shape of an Ore house.[23]

Geminus pinpoints the sponge-like "holonesse" of the lung's structure as the necessary mechanism by which air is most effectively drawn in and expelled. Although he goes on to use more displaced mechanical metaphors to describe the air's movement, Geminus' sponge description reinforces the notion of form follows function theory as a

[22] Zachary M. Kiser, Anel Lizcano, et. al., "Decreased erythrocyte binding of Siglec-9 increases neutrophil activation in sickle cell disease," *Blood Cells, Molecules and Diseases* 81 (March 2020): 1.
[23] Thomas Geminus, *Compendiosa Totius Anatomiae Delineation aere exarate* (London: N. Hill & J. Kingston, 1559).

critical methodology for explaining physiological phenomena. Through Geminus, this methodology was disseminated from Vesalian models into more publicly accessible sources for early modern English readers.

The relationship between form and meaning is therefore solidified in medical pursuits as the foundation linking morphology and physiology. As Deyrup-Olsen argues of their interdependence, "In truth neither is valid as it stands alone. The crucial dependence of function on structure is obvious from the outset."[24] Whereas Chapter 4 will consider this interdependence in whole bodies, this chapter focuses on the non-homeostatic layers of meaning legible in the morphologies isolated from their homeostatic physiology via dismemberment throughout *Titus*.

Although form remains, function undergoes dramatic shifts when body parts are severed. It is therefore crucial to consider how form/function relations participate in states of wholeness and fragmentation. The part/whole dichotomy reflects the object/subject divide via a direct correlation between subjectivity and wholeness. However, as the economies of corporeal fragments in *Titus* reveal, the subjectivity of the fragmented body is not neutralized into isolated objects but rather liberated from homeostatic purpose to manifest and absorb meaning with exponentially more legibility.

As with the disruption of body expectations throughout *Coriolanus*, Shakespeare plays with the frameworks of the body in parts and whole, presence and absence, and the relations of form and meaning throughout *Titus*. The use and deconstruction of these binaries is concentrated in the explicit moments of violence, but nonetheless reverberate throughout the play. The amputation of Titus' hand and the mutilation of Lavinia serve as the most apt

[24] Ibid, 587.

opportunities for the critical investigation of these corporeal binaries and the ways in which they enable and illuminate the presence of selfhood within the visceral body.

Gendered Dismemberment: Titus' Surgical Agency

Through their shared visceral wrist disarticulations executed in opposing social and cultural contexts, Titus and Lavinia make legible the gendered divisions of the dismembered body. In both visceral and linguistic modes, Shakespeare imbues Titus and Lavinia with disparate but complementary reclamations of individual autonomy on their path to revenge. Before delving into close readings of these scenes, it is first important to consider how Shakespeare deploys corporeal metaphors in service of the body. By crafting metaphors and puns which rely on notions of the body rather than replacing it, Shakespeare reasserts the body in the language of the play.

Even during scenes which do not feature explicit violence, the language of the body permeates the play and keeps corporeality a consistent focal point. The violence of *Titus* is never isolated, but rather engenders reverberations from each visceral act both linguistically and physically. Corporeal language like Lavinia's request that her father "bless me here with thy victorious hand, whose fortunes Rome's best citizens applaud"[25] foreshadows the specific acts of dismemberment awaiting them both in the coming revenge cycle. In the aftermath of violence, the language of the body works alongside the visibly altered physical states of Titus and Lavinia to process their trauma.

Albert Tricomi observes that Shakespeare's linguistic engagement with the body outside scenes of violence "keeps the excruciating images of mutilation before our

[25] *Titus,* 1.1.166-7.

imaginations even when the visual spectacle is no longer before us."[26] Unlike the metaphors of Menenius which threaten to usurp the visceral body throughout *Coriolanus*, Shakespeare's metaphorical incorporation of the body keeps the visceral wounds fresh in language when the physical violence has ended. Metaphorical and visceral bodies are only at odds when the metaphor seeks to replace the viscera with incorporeal imagery, as in Marcus' uncomfortably florid speech to the freshly mutilated Lavinia. As this section explores, Shakespeare situates Marcus as an antagonist to the visceral body who, like Menenius, fails to underpin his metaphors with material corporeality.

Surrounding Marcus' unfounded metaphors is the undeniable viscerality of the rest of the physically marked Andronici. Unlike Marcus, their use of bodily metaphors reflects literal first-hand application. Michael Schoenfeldt explains, "In early modern usage, the vocabularies of suffering commute easily between the physical and emotional realms."[27] Titus corporealizes his griefs in lines like, "my bowels cannot hide her woes, but like a drunkard must I vomit them,"[28] and then reaches back again to Lavinia's glossectomy when he asks for leave "to ease their stomachs with their bitter tongues."[29] More than punchlines for violent spectacles, these visceral expressions of grief illustrate the integral link between somatic and emotional states in early modern experience.

Even in comedic moments, bodily puns refuse to let the corporeal spectacle rest. Although Lavinia cannot speak her own metaphors, her father's uneasy references to tongues in her presence also ironically foreground the gendered bias distinguishing his daughter's unique corporeal experience from his own. As Mazzio explains of early modern perspectives

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[26] Albert Tricomi, "The Aesthetics of Mutilation in *Titus Andronicus*," in *Shakespeare and Language*, ed. Catherine M. S. Alexander (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 227.
[27] Michael Schoenfeldt, "Shakespearean Pain," in *Shakespearean Sensations*, ed. Katharine A. Craik (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 193.
[28] *Titus*, 3.1.231-2.
[29] *Titus*, 3.1.234.

on the unruly tongue, "malevolent and benevolent discursive agencies emerge from one and the same bodily organ."[30] By simultaneously speaking up for and speaking over his mute daughter, Titus' use of his own tongue reflects the part's unstable moral ambivalence.

When Titus tries to change the subject away from his and Lavinia's missing parts, he paradoxically foregrounds them again by punning, "O handle not the theme, to talk of hands, lest we remember still that we have none."[31] In these instances, metaphorical bodies and visceral ones work together to situate corporeality as an ongoing state of being beyond the isolated moment of violence. The viscerally grounded bodily metaphors of characters like Coriolanus and Titus oppose Menenius' manipulative body politic and Marcus' objectifying blazon by using the textual bodies of language as temporary stand-ins for the performative bodies on stage, not to detract from or replace them but to direct attention back toward their physical corporeality.

To fully address the physical corporeality of the text, it is necessary to turn to its literal embodiment in performance. Blanche McIntyre's 2017 *Titus* at the Royal Shakespeare Company provides several compelling examples of nuanced acts of dismemberment which make explicitly visceral otherwise understated moments in the text. McIntyre makes careful performance choices which highlight readings of the fractured body along various points of the subject-object spectrum. The ways in which fractured and whole bodies interact with dismembered parts throughout the production allow the viscera to impart its own meaning to the narrative.

For all its seemingly endless mutilation, one particular act of dismemberment in *Titus* stands apart from the rest of the bloodbath. Unique in its circumstances, setting, and

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[30] Carla Mazzio, "Sins of the Tongue" in *The Body in Parts* ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, (London: Routledge, 1997), 53.
[31] *Titus,* 3.2.29-30.

motivation, the amputation of Titus' hand in the first scene of Act 3 is voluntary, civilized, and co-operative. When read against the acts of rape, dismemberment, and execution in the forest, Titus' hand amputation occupies a relatively non-violent category. Lavinia's hands are stolen from her in an act of malicious violence. Titus' hand, though ultimately offered in vain, is volunteered for surgical amputation. Despite the unforeseen dishonesty of his surgeon, Titus imparts to Aaron, "Lend me thy hand and I will give thee mine."[32] The calm civility of Titus' tone shifts the exchange from victim and tormenter to patient and surgeon. In the midst of panic for his sons and lingering grief for his daughter, Titus acquires some degree of control over the chaotic tragedy of his life by offering up his hand, not only as ransom for the lives of his doomed remaining sons, but also as a wound in need of healing.

Titus' plea to have his hand chosen for amputation over that of his brother or his son operates on more than brotherly and fatherly love hoping to spare his remaining family from further torment. The moment also offers Titus an opportunity to process some of his grief for Lavinia's plight. Moments prior, upon being confronted with Lavinia's mutilated state, Titus cries, "Give me a sword, I'll chop off my hands too, for they have fought for Rome, and all in vain."[33] Although he reasons that he would lose his hands to shame the work they've done for the Rome which now betrays him, there is an underlying implication that the offer is also an effort to match his daughter's pain.

To lose his own hands would allow Titus to identify with Lavinia on a level so personal that it would permanently rewrite his own body. By chiding his hands for their service to Rome, Titus ties his physical body to his deeds, reputation, and identity as a soldier. This disavowal of his hands for their past deeds acknowledges the appendages'

[32] *Titus,* 3.1.188.
[33] *Titus,* 3.1.73-74.

linkage to his notion of self, even in shame, and contents himself to lose them. In Arthur Frank's model of narrative ethics, this "perpetual self-reflection on the sort of person that one's story is shaping one into" requires adjustment "to change that self-story if the wrong self is being shaped."[34] Titus' corporeally embedded story demands that his body is physically reshaped to reflect his changing identity from a servant of Rome to a betrayed enemy in a visceral version of Frank's process of "personal becoming."[35]

Titus' somatic isomorphism with Lavinia constitutes an attempt to empathize with a pain so intense it must be embodied to be understood. His hand becomes a tumor – a constant reminder of what he failed to protect in his innocent daughter and a physical extension of his regrets. To remove it would be a cure to his shame and a path to corporeal empathy with Lavinia. Frank describes the empathy of shared illness narrative as a "resonance" with the "other's self-story" which allows the empathizer to "feel its nuances and anticipate changes in plot" without necessarily feeling precisely the same pain.[36] Although Frank's models focus primarily on the impact of patient to physician relations in clinical contexts, the value he ascribes to illness narratives as an interpersonal method of constructivism applies to the relationship between Titus and Lavinia. By removing his own hand, Titus enables a better vantage point from which to interpret and predict the changes in Lavinia's plot. Shakespeare's visceralization of the intertwining illness narratives across the Andronici family illustrate the empathy necessary to validate the selfhoods of others.[37] Like Samuel

[34] Arthur Frank, *The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness, and Ethics,* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1997) 158.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] See also Eric Langley, *Shakespeare's Contagious Sympathies: Ill Communications* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018) for a closer look at how compassionate and sympathetic communications about illness clash with early modern anxieties of infection.

Pepys' public performance of his post-operative selfhood, Titus and Lavinia provide one another the necessary audience to their reconstructed identities.

A voluntary choice driven by a need for healing, the amputation of Titus' hand provides a surgical scene against which the play's other violent mutilations may be read. McIntyre's production at the RSC illustrates this division via specific costuming and setting choices during the amputation. After two acts full of blood spilled in violent attacks, the entrance of two nurses in white and blue surgical garb wheeling in a sterile steel table sets the brutal violence of the forest in stark contrast to the modern clinical aesthetic (see fig. 3.1). The trained physicians are distanced from the blood they studiously spill by masks and gloves which signify their licensure to open the body. The calculated nature of the surgically fractured body is highlighted by the meticulous steps taken to prepare the site and trace the line of the incision. Precision and cleanliness separate surgery from violence.



Figure 3.1. Helen Maybanks, *The infamous removal of Titus' hand*, 2017. Courtesy of Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-upon-Avon.

By constructing this contrast between the brutal violence in the forest and the clinical surgery in the court, McIntyre's production also participates in a history of unstable and duplicitous notions of the surgeon in flux throughout the development of medicine. Due to the surgeon's occupationally "vexed categorization" in the early modern period, public perceptions of surgery were heavily influenced by not only the inherent fear of the exposed bodily interior, but also by a confusion around the identity of the practitioner.[38]

The identity of the early modern surgeon was complicated by its distinction from the notion of the physician and its liminality between the unauthorized "barber-surgeon"

[38] Eleanor Decamp, *Civic and Medical Worlds in Early Modern England* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 11.

practicing tonsorial works alongside surgery and the licensed freeman of the Company of Barber-Surgeons operating under an established civic title.[39] The cultural identities of physicians and surgeons were imposed by a public perception of a false medical dichotomy. As Eleanor Decamp explains, "That there was a strict divide between surgeons working on the outer body with tools and physicians attending to the inner body with medicines was illusionary in practice, but in the popular imagination, the surgeon could be straightforwardly separated."[40] There is therefore not only an instability within the definition of surgeon, but also between the surgeon's role in reality and public perception. As a result, the hand wielding the scalpel could as easily be depicted a butcher as a healer.

In a gruesome play fluctuating between tragedy and comedy, the fluidity of tone further destabilizes the depictions of violence. The spectator's expectations for accepted routes into the bodily interior are influenced by the environmental context in which the breach takes place. According to Garrett Sullivan's "affective landscape" model, "not only is subjectivity distributed across bodies and environment, but the environment itself can also be seen as exercising the kind of agency usually limited to the subject."[41] Applied to *Titus*, the environmental agency of the darkened, lawless forest dictates the emotional identity of Lavinia's mutilation just as the environment of the civil court facilitates Titus' controlled amputation. Despite undergoing physically the same wrist disarticulation, one event is a mutilation and the other is a surgical procedure. The difference between Chiron and Demetrius as agency-robbing attackers and Aaron as an executor of subjective choice is rooted in an environmental specificity which reflects the dichotomy of the surgeon.

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[39] Ibid, 15.
[40] Ibid, 47.
[41] Mary Floyd-Wilson and Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr., "Introduction: Inhabiting the Body, Inhabiting the World," in *Environment and Embodiment in Early Modern England,* ed. Mary Floyd-Wilson and Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) 6.

To the early modern public, the surgeon's social license to break the flesh and expose the bodily interior was both a grotesque terror and a crucial responsibility. They had the noble responsibility of "altering, amending, reinventing, and reshaping bodies and therefore identities" whilst simultaneously being depicted in literature as "the embodiment of a character wasting away: pale and ineffectual."[42] The duality of the surgeon's identity in public perception was driven by the tension between fear and trust. The previous chapter touched on this dichotomy as Coriolanus avows the necessity of the surgeon by aligning his battlefield deeds with blood-letting whilst nonetheless foregrounding the absence of any such character. *Titus* takes these dichotomous surgeon identities and splits them into two separate characters.

Rather than balancing fear and trust in a single character, Shakespeare links Lavinia and Titus via a shared corporeal alteration but presents their distinct surgical experiences as respectively fearsome and trusted. The shift in Shakespeare's engagement with the monstrous/valuable surgeon motif between *Titus* and *Coriolanus* may be read as evidence of his ideas developing over the course of his career. While both arrangements are valuable commentaries on their contemporary medical anxieties, the ability to incorporate the dichotomous perspectives of both patient and surgeon into a singular character may signify an evolution in Shakespeare's complex characterization.

Decamp also cites a distinct lack of any specific operational locality as a component of the surgeon's identity. Just as their identities were unsolidified in name, "to the early modern imagination, surgeons were not allied with an equivalent, definite space to perform their daily works." Operating theatres in which surgical amputations were performed on live patients would not come into being until closer to the eighteenth century. Prior to that, the

[42] Decamp, 18-9.

dominant locus for work on the body was the cadaver-focused anatomy theatre. As Sawday describes, "The anatomy theatre was a register of civic importance, an index of the intellectual advancement of the community, an advertisement for a city's flourishing cultural and artistic life."[43] Compared to the less glamorous work of the spatially liminal surgeon, the elite communal reputation staked in the intellectual pursuits of the physically statuesque anatomy theatre glosses the identity of the individual dead body. Although its ambiguous setting and vexed licensure create a contentious reputation, the barber shop plays a more direct role in corporeal identity formation. Where the anatomist explores the posthumous evidence of the dead, the surgeon helps to craft the identity of the living.

The barber shop reasserts trust in the transparency otherwise lost in the isolated and privileged space of the anatomy theatre. As Decamp points out, "the environment is not an alien realm in which transformations miraculously occur, but a place where clients have a role in organizing their own subjectivity."[44] While Decamp uses this notion of personalized subjectivity in the tonsorial contexts of the barber shop, its implications on patient and surgeon power dynamics ring back to Titus' hand amputation. Regardless of whether Aaron is read as a villain in the broader narrative arc of the play, his position as surgeon in the amputation scene creates a distinct interpersonal context. By filling the role of willing – even eager – patient, Titus recasts his would-be enemy as the healing, if unstable, barber-surgeon.

The vital aspect of Titus' role in the scene is his agency. By approaching Aaron to ask his assistance in removing the offending appendage, Titus situates himself in that space described by Decamp "where clients have a role in organizing their own subjectivity."[45] Just as a client at the barber shop participates in the construction of his identity by enacting

[43] Sawday, 42.
[44] Ibid, 33.
[45] Ibid.

agency over his choice of hairstyle, Titus appeals to the barber-surgeon's bloodier skillset to sculpt his identity with the trimming of a few digits. In this context, Aaron becomes the executor of Titus' willful corporeal reorganization. The removed hand enters the realm of the object in its dislocation from the bodily whole and is therefore able to stand as bargaining chip for the lives of the two captured sons. At the same time, Titus' body without the hand becomes a consciously constructed reflection of Lavinia's new corporeal identity in a grotesque fulfillment of his initial quest to ease his daughter's suffering; "Shall we cut away our hands like thine?"[46]

Titus and Lavinia experience separate modes of suffering steeped in disparate sociopolitical and gendered contexts and requiring different measures to heal. Pascale Aebischer pinpoints these modes in terms of the characters' responses to their own suffering. She describes them as "equivalent in depth but different in expression: whereas Titus works through his grief linguistically, Lavinia works through hers physically."[47] These two processes intersect in Titus' efforts to "wrest an alphabet" from Lavinia's body language.[48] The extent to which Titus and Lavinia work together to acknowledge one another's meanings will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter. However, it is first important to explore how Lavinia's experience differs from her father's, especially in terms of the male gaze and its perpetuation of her dismemberment.

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[46] *Titus,* 3.1.131.
[47] Pascale Aebischer, *Shakespeare's Violated Bodies: Stage and Screen Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 49.
[48] *Titus,* 3.2.44.

Gendered Dismemberment: Lavinia's Visceral Emblazoning

As father and daughter strive to support one another through their respective pains, their individual experiences are nonetheless relegated to the private realm of the bodily interior and layered over with implications unique to their identities. Although his hand amputation gives Titus a corporeal taste of Lavinia's injury, the agency in his voluntary amputation precludes him from comprehending or sharing in the experience of Lavinia's violent mutilation. By situating Lavinia's suffering in context with contemporary literary traditions of reading (and misreading) the female body, Shakespeare illuminates the extremities of female dismemberment imbedded in poetic conduits of the male gaze. Speechlessly subjected to the observations of the men around her, Lavinia embodies Laura Mulvey's "signifier for the male other" within patriarchal culture as "the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning."[49] Although she is initially forced to bear the meanings read into her by the male gaze, Lavinia's corporeal adaptations surmount the obstacles to her communication and enable her to reclaim an autonomy grounded in the visceral enactment of her revenge.

In 1543, the published image of the body radically shifted in two different, but simultaneous ways. Students of anatomy will recognize the date as the original publication of Vesalius' *Fabrica*. It is the year in which the famous anatomist's detailed index of human anatomy illuminated the bodily interior to public audiences beyond anatomy theatres. In the same year, in the city where Vesalius initially began his studies, *Les Blasons anatomiques du corps femenin* became the first independent collection of anatomical blazons.[50] The blazon was a poetic tradition focused on the representation and elaboration of body parts in isolation

[49] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16, no. 3 (Autumn 1975): 7.
[50] Nancy J. Vickers, "Members Only: Marot's Anatomical Blazons," in *The Body in Parts,* ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (London: Routledge, 1997), 8.

from the bodily whole. According to Nancy Vickers, the goal of the blazon in printed collections was "to emphasize the partiality of the despised or venerated bodily object."[51]

While it is striking that these two modes of representing the body emerged simultaneously, Vickers disagrees with Sawday's invocation of the blazon in the development of dissection culture on the basis that they adhere to opposing purposes. The partitioned body in medicine situates the part in relation to as "an image of a vital whole."[52] For Vesalian anatomists, the complete homeostatic body is always present. Even in moments of focused study which isolate one part, the systematic body dictates that any part remains linked to its role in the complete corpus. By contrast, the blazon pays excessive attention to a single part and makes no effort to "recover the body's unity." The genre is one of "radical fragmentation" which, rather than breaking into parts to illuminate the whole, obsessively idolizes the part "at the expense of the whole."[53] Though it may be defined as a descriptive catalogue of parts, the blazon does not adhere to any ordering system because, unlike empirical medicine, its goal is poetic proliferation rather than taxonomical canonization. In its failure to reunify the body or express the female subject's experience, Titus' reciprocal hand amputation functions similarly to the blazon by focusing more on the elaborate performative gesture than its practical application to understanding the female body.

In the pursuit of a revisceralized literary corporeality, the central pitfall of the blazon is the act of substitution. The isolation process is partly carried out via metaphors which remove the body part specifically by replacing it with non-corporeal imagery. A prime example of this non-corporeal replacement occurs in Clément Marot's "Blason du tetin," the

[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.

first of his *blasons anatomiques* and the catalyst for the blazon and counter-blazon movements in early modern poetry.[54]

Tetin refait plus blanc qu'un oeuf	Well formed breast, whiter than an egg,
Tetin de satin blanc tout neuf,	Breast of brand new white satin,
Tetin qui fais honte a la rose,	Breast which puts the rose to shame,
Tetin plus beau que nulle chose.	Breast more beautiful than any thing.[380]

Marot's poetic devices displace the breast into non-corporeal alignments with eggs, satin, and flowers using its observable features. Empirical aspects of anatomical form like shape, color, and texture are co-opted to justify the poetic replacement of body parts. This replacement of forms may be understood as a willful misinterpretation of the form follows function principles which underpin anatomy and physiology. Rather than utilizing the observable shape of the body part to extrapolate a theory of its homeostatic function within the bodily whole, the blazon uses shape to displace the body part onto similar observable shapes outside the body.

The linkage of corporeal morphology to external, non-corporeal forms dissolves the crucial bond between form and function which gives the living body vitality and purpose. This reading of the blazon may seem an over-medicalization of poetic form, but the representations of bodies in art inevitably reverberate onto real bodies. Just as art and science collaborated to establish the Vesalian model of the standard body, the poetics driving the blazon tradition impact the visceral bodies of their primarily female subjects with a dissolving force. The poetic hyper-fixation on the craftsmanship of the image obscures the whole body from whence its inspiration initially arose.

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[54] Sara Morrison, "Embodying the Blazon: Performing and Transforming Pain in *Measure for Measure* and *The Duchess of Malfi,*" in *Staging the Blazon in Early Modern Theatre,* ed. Deborah Uman and Sara Morrison (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013) 67.
[380] Clément Marot, "Blason du tetin" in *The Body in Parts*, trans. Nancy Vickers (London: Routledge, 1997) 15.

The blazon tends to invest meaning in scientifically unsubstantiated imaginings of the body with a logic "more poetic than corporeal."[381] While some blazons seem to retain interconnectedness by indexing a variety of parts, even these links between isolated body parts in other blazons nonetheless replace homeostatic purpose with imagined functions. Vickers' translation of "Blason de la Cuisse" highlights the illogical reordering of the body's interconnectedness:

Cuisse la plus belle du monde.	Most beautiful thigh in the world.
Cuisse qui fais l'oeil esmouvoir,	Thigh that moves the eye,
Cuisse qui fais Tetin mouvoir	Thigh that moves the breast,
Cuisse qui fais parler la bouche,	Thigh that makes the mouth speak
Un temps avant que l'on te touche.	Before one touches you,
Cuisse qui fais la main servir,	Thigh that makes the hand serve,
Cuisse qui te fais poursuyvir.	Thigh you make yourself an object of pursuit.[382]

The anaphora of "Thigh that moves" and "Thigh that makes" reinforces a dynamic of control which erroneously credits the emblazoned form of the thigh with functionality over the other body parts. The device used to suggest that the thigh attracts the attention of onlookers' eyes, speeds their excited hearts, and urges their speeches of praise confounds homeostatic purposes with poetic ones. The movements of the rectus femoris and sartorius muscles define their interconnected purpose in terms of the thigh's functional relationships to the pelvis and popliteal fossa. The blazon's realignment of the thigh with anatomically disparate eye, breast, mouth, and hand resists corporeal unity and reassigns its active homeostatic prerogative to lift the leg into a fragmentary series of passive invitations to the male gaze. This new poetic purpose to serve the male gaze situates the objectification process as a function of the body part which overwrites its ability to walk. The emblazoning poet

[381] Vickers, 11.
[382] Jacques le Lieur, "Blason de la Cuisse" in *The Body in Parts*, trans. Nancy Vickers (London: Routledge, 1997) 9.

replaces the thigh's motor function with a decorative one: "Thigh you make yourself an object."

Artistically, the practice of linking the body to dissimilar concepts and objects can illuminate how humanity conceptualizes and understands its physical makeup. The early modern vogue of conceptualizing the body as a building full of chambers, for instance, utilizes familiar spaces to make the foreign bodily interior easier to claim and control.[383] However, in terms of early modern anatomy's efforts to index and unify the corporeal whole, literary traditions like the blazon pose a counterproductive obstacle to the reintegration of the dissected body. The blazon's isolation does not simply exclude the whole body and objectify the fragmented subject. Its explicit deconstruction of form/function relations unravels the homeostatic potential by which morphology serves not as an aesthetic reflection of nature, but as a precisely crafted component of the mechanisms of life. The body's intricate homeostatic relationship with nature will be addressed further in Chapter 4.

Vickers describes the exhibitionist nature of the emblazoned female body which "literalizes the logic whereby the self is collected, defined, and displayed through the process of splitting and exhibiting the other."[384] Despite its resistance to anatomical reintegration, the blazon must be acknowledged for its participation in the pursuit of selfhood within the corpus. Where anatomy seeks selfhood in the flesh by digging into its viscera, the opposing technique of the blazon dissolves the material corpus into a more philosophically interpretable concept via fragmentation into a series of malleable poetic images.

The blazon maintained its popularity for several decades after the multi-authored *Blasons anatomiques* collection of 1536 set it at the forefront of fashion, where it remained

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[383] For his propensity toward architectural bodily imagery, see John Donne, "Sermon No. 10," *The Sermons of John Donne* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), 236 and "Of the Progress of the Soule," *The Epithalamions Anniversaries and Epicedes of John Donne* (London: Oxford University Press, 1978), 49.
[384] Vickers, 14.

marketable in reprints into the 1570s.[385] Shakespeare reacts to the poetic convention critically, sarcastically, and at times hyperbolically. In Sonnet 130, he writes, "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun,"[386] lampooning the objectifying blazon and its Petrarchan ideals by explicitly refusing to partake in the fad of part idolization. The sonnets respond poetically by breaking with the conventions of the written word, but the stage offers the opportunity to test the effects of emblazoning on vital, whole bodies in performance.

In context with Shakespeare's reactions to blazon culture, Lavinia presents a grotesque dilemma suspended between explicitly flowery language and the literal isolation of body parts. The female body imposed upon by natural metaphors and corporeal fracturing is hyperbolically visceralized in Lavinia. Upon sight of his mutilated niece, Marcus urges:

> Speak, gentle niece, what stern ungentle hands
> Hath lopped and hewed and made thy body bare
> Of her two branches, those sweet ornaments
> Whose circling shadows kings have sought to sleep in.[387]

The imagery of Marcus' description transforms Lavinia into a cultivated garden, perpetuating the narrative of patriarchal control even in his efforts to mourn and sympathize. The connotations of "lopped and hewed" to describe her dismemberment implies a necessary control enacted by man over unruly nature's overgrown "branches" which were once a woman's hands. The garden metaphor also foregrounds her objectivity as property. A cultivated garden is a signifier of wealth and status.[388] As Marcus indexes the damages done, he assesses the remaining value of his inheritance. Even the seeming compliment in the

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[385] Catherine Bates, *Masculinity, Gender, and Identity in the English Renaissance Lyric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 93.
[386] William Shakespeare, "Sonnet 130," in *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. Katherine Duncan-Jones (London: Arden, 2010) 130.
[387] *Titus*, 2.3.16-19.
[388] See for instance Jane Whitaker, *Gardens for Gloriana: Wealth, Splendor, and Design in the Elizabethan Garden* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019).

extended metaphor hailing her embrace of kings nonetheless situates her touch as a titillation rather than a part of her autonomous body. Shakespeare turns the blazon to grotesque dismemberment by literally isolating Lavinia's hands from her whole body and lavishing them with pleasant metaphors at the expense of the subject.

The same unsettling fascination is perpetrated on Lavinia's mouth, ironically glossing the effects of her forced glossectomy with a naturalization which continues to objectify and fracture her already dislocated form. Phrases like "rosed lips" and "honey breath" keep to the garden metaphor as her flowing blood becomes an ornamental fountain amid the flowers with a "crimson river" accenting the scene from her "three issuing spouts."[389] Each corporeal site of the attack is embedded in hyperbolically florid language as it is carefully considered in isolation.

If the description had come from Lavinia's attackers, it would have simply added conceptual fragmentation to the visceral act. But in the mouth of Lavinia's uncle, the strangeness of the objectifying and fracturing description is incongruous with the compassion of her grieving family. A more generous reading might suggest that Marcus' de-visceralizing metaphors enact a defensive distancing from the traumatic vision of Lavinia's mutilated form. The focus on aligning her body with the beauty of nature may be read as a desperate attempt to see beauty in her even as she breaks. However, such a reading would require a more explicit prioritization of Lavinia's selfhood, something effectively undermined by the fragmentation of Marcus' analysis. The idea of nature as a stand-in for Lavinia's continued beauty is also problematized by the connotations of control and man-made organization in garden cultivation as opposed to the unrestrained freedom of growth in nature. In the

[389] *Titus,* 2.3.22-30.

Neoclassical movement of the eighteenth century, Alexander Pope would eventually refer to this poetic control as "Nature methodiz'd."[390]

Marcus' failure to offer Lavinia any functional support is made explicit in Lavinia's response. Although she cannot voice her discomfort, the mute character's experience is nonetheless carefully woven into the text through the words of others. In the final lines of the scene, filling the space where her words would otherwise form the logical conclusion of the one-sided conversation, Marcus says, "Do not draw back, for we will mourn with thee."[391] The line subtly reveals more about the subject of the sentence than its speaker as Shakespeare gives Lavinia a silent moment of body language. Lavinia draws back, not necessarily in fear or shame, but specifically in response to Marcus' mode of mourning. By recoiling from Marcus' poetic speech, Lavinia reveals the emotional disconnect between his aesthetic words and her violent physical experience.

Physical performance choices can enhance this uneasy division between the mourning Marcus and the suffering Lavinia. In the 2017 McIntyre production at the RSC, Patrick Drury portrayed a conflicted Marcus, seemingly unsure whether to approach the traumatized Lavinia. For most of his one-sided speech, arguably a soliloquy addressed more to the speaker and audience than to the subject, Drury's Marcus stands across the stage and points toward Lavinia. Eventually, he reaches his hand out to her, but remains at a safe enough distance that the two would remain separate even if she reached back. The physical distance between the actors on stage visualizes the divide between Marcus' poetry and its incapacity to process Lavinia's pain.

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[390] Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* (London: W. Lewis, 1713) 9 line 89. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* accessed 23 June 2020.
[391] *Titus,* 2.3.56.

To illustrate how performance focused on realism confronts audiences with Lavinia's unresolvable horror, Aebsicher sites Xavier Leret's 2001 Kaos Theatre production as one which "uncompromisingly refused to 'poeticise' the representation of Lavinia."[392] The acts of violence and their results are neither stylized nor abstracted in Leret's production, leaving an unflinchingly stark revelation of Lavinia's bloodied and bare violated body. In this extreme example of the attempt to fully portray Lavinia's pain, the inadequacy of Marcus' speech is more blatantly exposed. According to Aebischer, "Marcus' monologue did nothing to relieve the horror, the discrepancy between his poetry and the sight of Lavinia being excruciatingly obvious."[393] Although the two productions operate at varying degrees of extremity, McIntyre allowing room to read Marcus' distance as compassionate caution toward a trauma survivor, both illustrate what Elaine Scarry refers to as the "unsharability" of pain. Marcus' reliance on language to empathize with Lavinia is a two-fold failure as it is precisely "resistance to language"[394] which makes pain unshareable. Even if there were words to express it, Marcus' external position leaves him inevitably doomed to misinterpret Lavinia's inexpressible internal experience.

It is therefore not necessarily Marcus, but the inherent limitations of language which complicate the effects of the monologue. Shakespeare has not failed to write the experience of grief, but instead succeeded in expressing the unsatisfying, isolating, and potentially counterproductive phenomenon of attempting to transfer and explain another's pain. As Scarry points out, "the metaphor of bodily damage also entails a wholly distinct set of perceptual complications."[395] Whilst Scarry refers to the metaphors of weapons and wounds used to describe pain, her implication of outsider perceptions and, by extension, "the ways in

[392] Aebischer, 50.
[393] Ibid, 52.
[394] Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) 4.
[395] Ibid, 16.

which they get sorted out by culture" applies as aptly to Marcus' restraining Classicist garden imagery. In either case, the application of interpretive metaphors onto the body of the wounded dissociates the corporeal wholeness of the subject and diverts its meaning to cultural and socio-political rhetoric.

Lynn Enterline identifies Marcus' speech as "a truly Ovidian juxtaposition of aesthetics and violence" and specifies its value as a touchstone of "the relation between text and the social world, aesthetic form and cultural violence."[396] Marcus' uncomfortable mourning mixed with praise shifts Lavinia's body from one objectified by violence to one objectified by aesthetics. Like the blazon, neither attacker nor mourner endeavors to reunify the victim's corporeal whole. The space Enterline reads between the text and the social world is occupied by Lavinia's physical embodiment of the poetic tradition which her mutilation literalizes. Although aesthetics and violence may be juxtaposed rhetorically in the scene, both enact the same dismembering process on Lavinia's corpus. The former perpetuates conceptually the fracturing made visceral by the latter.

By putting Marcus in the role of the emblazoning poet, Shakespeare foregrounds the incapacity of the convention, even in the voice of a well-meaning speaker, to effectively address the female form with acknowledgment of her wholeness and subjectivity. The inappropriateness of the garden imagery spoken to a visibly distraught and mutilated woman deliberately exposes the textual body's incapacity to construct the visceral one. The play's textualization of the female body is, itself, a fallacy of which Shakespeare is acutely aware. His attack on the blazon tradition satirizes the disconnect between the textual construction of

[396] Lynn Enterline, *The Rhetoric of the Body from Ovid to Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 8.

character and the corporeal embodiment of identity. Wholeness is again exposed as a myth which cannot be achieved by poetry or rhetoric.

Karim-Cooper locates Shakespeare's attitude toward the blazon tradition in Katherine and Alice's verbal dissections in *Henry V*. As the translation process breaks Katherine into linguistically indexed body parts, "d'hand, de fingres, de nails, de arm, de bilbow,"[397] Karim-Cooper asserts that "Shakespeare highlights here the relationship between bodies of text and real bodies."[398] Although the *Henry V* scene stops short of visceralizing the breaking points between body parts, the textual body is linked to the real body in the process of identification and translation. Karim-Cooper argues this relationship between text and corpus is achieved "by parodying the Petrarchan blazons that regularly took apart women's bodies in poetic acts of courtship."[399] Marcus' speech is another example of Shakespeare's Petrarchan parody wherein the poetic act is undermined by the circumstantial context of the real body.

The fragmentation of Lavinia's body in *Titus* is more than an ironic literalization of the blazon's dissecting gaze. Shakespeare's materialized emblazoning of the fragmented female form is strategically reformulated to ground the poetic body in the quantifiable empiricism of the anatomical body. Shakespeare approaches the blazon by carefully choosing his comparisons between the body and nature with consideration not just for aesthetic similarity, but for structurally comparable form and function. Rather than situating the emblazoned body as an object abstracted and disintegrated into an obscure nature, Shakespeare links the body to its own natural state by drawing comparisons between anatomical structure and its botanical counterparts.

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[397] William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, ed. T. W. Craik (London: Arden, 2012) 3.4.25-6.
[398] Karim-Cooper, 15.
[399] Ibid.

When the metaphor is precisely chosen to accurately reflect the form and function of the subject, the relationship between the body and nature is not a substitution, but a structural continuation. When Shakespeare writes about Lavinia's "two branches," he creates a natural mnemonic for how the body actually works.[400] Chapter 1 addressed chief medical examiner Milton Helpern's description of individuated interiorities with "branching vessels."[401] The human body is formed of a trunk and limbs, growing even in its interior planes with the branching structure observable as much in blood vessels as it is in trees, vines, mold, rivers, and valleys. Shakespeare's evolution of the isolating substitutionary blazon into a tool for continuation and integration situates the body as not simply comparable to nature, but as an undifferentiated part of nature. This consideration for physiological function positions Shakespearean bodies at a juncture bridging the gap between the poetic body and the scientific. As Chapter 4 will show, the continuity of the Shakespearean body with nature culminates in the acutely environmental homeostatic bodies of *Lear*.

The emblazoning poet and the rhetorician Shakespeare crafts in Marcus and Menenius respectively constitute the voices of outdated corporeal metaphors yielding to a new wave of empirical body knowledge in early modern imaginations. As previously discussed, Menenius' scientifically unsubstantiated and rhetorically manipulative body-politic throughout *Coriolanus* offers an antithetical point of reference for the titular soldier's reassertion of the corporeal body. Similarly, Marcus' ineffectual attempts to poeticize Lavinia's mutilated body threaten to usurp visceral body knowledge with manipulative language. The militarized male body of Coriolanus resists the rhetorical mythology of the body politic while the grotesque parody of courtship wrought upon Lavinia's viscerally emblazoned female body deconstructs

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[400] *Titus,* 2.3.18.
[401] F. Gonzalez-Crussi, *Notes of an Anatomist* (London: Picador, 1986), 69 quoted in Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned* 7.

the poetics of corporeality. Both Menenius and Marcus represent crucial antagonists to the visceral corpus not only as voices of imagined bodies, but as necessary reminders of previous steps in body knowledge which must evolve with the cultural and scientific revelations of empirical Vesalian anatomy.

By the end of *Titus*, surrounded by the mutilated remains of both family and enemy, Marcus never learns to read the body materially. Instead, he merely takes the inclusion of mutilated male bodies as a sign to switch from poetic emblazoning to political rhetoric. This shift toward the dramatic critique of the body politic via the spectacle of dismemberment in performance offers, in Marcus, an early glimpse of what would grow into the fully realized deconstruction of the body politic metaphor in *Coriolanus*. Despite all the visceral fracturing undermining the rhetorical body with the spillage of literal blood throughout *Titus,* Marcus still stands over the gore-littered stage and attempts to reintegrate the dismembered bodies with words.

> MARCUS: You sad-faced men, people and sons of Rome,
> By uproars severed, as a flight of fowl
> Scattered by winds and high tempestuous gusts,
> O let me teach you how to knit again
> This scattered corn into one mutual sheaf,
> These broken limbs again into one body.[402]

In the socially detached sphere of the court, such a speech might urge sympathy and motivate unity between disparate political parties in the interest of nurturing a society conceivable as a whole body. Instead of placing this speech in an atmosphere which would validate its rhetoric, Shakespeare situates Marcus' speech immediately after the bloodbath to an audience of dead bodies. The absurdity of Marcus' feeble attempt to rhetorize "these broken limbs again into one body" to corpses unmoved by eloquent language underscores

[402] *Titus,* 5.3.66-71.

Shakespeare's disavowal of the metaphorical body which refuses to acknowledge the reality of its visceral counterpart. As a grieving process disconnected from the physical pain from which he alone was exempt, Marcus' speech also reasserts the resistance to language to which Scarry refers in her discussion on the "unsharability of pain."[403] The failure of language to reintegrate the scattered bodies exposes the unattainable myth of the whole body in neither concept nor material.

Even when Marcus determines to end the entire Andronici line by hurling himself and his family off the building to "make a mutual closure of our house"[404] and join Titus and Lavinia, his inappropriate rhetoric again falls short of poetic resolution in the face of corporeal reality. Marcus' attempt to follow in the fates of his dismembered family is made awkwardly comedic by his suggestion that "the poor remainder of Andronici will hand in hand all headlong hurl ourselves"[405] to their deaths. The unfortunate use of the word "remainder" foregrounds the remnants of the bodies littering the stage with a variety of missing parts.

The faux pas is made more amusing by phrasing which depends on the specific body parts which his dead family members all lack. Any attempt to follow Titus or Lavinia whilst "hand in hand" is doomed to fail by disregarding either's lack thereof. To hurl himself "headlong" would equally be an act unfathomable to his headless nephews. Without considering the corporeal elements of his family's viscerally altered lives and deaths, Marcus separates himself from the real tradition of the Andronici by proposing a death which preserves his corporeal wholeness. By denying him a dismemberment, Shakespeare casts

[403] Scarry, 6.
[404] *Titus,* 5.3.133.
[405] *Titus,* 5.3.130-1.

Marcus as lesser than the other Andronici and reinforces the value of corporeal experience as an element of familial identity.

The corporeal empathy missing from Marcus' misreadings of Lavinia is instead legible in Titus' relationship with his daughter. After deconstructing the blazon tradition to expose its erosion of corporeal autonomy in the subject, Shakespeare writes Titus with an eagerness to adapt Marcus' otherwise self-serving, inadequate language into an accessible mode of communication. The corporeal language Titus offers Lavinia situates her as an active participant in both the conversation and the construction of her own identity. By creating space for Lavinia within the conversation, Shakespeare resolves Marcus' silencing objectification into an adaptive acknowledgment of Lavinia's ongoing post-traumatic autonomy.

Handless Character: Adaptive Autonomy

In 1588, Dutch engraver Hendrick Glotzius created an emotive image of his own disembodied right hand which Karim-Cooper rightly describes as a "self-portrait." She argues, "Glotzius's drawing reminds us to what extent the hand was a symbol of the self in this period; it signified one's character as well as their social and intellectual identity."[406] The term "character" contains multifaceted value, referring to the uniqueness of both lettering and identity, throughout discussions of selfhood and handwriting.

Shakespeare takes advantage of these shared meanings by punning on the term. In *Hamlet*, an exchange between Claudius and Laertes over the author of a letter links handwriting to selfhood. Laertes asks, "Know you the hand?" to which the king replies, "'Tis

[406] Karim-Cooper, 12.

Hamlet's character."[407] Karim-Cooper credits the corporeal hand with the selfhood implied by the exchange, arguing, "one's handwriting is an extension of the hand and thereby a symbol of the self."[408] The hand is invested with not only selfhood, but agency and intellect. Alongside Smith's notions of the "making and knowing" [409] surgical hand, Karim-Cooper adds "the inherent relationship between acquiring knowledge, skill, memory, and the hand."[410] In *Titus,* Shakespeare subverts these values ascribed to the hand in extremes. As previously analyzed in Titus' amputation, the tokenization of the severed hand concentrates and amplifies the part's meaning. In Lavinia, however, Shakespeare takes the opposite route by challenging the necessity of the hand in the formation and illustration of identity.

Locating handwriting as a site of selfhood places Lavinia at a vantage point for identifying corporeal meaning. Marcus, still unable to read Lavinia's unspeakable pain despite her expressive non-verbal corporeal presences, requires her to transfer her meaning into legible text. Guiding a staff in his mouth through the sand with his feet, Marcus explains, "I here have writ my name without the help of any hand at all."[411] Lavinia responds to the innovation by forming a handless handwriting. In doing so, Lavinia overleaps the conduit of the hand to achieve the dual characterization of self implicated by handwriting nonetheless.

By removing the body part traditionally recognized as a symbol of selfhood and agency, Shakespeare sets up an expectation that the mutilated Lavinia will, in turn, lose those aspects of her character along with the stolen parts which physically and symbolically enable them. Instead, Shakespeare subverts the tradition of the hand by transferring Lavinia's identity onto other adapted parts of her body in the absence of hands. Rather than prescribing

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[407] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet,* ed. Neil Taylor and Ann Thompson (London: Arden, 2006) 4.7.49.
[408] Karim-Cooper, 208.
[409] Smith, 85.
[410] Karim-Cooper, 38.
[411] *Titus,* 4.1.79.

concrete meaning to a single body part, Shakespeare makes meaning in the body fluid and adaptable. Karim-Cooper suggests that "hands are always ghosting, then, when handwriting in the form of letters appears on stage."[412] Lavinia's hands ghost alongside her present body when she writes her letter in the sandy plot. In doing so, she retains her autonomy by refusing to become the passive object implied by her missing corporeal tools of action.

It is worth briefly leaving Lavinia here to address an instance of "ghosting" hands manifesting corporeally in performance. In her 2017 production, McIntyre made a subtle but powerful choice which echoed, in the final act of the play, a visceral reminder of the hand amputation executed two acts prior. The first appearance of the mad Titus in Act 5 occurs, in the original stage directions, when "*They knock, and TITUS opens his study door.*"[413] In 1767, Edward Capell updated this direction to specify an entrance "above" on the basis that the door indicates the use of the discovery space.[414] Bate further extrapolates these directions into "*aloft with papers*" at his door.[415] McIntyre exploits the ambiguity of the entrance to leverage the viscerality in Titus' announcement: "See here in bloody lines I have set down."[416] While the dialogue specifies the sanguineous ink, the sparce stage direction leaves the canvas, which Bate suggests as "papers," open to interpretation.

The act of writing in blood melds Karim-Cooper's ghosted hand with the visceral, but the McIntyre production took the opportunity of the stage direction's ambiguity to match the visceral extremities of the play by resurrecting the ghost into a full-blown zombie. Rather than waving a bloody leaf of paper, David Troughton's Titus emerged with characters etched into the rotting remains of his own severed hand. The "bloody lines" were not simply a

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[412] Karim-Cooper, 208.
[413] *Titus,* collation line 8.1, 253.
[414] William Shakespeare, *Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies*, ed. Edward Capell (London: The Strand, 1767-8).
[415] *Titus,* 5.2.8.1.
[416] *Titus,* 5.2.14.

displacement of his own internal blood, but an exposure of the interior visceral self still contained in the severed part. The character of his handwriting carved into this tokenized fragment of himself literalizes the investment of character into the corporeal flesh.

The use of the hand rather than a paper also creates an opportunity for a grotesque attempt at corporeal reintegration, an option foregone to Lavinia in the complete absence of her stolen parts. By writing into his own hand, Titus is afforded the reassertion of his bodily autonomy. While his attached hand still allows him to write, his detached one reasserts a new active purpose by ascending from functionless object into the platform for written agency.[417] Lavinia's handwriting, whilst affording her communication, remains handless and mediated by the input of the men around her.

In her dismembered state, Lavinia embodies a form of corporeal autonomy that tends to be overshadowed by critical analyses of the fragmented female form as a symbolic object. Tricomi uses Lavinia's violation as a stand-in for "the violation of Rome and of all civilized value," even going so far as to employ the language of pregnancy to homogenize Lavinia's whole character into "this enlarged conception of violation."[418] David Willbern expressly dodges Lavinia's corporeality by prioritizing the pit "considered symbolically" as "almost anatomical."[419] Whilst imbuing the pit with her displaced anatomy, Willbern's reading disregards Lavinia's dismembered corpus as an accumulation of "a great deal of symbolic significance." This symbolic interpretation foregoes Lavinia's status as a character within the play to instead transcend metatheatrically into a representation of "the unconscious proximities of sexuality, rape, death, and dismemberment on which the play builds."[420]

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[417] See Katherine Rowe, *Dead Hands: Fictions of Agency, Renaissance to Modern* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).
[418] Tricomi, "The Aesthetics of Mutilation," 235.
[419] David Willbern, "Rape and Revenge in *Titus Andronicus*," *English Literary Renaissance* 8, no. 2 (January 1978) 170.
[420] Willbern, 172.

Not unlike Coriolanus in the marketplace, the removal of Lavinia's physical agents of voice and action leave her vulnerable to metaphorical interpretation among critics. Karim-Cooper criticizes the reduction of Lavinia into a political trope by readings which frame her as "a sign of the violently fragmented body of Rome" or "embodying the grief and 'suffering' of these patriarchal figures."[421] These readings deflect Lavinia's identity and redistribute her meaning amongst the Roman body politic and the revenge motives of her male family members. Despite the explicit viscerality of her textual body, Lavinia's presence in criticism tends toward what Carol Rutter defines as the "discursive body whose representation is continuously, opportunistically refashioned."[422] While the symbolic implications of Lavinia's suffering on broader political themes contribute crucial layers to *Titus,* these peripheral readings of Lavinia must not be made at the expense of her standing as a character. Although corporeally incomplete, Lavinia maintains an autonomous corporeal selfhood driven by her own experiences of pain, grief, and vengeance.

Lavinia's silent voice is legible in her body language, writing, and physical on-stage presence. In the dramatic medium driven primarily by dialogue, Shakespeare subverts the expectations for a silent female character by enabling her character development to continue unabated despite her sudden cessation of lines. Lavinia enters the stage at the beginning of Act 3 for her father to witness her mutilated state. Even after the focus shifts from Titus' conversation with Lavinia to his deal with Aaron, Lavinia remains on stage for the full duration of the lengthy scene.

Throughout the debates over sacrificial body parts and the grotesque family reunion at the return of Quintus and Martius' heads, Lavinia is given a participatory presence. Her part

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[421] Karim-Cooper, 223.
[422] Carol Chillington Rutter, *Enter the Body: Women and Representation on Shakespeare's Stage* (London: Routledge, 2001) 116.

in the scene is neither passive nor ornamental. With the support of her family, Lavinia is consistently acknowledged and included in the action. Lucius offers, "Ah, my Lavinia, I will wipe thy cheeks,"[423] and Titus sees her body language: "What, wouldst thou kneel with me?"[424] Just as the silent character begins to fade into the background, Shakespeare subtly reinforces her presence with moments of non-verbal communications.

Lavinia's active presence is not only palpable, but thematically crucial when she is "employed" by her father to carry his severed hand from the stage.[425] As Titus carries a head in his remaining hand, he tasks her, "Bear thou my hand, sweet wench, between thy teeth."[426] In another instance of adaptive agency, Lavinia foregoes the necessity of hands to literally carry out her familial loyalty. This constitutes one of many "prosthetic means" by which Lavinia surpasses spectacle and becomes what Karim-Cooper describes as "a woman who demonstrates how the body can transcend dismemberment."[427] In terms of the broader relationship between part and whole, the image of Titus and Lavinia removing hands and heads from the stage also engages Hillman and Mazzio's critical stance that "if there is always a tension between part and whole, it is because neither can do without the other." As their bodies missing parts bear parts missing bodies, Titus and Lavinia highlight the interconnectedness of severed parts.

The prioritization of Lavinia's body language over speech addresses the body's capacity to communicate unspeakable suffering. Aebischer identifies Shakespeare's "consistent portrayal of the inadequacy of language in the face of such violence." In doing so, Aebischer argues, Shakespeare "lays greater stress on physical expressions of suffering than

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[423] *Titus,* 3.1.143
[424] *Titus,* 3.1.210
[425] *Titus,* 3.1.282
[426] *Titus,* 3.1.283
[427] Karim-Cooper, 9.

on attempts to verbalise pain."[428] The "unsharability" argued by Scarry is therefore somewhat refuted by the language of the body in Lavinia's suffering. The absence of a tongue to speak or hands to write is made moot by the limitations of language. Instead, Lavinia adapts her communicative mode into corporeal presences directed toward an equally adaptive father eager to interpret. Her pain is shared through the visceral presences of her exposed bodily interior through her flowing blood and, in some performances, including McIntyre's production, the proto-linguistic guttural scream at her butchered rapists.

Investment, Absorption, and Transference: The Medicinal and Magical Currency of the Body Part

Alongside their diverse, often opposing, exploratory techniques, art and science invest distinct capital in the cultural currency of the body. In the anatomy theatre, the primary currency of dissection is knowledge. But in the dramatic theatre, the more valuable commodity produced by corporeal fragmentation is emotion. Neither knowledge nor emotion is more valuable than the other in direct comparison, but the priority of each in their respective fields makes both coordinately valuable to the interdisciplinary development of the body. Andrew Sofer identifies the power of the early modern body prop as "a mobile object lesson intended to reshape the spectator's emotional response."[429] This emotional currency is especially productive in cases, unlike Lavinia's, where the severed part remains on stage.

Lucy Munro argues that "the symbolic potential of blood or limb is always to the fore, but we are also simultaneously aware of its association with the raw physicality of the bleeding or damaged body."[430] Whilst tied to the dismembered character by synecdochical

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[428] Aebischer, 49.
[429] Andrew Sofer, *The Stage Life of Props* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003) 76.
[430] Lucy Munro, "'They Eat Each Other's Arms': Stage Blood and Body Parts," in *Shakespeare's and the Effects of Performance*, ed. Tiffany Stern and Farah Karim-Cooper (London: Arden, 2014) 92.

reference, the isolated body part fluctuates between states of subjectivity and objectivity. The body fragment is part of a previously whole character imbued with identity and still containing wisps of individual vital spirit, but its isolation from the body which distilled that spirit objectifies the part into a token of emotional currency.[431]

Alongside Titus' hand, the McIntyre production invoked both subject and object values in staging Quintus and Martius' posthumous physiognomies. As Titus' relationship with his sons tragically descends into a father's relationship with his sons' severed heads, the engagement with corporeal remains situates the characters' selfhoods within visceral vessels even as they are removed from the bodily whole. McIntyre's production foregrounded the subjectivity retained in the severed heads by drawing attention to the impact of physiognomies.

Cashing in on the horror trope of the hidden monster, the revelation of Quintus and Martius' heads tends to be abstracted into bloodied canvas bags. The abstraction works on the imagination of the spectator to allow their fears to project onto the unseen horror a personalized image worse than any prop might attempt to replicate.[432] McIntyre foregoes this manipulation of the spectator's expectations to prioritize the identities of the beheaded. Instead of opaque, blood-stained canvas, McIntyre presents the severed heads in clear plastic bags. As a result, Quintus and Martius' physiognomies were preserved in their corporeal fragments, enabling the continuity of their selfhoods to remain invested in their viscera and propagate the emotional value of the corporeal currency.

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[431] Karin Sellberg, "'Bloody Business:' Passions and Regulation of Sanguinity in William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *King Lear*," in *Fluid Bodies and Bodily Fluids in Premodern Europe* ed. Anne M. Scott and Michael David Barbezat (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2019) 119.

[432] See Noel Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror or Paradoxes of the Heart* (London: Routledge, 1990) for more on the categorization of severed parts as monstrosity, imagery of unseen horrors, and "conflicting emotions of disgust and care" toward the declining health of a loved one.

The relative subjectivity or objectivity of a body part is dependent on the meaning it carries in isolation. Physiologically, the isolated body part is arguably an object because its removal from the whole body negates its capacity to participate in homeostatic function. In terms of function and form, its shift from physiological component of a system to functionless anatomical fragment situates the body part as an object devoid of meaning. However, the meanings invested into body parts (attached or otherwise) are not limited to the utilitarian definitions of medicine. The investigation of the body in non-medical contexts like the arts critically complicates the expectations of form to function relations. A severed head might tell an anatomist how blood is delivered to the brain through the helpfully exposed carotid artery, but the physiognomy of the same pallid visage imparts to a bereaved family member a very different story – one of anguish imprinted on a history of living memories.

As seen in the artistry of Vesalius' *Fabrica*, medicine cannot afford to limit its readings of the body to unemotional technicality. Shakespeare's engagement with severed parts throughout *Titus* explores the body's capacity to carry subjectivity in its fragments. Although homeostatic purpose is lost in the dismemberment process, Hillman and Mazzio's "density of implication" identifies the compact layers of emotional, symbolic, synecdochic, and psychological purposes which replace it.

In 2000, a study published in the *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* utilized neutral facial expressions in photographs to determine the extent to which personality traits are encoded in the face. Researchers Ran Hassin and Yaacov Trope specify a delineation between the pure "physiognomic inferences" innately legible in the neutral face and the "thin slices of expressive behavior" otherwise interpreted in live face-to-face encounters. Hassin and Trope clarify, "Whereas thin slices are slices of *behaviors*, the experimental study of

physiognomy examines the effects of *static* facial signs."[433] Their stress upon the static face as the subject of this research makes it an apt foundation for reading the communicative capacities of the post-mortem physiognomy.

Hassin and Trope argue, "Considerable experimental evidence suggests that people can and do infer personality traits from faces."[434] Without supplemental body language or behavioral information, however, the physiognomy of the severed head falls strictly within the process identified as "reading into faces" (RIF) whereby "information about personality changes the perception of faces."[435] Within the parameters of the study, RIF was examined in order to determine whether people attributed facial features to a person based on a foreknowledge of their character. The studies found that "data about 'the person behind the face' may be used in the perception and interpretation of the face."[436] As Titus gazes into Quintus and Martius' eyes, a psychological process takes place whereby the father's familiarity with the character behind the isolated physiognomies of his sons allows him to perceive and interpret meaning.

Whilst the fictional character of Titus only has as much psychological processing as is inherent in his text, bringing this study to the play offers a valuable insight into why the scene works. Rather than attempting to incongruously map modern psychology onto early modern understanding, reading Titus' experience of his son's severed heads in the context of RIF processing legitimates the link between physiognomy and identity through interdisciplinary, transhistorical evidence. Shakespeare's craftsmanship and Hassin and Trope's findings are

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[433] Ran Hassin, "Facing Faces: Studies on the Cognitive Aspects of Physiognomy," *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* 78, no. 5 (New York: 2000) 838.
[434] Ibid, 838.
[435] Ibid, 839.
[436] Ibid.

not directly applicable to one another, but instead constitute complementary data points on the centuries-long study of the human visage.

The severed head's capacity to communicate via the preservation of its physiognomy is made explicit in the third act of *Titus*. The sight of Martius and Quintus' severed heads proves so harrowing to their father that it triggers an emotional hallucination which partially revivifies their voices in Titus' mind. He admits, "These two heads do seem to speak to me and threat me I shall never come to bliss till all these mischiefs be returned again even in their throats that hath committed them."[437] A conceptual detachment takes place as Titus refers ambiguously to "these two heads" rather than specifically identifying his sons. Nonetheless, the specificity of their familiar faces does not require explicit acknowledgement to deliver the impact of the physiognomies. Titus' corporeal location of mischief "even in their throats" also draws attention to the exposed organs of speech, creating a visceral impetuous for Chiron and Demetrius' specific executions which, in turn, reflect their visceral silencing of Lavinia.

Despite Titus' linguistic attempt to deny the identities "these two heads" encapsulate, the memory of his murdered sons is manifested in the visceral remains of identities still encased in their lifeless faces. More than passive objects abstractly representative of loss, the heads of Martius and Quintus retain their RIF legibility such that the interpretive capacities of their grieving father give voice to their neutral faces. After a prayer with "one hand up to heaven"[438] whilst the other is delivered to his tormenters, all the "wretched tears"[439] shed for the Andronici are finally used up and passive grief evolves into active madness via the catalyst of this grotesque conversation between father and the remains of his sons.

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[437] *Titus,* 3.1.272-5.
[438] *Titus,* 3.1.207.
[439] *Titus,* 3.1.209.

Titus concludes the exchange with an explicit call to action: "Come, let me see what task I have to do."[440] This active turn comes moments after the devastated father lets out an unsettling laugh. The incorporation of comedy into the latter half of the play serves as a deconstruction of emotional excess. Jonathan Bate argues that the presence of comedy is not simply a parody, but rather a tool to "blur the conventional distinctions between tragedy and comedy, grieving and laughing."[441] Bate measures the point at which emotional excess breaks through "the decorums of dramatic expectation"[442] on a threshold of accumulated body parts. In an effort to summarize Titus' woes, Bate asks:

> What do you do when twenty-one of your sons have been killed in battle, you've killed the twenty-second in a fit of pique, your daughter has been raped and had her hands cut off and her tongue cut out, two further sons have been wrongly accused of murdering your son-in-law and the remaining one sentenced to exile, you've been told that the two who are condemned will be reprieved if you chop off your hand, and you do so, only to have the hand and the heads of the two sons sent back to you in scorn?

Bate's tally is an effective introductory overview of the critical plot points meant to highlight the relative absurdity of the tragedies wrought upon Titus throughout the play. But from a corporeal standpoint, Bate's list also foregrounds the distinct viscerality of each accumulating moment. The build-up of anguish runs on a scale from broad, unseen and unspecified battlefield death, to the increasingly condensed impacts of precise mutilations until the climax of woe comes to a literal head in two precise physiognomies asking their father for vengeance.

Dismemberment is distinct from death in its personal specificity, enabling Hillman and Mazzio's "density of implication." The sons who died in battle did so under the

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[440] *Titus,* 3.1.276.
[441] Jonathan Bate, "Introduction," in *Titus Andronicus* ed. Jonathan Bate (London: Arden, 1995) 11.
[442] Ibid.

expectations of the soldier, their physical absence from the narrative making their deaths more conceptual than material. The visceral presence of Martius and Quintus' severed heads, especially upon the promise of their safe return, is therefore not an isolated spectacle of gore, but rather the maximum point on a scale of corporeal destruction configured to juxtapose faceless death with literal face-to-face confrontation.

The severed heads demarcate the play's generic tipping point into tragi-comedy by elevating the viscera from isolated spectacles of prop gags to conceptually resurrected characters capable of affecting both character development and narrative action. Titus's conversation with Martius and Quintus reinforces the subjectivity within their corporeal form as their fragmented corpses retain the power to catalyze their father's character development. The lingering sense of displacement created by Titus' non-specific phrasing, "these two heads,"[443] is coupled with an emotional response driven by physiognomic interpretation, leaving the heads suspended between states of generalized object and character-specific subject.

The investment of identity in severed body parts destabilizes the subject/object binary by condensing otherwise centralized notions of essence into peripheral fragments. As previously explored throughout *Coriolanus,* essentialism and constructivism both implicate the corpus.[444] While essentialism may be read corporeally as a prioritization of a natural core within the bodily interior, Coriolanus proves the importance of constructivism's agency by willfully reorganizing his exterior into a reflection of the interior. Throughout *Titus,* physically dislocated corporeal fragments carry essential identity by maintaining an

[443] *Titus,* 3.1.272
[444] Mark Olssen, "Radical Constructivism and Its Failings: Anti-Realism and Individualism," *British Journal of Educational Studies* 44, no. 3 (1996): 275.

association with the natural core from which it has been removed whilst simultaneously taking on new meanings as an isolated object.

In early modern medicine, this detachable and transferrable nature of essence is manifested physiologically in the form of vital spirit. In his 1689 *Astrological Practice of Physick*, Joseph Blagrave combines medical and spiritual theories to provide cures grounded in medicine and magic. Although Blagrave's publication comes nearly a century after *Titus*, it responds to an ongoing tradition of pre-disciplinary methods of physic throughout the early modern period. As a scientific assessment of these blended methodologies, Blagrave's work offers a retrospective survey of concepts and techniques previously established and disseminated during the late sixteenth century.

The transferable power of fragmented corporeal material is evident throughout Blagrave's cures, especially in vital spirit's capacity to tailor physic to the identity of the patient. His "Sympathetical Powder" operates on the theory that the individuated essence of vital spirit links viscera to the body from which the material originated. Blagrave's "Powder for the curing of Distempers and Infirmities; especially such, wherein the Blood and vital Spirits are concerned" specifies the necessity for the patient's blood to serve as the active ingredient responsible for catalyzing the curative effect on the body:

> And when you are minded to cure thereby, you must warm the Powder very well over a few Coals, and while 'tis warm, put a small quantity of the Patient's Blood into it, and mix it very well together, always keeping it warm; and so make it up in a little bag, and let the Patient wear it next their Skin, that so it may always be kept warm.[445]

[445] Joseph Blagrave, *Blagrave's Astrological Practice of Physick* (London: The Bear and Star in St. Paul's Churchyard, 1689) 100.

The stress upon the warmth of the blood, especially by proximity to the heat generated by the movement of the heart, illustrates the active properties of vital spirit and blood outside the body. It is necessary to keep external blood as warm as internal blood in order to maximize the potential energy of the former. The external blood within the bag is effectively a removed bodily fragment capable of being both activated by and affective to interior physiological processes. The fact that it must be "the Patient's Blood" exemplifies the extent to which specific identities are encoded in the body via the vital spirit. This use of vital spirit as a transferrable carrier of identity also enables body objects, like Blagrave's bag of powder and blood, to retain an active, arguably supernatural, link to the whole body upon which the object can affect change.

The investment of visceral meaning in artificial models of the body factors heavily into the fear of illusion underscoring the history of Elizabethan drama. Andrew Gurr recounts the views upheld in anti-theatrical sermons of the time: "Like witchcraft, play-acting was a deliberately deceptive business, and so must be the Devil's work."[446] But the false identities of deceptive actors are not the only aspects of theatrical spectacle verging on satanic ritual. The investment of meaning into an image or model of a body and its parts is an explicit feature of early modern witchcraft, itself a method of physic. Blagrave addresses the evils and the benefits of witchcraft in tandem, offering cures based in the magical theories by which the diseases may have been incurred. He prefaces one of his recorded purgations of evil with a brief description of the witchcraft responsible for sharp pains, especially of the peripheral limbs:

> The way which the Witches usually take for to afflict Man or Beast in this kind, is as I conceive, done by Image or Model made in the likeness of that Man or Beast they intend to work mischief upon, and by the subtilty of the Devil made at such

[446] Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1574-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) 7.

> hours and times, when it shall work most powerful upon them by thorn, pin, or needle pricked into that Limb or part of the Image, which answereth to that Limb or Member of the Body afflicted.[447]

Blagrave's account of the methods of witchcraft calls attention to a link between the body and its image for which the former answers to the latter. While perhaps not constructed under the same satanic conditions as the witch's model, a theatrical body prop shares as much with the corporeally linked image by virtue of audience investment in the dramatic illusion. When applied to the severed body parts on stage, the suspension of disbelief which allows spectators to enter the dramatic diegesis transforms the isolated props into meaningful surrogates for the actor's limbs. A similar quality of magic seems to work on the theatrical spectator as an "Image or Model made in the likeness of that Man or Beast" wields the power to affect emotional change on the spectator, the investment of which affects change on the identity of the character from whose body the model is perceived to have been severed. The same process which transforms the textual character into the corporeal actor also imbues the body prop with visceral value.

Frances Teague refers to a "dislocated function" of stage props whereby "the fiction of the play asserts the reality of what is done with the properties."[448] In the case of body props, part of the "dislocated function" engaged by the spectator's suspension of disbelief is a connection to the whole character for which the body parts synecdochally stand-in. By virtue of their isolation, however, the body fragments mix with external influences beyond homeostatic purpose to become objects of economic, political, and emotional currency. Meanwhile, the vital spirit within the isolated part resists generalization and maintains the

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[447] Blagrave, 89-90.
[448] Frances Teague, *Shakespeare's Speaking Properties* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1991) 17-18.

fragment's specific connection to the individual body from which it was severed. The tokenization of Titus' hand as well as the hallucinatory dialogue instigated by the physiognomies of his sons therefore relies, not only on a diegetic suspension of disbelief within the theatrical mode, but on a formal understanding of the physiological properties of the vital spirit.

The significance of a severed part's corporeal and characteristic origin in both theatrical and medical usages is more clearly illustrated via an anomaly of dismemberment on the early modern stage. John Webster's Jacobean revenge tragedy, *The Duchess of Malfi*, is known for its visceral brutality, an established feature of the dramatic genre.[449] However, in the two decades between *Titus* and *Malfi*, Webster's work evolved dismemberment tropes into a complex subversion of audience expectations for body props. Amid manifold violence throughout, a diegetically fake wax hand enters the narrative as a trick to fool the Duchess into believing her husband is dead. Even outside the diegesis, the stage direction, "*Gives her a dead man's hand,*" extends the ambiguity of the prop to blur the lines between corporeal subject and object in stagecraft.[450] Rather than specifying that the prop is a wax hand, Webster leaves readers to assume, along with the Duchess, that the prop is intended to represent a real hand. The overlapping theatrical illusions operate simultaneously on both the Duchess and the spectator until after she has left the stage and Ferdinand enters to reveal, "These presentations are but framed in wax."[451]

Karim-Cooper argues that "[*Malfi*] reminds audiences how hands can absorb and register character and identity, even when they are detached."[452] The *Malfi* wax hand is unique in its multi-faceted verisimilitude as it ascends from non-diegetic stage prop to

[449] John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, ed. Leah S. Marcus (London: Arden, 2020).
[450] *Malfi*, 4.1.44.
[451] *Malfi*, 4.1.110.
[452] Karim-Cooper, 204.

diegetic reality and back again to prop, this time within the diegesis of the play. This particular severed hand raises the question as to whether the object is only conducive to identity absorption because it never originated from a whole body and therefore has no synecdochic base or natural essence to refer back to.

The wax hand that has always existed in isolation is already whole. Containing no vital spirit from any source heart, the fake hand operates as an empty template acquiring meanings relevant to its recipients as it moves through the play. Karim-Cooper identifies its meanings by character, arguing that it "embodies Ferdinand's misery, his psychotic fantasies of dismemberment and his incestuous need to *take hold* of and tyrannize his sister." Meanwhile, "it absorbs the Duchess's identity" by reflecting her isolated state "'cut off' as it were from her beloved."[453] The ability of the subjectively empty wax hand to fit the identities of its recipients may be read in terms of modern medicine as a kind of donor organ.

In modern medicine, the primary complication in organ donation is the compatibility of parts. The danger of rejection is a feature of the immune system whereby the recipient body recognizes the unfamiliar donor cells as a potential threat.[454] In order to prevent the recipient's body from attacking the donor organ, immunosuppressant ("anti-rejection") medication is necessary to reduce damage by the native immune system.[455] The immune system's recognition of self and other is a physiological mechanism of corporeal selfhood imbedded in the body's natural defenses. The most promising solution to the problem of transplant rejection is the autograft method whereby native cells are harvested from the patient, proliferated, and applied to a decellularized protein scaffold. There, the cells are

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[453] Ibid.
[454] Fadi G. Issa, Ryoichi Goto, and Kathryn J. Wood, "Immunological Principles of Acute Rejection," in *Organ Transplantation: A Clinical Guide*, ed. Joren C. Madsen and Andrew Klein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) 9.
[455] Ibid, 15.

stimulated to regrow the patient's own replacement part.[456] The process is a biomedical union of essentialist and constructivist modes of corporeality. The biopsied native cells provide the naturally occurring essence (arguably "vital spirit" in early modern terms) to a literally constructed body part which is simultaneously both externally engendered by manual craftsmanship and borne of the natural generative properties of the bodily interior. The engineered tissue is both self and other.

Although medical pursuits of the early modern period had an extremely limited concept of tissue regeneration and no means of procuring evidence of a self-aware immune system, the concept of reconstructed selves in body prosthetics plays a significant role in early modern body discourse.[457] Webster's wax hand is the constructed scaffold free from any original essence and therefore capable of taking on the personal meanings of its various hosts throughout the play. Its waxen verisimilitude "can absorb and register character"[458] without rejection because, like decellularized biomedical scaffolding, there are no remnants of others against which the body must defend itself.

Theatrical body objects occupy an unusual space between prop and character. Outside the dramatic diegesis, the models representing the severed heads, hands, and tongues of *Titus* may be simple objects of wax or plastic. But when the audience includes them within their diegetic suspension of disbelief, the body objects are invested with meaning via spectatorial processes of expectation, association, and emotional affect. The spectator's willfulness to participate in the illusion of dismemberment on-stage links the body prop with the actor's

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[456] Katie Bush and Arthur A. Gertzman, "Process Development and Manufacturing of Human and Animal Acellular Dermal Matrices," in *Skin Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine*, ed. Mohammad Z. Albanna (London: Academic Press, 2016) 87.

[457] See Naomi Baker, "'Happy, and without a name': prosthetic identities on the early modern stage," *Textual Practice* 30, no. 7 (November 2016): 1309-1326 for her analysis of early modern characters with prosthetic limbs as transcendent of normative identities, making both body and identity inherently prosthetic features of the self.

[458] Karim-Cooper, 204.

body, transforming the part from a representational object into a severed piece of the subject. In this sense, the spectator invests the character's vital spirit into the body prop. If the subjectivity of a character may be measured by its capacity to dynamically interact with and affect emotional change on other characters as well as the audience, then spectatorial investment and the visceral catalysts for emotional change throughout *Titus* situate the severed body parts as characters.

Wholeness in Miniature: A Defense of the Fly

These iconic body parts, so crucial to the narrative of *Titus* that they transcend prop objectivity, tend to overshadow one prop within the play which is a whole body in itself. During its brief moment upon the stage, the body of the murdered fly passes through all stages of objectivity and subjectivity, wholeness and dismemberment, prop and character. This critically baffling object-character-prop is invested with a slew of meanings as it stands in for and absorbs the destabilizing climax of Titus' pain.

Earlier in this chapter, Marcus' uncomfortable emblazoning of the freshly mutilated Lavinia raised the question of whether pain is expressible through any linguistic mode. As we have seen, Scarry has emphatically argued that an integral aspect of the experience of pain is its "unsharability," a concept synonymous with a conceptual transference explicitly linked to corporeal experience. The transference of pain itself may be realistically impossible, but the diegetic suspension of disbelief achievable in the theatre offers a rare space for the collective distribution of human experience.

The investment of meaning into severed body parts by both audience and actors operates on a shared belief, or at least expectation, that the prop does not simply represent pain, but diegetically creates it. The question therefore stands whether or not *Titus*

successfully expresses pain. Scarry offers a benchmark for determining the answer: "Either it remains inarticulate or else the moment it first becomes articulate it silences all else: the moment language bodies forth the reality of pain, it makes all further statements and interpretations seem ludicrous and inappropriate."[459] If there is one artifact of the Shakespearean canon which makes its stand upon a critical tradition of being called "ludicrous"[460] and "inappropriate,"[461] that play is *Titus Andronicus* and that scene is the death of the fly.

The second scene of Act 3 appears only in the Folio, an awkward afterthought wedged into place with Titus and Marcus having to re-enter the stage immediately after having exited in the previous scene. The strangeness of 3.2 permeates all levels from its unusual textual craftsmanship to its tone and diegetic content. Due to its absence from the quarto editions and stylistic divergence from the rest of the text, the fly scene is generally accepted as a non-Shakespearean addition.

Gary Taylor regards 3.2 as "a 'new addition' commissioned by an acting company for a revival" and concludes that the scene "cannot be convincingly attributed to either Peele or Shakespeare."[462] In his revised edition of the play, Jonathan Bate agrees with Gary Taylor and Doug Duhaime's findings that the insertion for the act division structure aligns with the mid-1608 move to the Blackfriars playhouse, where practical breaks in the action were necessary to accommodate candle wick trimming. Comparative stylistic analyses of "unique

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[459] Scarry, 60.
[460] Joseph E. Kramer, "*Titus Andronicus*: The 'Fly-Killing' Incident," *Shakespeare Studies* 5 (January 1969): 13. Kramer refers to the redundancy of entrances at the start of 3.2. as evidence of "awkward planning and ludicrous staging."
[461] Jack E. Reese, "The Formalization of Horror in *Titus Andronicus,*" *Shakespeare Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (Winter 1970): 78. Reese explicitly omits "the language of the play" from his discussion on the basis that it is "inappropriate to, and detracts one's attention from, the shocking events being portrayed."
[462] Gary Taylor, Terri Bourus, Rory Loughnane, Anna Pruitt, and Francis X Connor, "Introduction to *Titus Andronicus,*" in *New Oxford Shakespeare Critical Reference Edition,* ed. Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus, and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017) 128.

parallels of word collocations" reveal evidence of John Fletcher and Thomas Middleton, contributing strong theories to the authorship debate despite lingering uncertainty beyond the generally accepted basis that the scene is not Shakespeare.[463]

The fly scene's exclusion from Shakespearean authorship combines with its tonal difficulties for performance such that the addition is often cut from productions, leaving the scene a kind of textual amputation. The debate over its authorship tends to eclipse critical analysis of the scene's diegetic impact when it is considered as a continuous part of the play. Regardless of its authorship, the content of the fly scene represents a crucial incident for the relationship of part and whole bodies in the construction of subjectivity on the early modern stage.

Joseph E. Kramer's article "*Titus Andronicus*: The 'Fly Killing' Incident," considers the production requirements of the scene, focusing on the "spectacle in terms of props and ceremony"[464] as well as "the structural pattern of the play."[465] On the basis that the scene is "purely emblematic," "derivative for the period," and "ludicrous,"[466] Kramer concludes, "the scene represents a later addition to the text and is probably not by Shakespeare, but by someone superficially clever, though hardly precise about his job."[467] While Kramer's authorial claim is chronologically valid in terms of the scene's absence from the quartos, his complete disregard of the narrative content of the scene leaves room for further investigation. Despite the article's title, Kramer spends surprisingly little time unpacking the implications of the fly's murder. Regardless of 3.2's dubious authorship, the seemingly incongruous turns

[463] Jonathan Bate, "Reconsiderations and Reinventions," in *Titus Andronicus: Revised Edition,* ed. Jonathan Bate (London: Arden, 2018) 146.
[464] Kramer, 13.
[465] Ibid, 14.
[466] Ibid, 9-10.
[467] Ibid, 18.

of tone, character, and narrative action in the scene constitute a valid part of *Titus*'s complete, transhistorical textual body and are worthy of closer inspection.

On the surface, Titus' garbled syntax may seem to betray a clumsy attempt to write generalized madness. However, the specificity of Titus' linguistic breakdown may offer an example of Garber's corporeal semantics in which meaning is conveyed via the dismemberment and reorganization of linguistic joints.[468] By redefining the subject of his sentence half-way through speaking it, Titus converts the dismemberment of his body into a dismemberment of meaning. In doing so, the extreme depths of his grief are made legible in the inadequacy of language to properly convey them. He loses track of the subject in his meandering lament:

> This poor right hand of mine
> Is left to tyrannize upon my breast,
> Who, when my heart, all mad with misery,
> Beats in this hollow prison of my flesh,
> Then thus I thump it down.[469]

The sentence traces a relationship between hand and heart with Titus' remaining right hand serving as the subject. However, by the end of the sentence, the subject responsible for reprimanding the mad and miserable heart shifts to "I." The result of this seemingly nonsensical confusion is a poignant integration of body and self. Titus' right hand becomes him entirely as it takes on the job of physically beating his frenzied heart back into place. The autonomic actions of the grieved heart are assuaged by the somatic intervention of the hand. As the last remaining mechanism of control in his life, Titus invests his whole identity in the poor right hand and its capacity to rally against the heart whose unrelenting involuntary physiological processes reflect the uncontrollable and overwhelming nature of grief.

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[468] Garber, 45.
[469] *Titus,* 3.2.7.

Such a poignant account of visceral emotions and corporeally fragmented selfhood would seem to set a stable tragic tone for the remainder of 3.2. But Titus has proven already that at the most extreme edge of grief is a passage back to laughter. Not twenty lines later, the hand which brought him control and a sense of selfhood suddenly becomes the butt of an absurd joke: "O handle not the theme, to talk of hands, lest we remember still that we have none."[470] In response to Marcus' earnest concern for Lavinia and perhaps to his own convoluted allusions to the *Aeneid*, Titus cuts off the somber exchange to foreground the absurdity of their predicament with a weak pun. The uncomfortably funny joke derails the grand classical parallels and leaves the characters stranded in their mundane parody of a family dinner where the biggest conflict is not the burning of Rome but the task of feeding a daughter with no hands or tongue.

The central feature of 3.2 is not just the uncomfortable dinner, but the parody of death which takes place on the table. Without warning, Marcus suddenly reaches out and strikes at his dish with a knife. When Titus asks him what he has struck, he replies, "At that that I have killed, my lord – a fly."[471] Titus' range of responses to this act which he regards as monstrous and then praiseworthy trace a metaphysical conceit encompassing the value of life, man's place on the Great Chain of Being, and the distinct power of corporeal mutilation.

Kramer argues that the spectacle of a full banquet at 3.2 "would seriously undercut the effectiveness of the novel and spectacular state-Thyestean-Ovidian banquet of the final scene." He even suggests that the banquet at which the fly is murdered "is not even a prolepsis of the final action, so that the principle of analogous action does not at all pertain."[472] But what Kramer sees as a dramaturgical problem counterproductive to the

[470] *Titus*, 3.2.34.
[471] *Titus*, 3.2.53.
[472] Kramer, 13.

effects of the play's conclusion is, in fact, a significant preamble to the absurdity and relative insignificance of Titus' own death.

When read as a parodic parallel to Titus' fate, the death of the fly provides a locus for the re-evaluation of humanity's worth. By situating both the fly and the general at mirrored fatal banquets, a nihilistic equity is drawn between insect and human. The uncomfortable absurdity of death in both scenes simultaneously illustrates the nobility of the fly and the insignificance of man until the Great Chain of Being collapses and the two meet in the middle. This escape from the hierarchy of the Great Chain in favor of man's reintegration into the homogenized cycle of nature will be explored in greater depth in Chapter 4.

From a corporeal standpoint, the body of the fly also participates in the economy of dismemberment integral to the rest of the text. The fly's visceral end is an echo of the previous mutilations still haunting the Andronici. Back home with their remaining family and briefly on reprieve from the brutal game of vengeance, the permanence of Titus and Lavinia's dismemberments are illuminated as more than isolated spectacles of violence. By situating them within a mundane private sphere completely disconnected from the revenge cycle, 3.2 highlights the personal impacts of the play's violence. Titus laments his inability to express himself with basic body language, mourning that he and Lavinia "cannot passionate our tenfold grief with folded arms."[473]

When Lavinia struggles to perform the simple tasks of eating or speaking, she is given space to be the subject of a story about physical disability rather than the object of a violent crime. The scene illustrates the mundane, daily consequences of the violent spectacle to shift the mutilation from a singular act of vengeance by Tamora and her sons into an ongoing process of healing and character development in Titus and Lavinia. This side-story of the

[473] *Titus,* 3.2.6-7.

Andronici family dinner exists outside the machinations of the revenge tragedy cycle. As such, the scene provides a moment to read Titus and Lavinia's corporeal alterations as new aspects of their identities requiring conscientious adjustment. Instead of adding the severed parts to the great tally of vengeance and moving on, 3.2 disrupts the momentum of violence to contemplate its anatomical and physiological effects on daily life.

Within this reading of the scene, the fly would seem to concede to Kramer's shallow assessment of its killing as "purely emblematic"[474] on the basis that it is simply an object which reflects the death of man. The objectified fly was a common element of *memento mori* tradition of the early modern period. In his 1684 *Hesperides,* Robert Herrick published several poems using bees and flies respectively to represent vitality and death. "Upon a Flie" remarks on the double burial of a fly which has been cast in gold and then kept in an ivory box. The fly cast was a popular *memento mori* as the presence of flies around decaying corpses made the creatures a recognizable signifier for death. Herrick's "Corps as bright as burnisht gold"[475] exemplifies the emblematic value of the fly as a mechanism for juxtaposing material values like the luxuriant "Box of Yvorie" with their futility in the face of death and decay.

When compared to the emblematic gilded fly of Herrick's poem, the fly of 3.2 is uniquely literal in its individual specificity and visceral execution. While the appearance of the fly may signal a familiarity with the emblematic fly of *memento mori* tradition, Titus' specification of the particular fly's life, family, and motives lifts it out of the realm of the symbolic. This individualism is reinforced corporeally through Titus' concerted efforts to "insult on him" with his knife. Unlike the gilded fly permanently solidified as a whole

[474] Kramer, 9.
[475] Robert Herrick, *Hesperides* (London: John Williams, 1648) 215.

allegorical object, the physical dismemberment of Titus' fly acknowledges the subjective value of its organic corpus in the dissection process.

Upon Marcus' declaration that he has "but killed a fly," Titus scolds the flippancy with which Marcus regards the act and cultivates an imagined individualism on behalf of the slain creature.

> TITUS: 'But'?
> How if that fly had a father and a mother?
> How would he hang his slender gilded wings
> And buzz lamenting doings in the air.
> Poor harmless fly,
> That with his pretty buzzing melody
> Came here to make us merry, and thou hast killed him.[476]

The parallel between this banquet scene and the final bloodbath is embedded in Titus' primary tool for validating the fly's life: familial relations. By imagining parents who might, like him, mourn the death of a child, Titus creates an identity for the fly in the process of investing his own strife therein. In doing so, Titus enacts a transference of value along the Great Chain of Being which elevates the fly to the status of humanity through the mourning process. At the same time, Titus lowers himself to the creature's level through his shared laments with the fly's imagined father.

In Renaissance philosophy, this freedom of movement along the Great Chain was normally reserved for humanity. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola set humans apart from the hierarchal structure in his 1486 *De hominis dignitate oratio* (Oration on the Dignity of Man). Pico is regarded as "the first philosopher to break the metaphorical chain in order to laud the transcendent abilities of all human beings, exercised through their free will."[477] A century after Pico's alteration to the Great Chain philosophy, Titus' fly extends this freedom of

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[476] *Titus,* 3.2.60-66

[477] Craig Truglia, "Al-Ghazali and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola on the Question of Human Freedom and The Chain of Being," *Philosophy East and West* 60, no. 2 (April 2010) 143.

movement to all members of the chain and, as *Lear* will demonstrate in Chapter 4, enables unrestricted movement upward, beyond humanity's original state, and downward to a reintegration with the lowest creatures in nature.

Titus also situates Marcus' deed as a murder on the basis of the fly's individual value. He gives the fly agency by suggesting that the creature specifically "came here to make us merry" with an autonomous, conscientious motive. These features of individualism in purpose and familial relations build up an identity for the fly so that it shakes off its role as emblematic *memento mori* and ascends to character status. This elevation does more than invert the Great Chain of Being. It also sets up the payoff of Titus' sudden turn against the now fully realized fly character. More specifically, it invests meaning in a corpus before subjecting it to the dismemberment which haunts every corner of the play.

When Marcus eventually joins in with Titus' fly-self constructivism, he reverses Titus' sympathies by removing the mourning father's personal identification with the creature. Marcus replaces the conceptual familial identity with one built on the observable color of the fly: "it was a black ill-favoured fly, like to the empress' Moor."[478] This separation between the identity of the father like Titus and the villain like Aaron disregards Aaron's potential to be a father himself, a dehumanization disproved only a few scenes later by the birth of Aaron's son. The passion with which Titus perceives the fly as himself, his enemy, and its own self comes to a visceral, if miniscule, climax in arguably the most unusual dismemberment to grace the early modern stage.

Although the fly is already dead, Titus resolves to further torment the creature out of displaced vengeance directed toward Aaron. He demands "Give me thy knife; I will insult on

[478] *Titus,* 3.2.67-8.

him"[479] as he strikes at the tiny body. The explicit effort to posthumously "insult" upon a body echoes the socio-political function of public dissection whereby criminal bodies were exposed to the horrors of anatomical investigation as double punishment "more rigorous than death" as well as a warning to any prospective criminals in the audience.[480] When Titus anatomizes the body of the murdered fly, he implicitly validates the fly's identity by making it worthy of the superfluous effort. The dissemination of the fly's body from a whole corpus to a series of disintegrated body objects also evokes the power of criminal corpse pieces which "dying before their time – possessed a still valuable amount of life-energy" popularly suited to folkloric corpse medicine.[481]

In dismembering the fly, Titus also makes explicit the difference between murder and mutilation in terms of corporeal wholeness and its linkage to subjectivity. The initial murder of the fly is surrounded by Titus' constructivist defense of its individual subjectivity. The dismemberment of the corpse, however, traces a dissolution from a whole individual with family, purpose, and imagined backstory into an object broken into parts. The corporeally charged act nonetheless participates in Hillman and Mazzio's "density of implication" as each breaking point is punctuated with personal meaning which reinvests identity into the body of the fly: "There's for thyself, and that's for Tamora."[482] Whether the fly constitutes its own character or merely provides a receptacle for Titus' madness, the explicit engagement with the body of the fly situates the navigation of self and other within a visceral, if miniscule, corpus.

The significance of the fly's physical body is antithetically proven by Marcus' continued inability to recognize the visceral. Like his florid transformation of Lavinia's

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[479] *Titus,* 3.2.72.
[480] Sugg, 19.
[481] Francesca Matteoni, "The Criminal Corpse in Pieces," *Mortality* 21, no. 3 (2016) 199.
[482] *Titus,* 3.2.75.

mutilated body into rhetorical posturing, Marcus pontificates on the fly as though its visceral body were absent. His comment that Titus "takes false shadows for true substances"[483] inversely foregrounds the substantial presence of the tiny mutilated corpse in his attempt to cast it as an illusion. Perhaps the "shadow" to which Marcus refers is the supposed hallucination of Aaron's form in the fly, but his disregard of the body as a trick of the light constitutes a willful blindness to visceral meaning as it was him who not only saw it, but physically killed it with his own hand.

It could be argued that Marcus' comment on the substance of the fly is a quirk of performance practicality. In the spectrum of stage spectacle, the fly is generally considered too small to require a visible prop. However, in McIntyre's production, the fly prop was explicitly displayed for the demonstration of its dismemberment. Troughton's Titus made a point of clearing the whole table so the little black speck, which he began by holding up in the air between his fingertips, would be identifiable against the otherwise spotless surface. He then made two distinct cuts at perpendicular angles and used the edge of the knife to slide each of the four segments away from the center. When the production was filmed for broadcast, the full effect of the fly's dismemberment was enabled by the camera's capacity to overstep the boundaries of theatrical spectatorship and reveal close-up images. Whereas theatre audiences were made to understand the extent of Titus' work via exaggerated movements of the knife, the filmic broadcast version of the production includes a shot which clearly shows the fly broken into four distinct parts.

Whether the fly is afforded a prop in performance or remains relegated to the realm of the imagined, the creature's role is a critical component of the deconstruction of objectivity taking place throughout the play. Amid a slew of dismembered human bodies struggling to

[483] *Titus,* 3.2.81.

reclaim the unstable myth of wholeness, the fly concentrates corporeal selfhood and objectivity into a dense spec of implications. The fly occupies the realm of object in its initial murder, but ascends to subject by virtue of Titus' defense. That subjectivity is then invested in the visceral body of the fly as Titus punitively dismembers it, a posthumous act implicating the presence of corporeal identity remaining in the corpse. In this brief and strange moment, the fly provides a striking microcosm of the corporeality of humanity throughout the play. The fly is a prop, an object, a character, a subject, a son, a villain, and a collection of parts.

Conclusion

The bodies of *Titus* reveal the presence of selfhood embedded in the visceral corpus through character development which depends upon and prioritizes non-standard bodies in various states of dismemberment. By investing character-specific meanings into isolated body parts and imbuing his characters with an acute awareness of their corporeal state, Shakespeare locates identity within the physical body. The myth of wholeness is exposed by the "density of implication" which Hillman and Mazzio read in the isolated part, revealing the multitudes of meaning engendered by the disarticulation of a body which was never whole, but instead an organic compendium of parts. Shakespeare's dramatic reorganization of the body responds to the deconstruction of wholeness taking place in the taxonomies of early modern anatomists.

The strategic contextualization of Titus' hand amputation within a narrative of corporeal agency extends Shakespeare's engagement with contemporary anxieties by addressing the dichotomy of the surgeon. Constructivism in the barbershop made the surgeon a helpful craftsman of identity via the alteration of the corpus at the same time that fears of the exposed bodily interior made him a butcher. By enabling Aaron to shift from villain to

executor of Titus' willful corporeal reorganization and back again, Shakespeare uses the body to catalyze the fluidity of character and reflect public concerns amid major shifts in medical practice. His conversation with his contemporaries extends beyond the medical and into the literary with Lavinia as her mutilation responds to the blazon tradition. By satirically literalizing the fractured female body on which the blazon relies, Shakespeare foregrounds the inadequacy of language. Not unlike his treatment of manipulative body politic rhetoric throughout *Coriolanus,* Shakespeare uses the visceral body to refute literary attempts to express corporeal meaning.

Although her character embodies the consequences of the blazon, Lavinia is neither a personified poem nor a receptacle for men's pain. Her autonomy is rather tied to her non-standard body as she enacts her adaptive corporeal experience in defiance of the bodily tools of agency stolen from her. In Lavinia, Shakespeare crafts a complete character not despite her corporeal fracturing, but through the incorporation of her non-standard body into a new identity. Although his bodily alteration comes from a place of power and choice whilst hers is enforced, Titus and Lavinia grow together in their mutual support of one another through their recognition of the shifts in identity which follow their visceral metamorphoses.

The tokenization of body parts on stage during and after the scenes of violence balance Shakespeare's engagement with non-standard severed bodies against the significance of their missing parts. The currency of the body part is emotional and economic, containing a multitude of meanings enabled by isolation from homeostatic purpose. Vital spirit visceralizes the elements of identity which remain not only palpable, but arguably more powerful in the severed part. Shakespeare's usage of this transference of identity recognition through stage props echoes the astrological and magical elements of physic in the early modern period.

The visceral excesses of *Titus* enable the confrontation and analysis of emotional extremities at the heart of Shakespearean drama. Shakespeare's dismemberment of his characters throughout the play does significantly more than cash in on the popular trend of gore spectacle. By aligning his character development with corporeal awareness and insisting on the consequences of the violence reverberating throughout the play, Shakespeare locates the peaks of emotional growth and humanism within the physical material of the flesh. This combination of character built on corporeal state and growth catalyzed by viscera situates the selfhood of *Titus Andronicus* securely within the body.

Hillman and Mazzio assert that "the body in parts is not always the body in pieces."[484] A crucial feature of their approach to the multitudinous meanings of individual parts is a resistance against the tendency to equate fracturing with destruction. The bodies of *Titus* which at least temporarily survive their physical dismemberment gesture toward this effort by shifting the notion of wholeness to accommodate their relative completeness after the loss of individual parts via an adapted reassertion of their personal agency. However, the physically destructive and ultimately fatal processes which lead them to this new social and psychic wholeness nonetheless beg the question as to whether it is possible to dissect the body whilst maintaining its original physical cohesion. With corporeal wholeness exposed as a myth tantamount to the standard or healthy body, the answer requires an analysis of the destabilized living body. With systems labeled in Chapter 1, borders defined in Chapter 2, and isolated parts examined in Chapter 3, it is now necessary to turn the reading of the body toward a reunification within both its artificially sectioned interior makeup, and its wider role in nature. For the unstable body not physically fractured, but physiologically disintegrated, we turn to *King Lear*.

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[484] David Hillman and Carla Mazzio, "Introduction: Individual Parts," xi.

Chapter 4: Anatomizing the Physiological Body in *King Lear*

Introduction

This thesis has thus far approached the medical body as a cadaver in the hands of the anatomist rather than a patient in the hands of a physician. To prioritize viscera and place anatomy within the context of early modern medical practice, it was first necessary to focus on the dissected cadaver, situating anatomical analyses securely after the cessation of physiological function. The anxiety of seeing oneself on the anatomist's table, not only dead, but analyzed and catalogued is reflected in the exposure and fracturing of the body throughout *Coriolanus* and *Titus Andronicus*. But the fearful pursuits of the anatomist, although primarily reliant on the dead body, are nonetheless undertaken to understand living bodies. The final chapter of this thesis, therefore, sets out to investigate the vital properties of the body by pairing anatomy with its functional partner missing from the dissection table: physiology.

This chapter investigates the use of vivisection to illuminate vital physiological processes, and how the reliance on non-human subjects in the pursuit breaks down the boundaries imposed between man and his natural animalism by the theories of The Great Chain of Being and The King's Two Bodies. In *King Lear*, Shakespeare foregrounds the body's natural mortality to expose the fallacies of these rhetorical models in the face of visceral decay. As the titular monarch struggles to unlearn his pseudo-divine royal place at the top of the Great Chain, Shakespeare reintegrates the hierarchically elevated human body once prioritized by the taxonomies of Vesalian anatomy into its vital role within nature's collective macrocosmic body. In doing so, Lear takes the *nosce te ipsum* imperative outside

the realm of the physician to find a corporeal selfhood grounded in its natural origins. By investing characterization in the physiological properties of the vital body, *Lear* illustrates corporeal selfhood as a function of homeostatic balance within both the microcosmic bodily interior and the macrocosmic environment.

The bodies which populate the play can be read as a series of case studies into the alterations of character facilitated by the corporeal awareness which accompanies physiological malfunctions. Through the survival of their respective blinding, exposure, and deterioration, the characters of *Lear* offer a glimpse of the homeostatic function normally only visible in acts of vivisection. By its autonomic nature, homeostasis is normally imperceptible to the conscious mind of the healthy subject. It is only when the internal homeostasis is disrupted that it becomes legible and the subject is forced to consciously participate in the regulation of the body's survival processes. Michael Schoenfeldt argues, "Shakespeare turns so frequently to physiological terminology because the job of the doctor, like that of the playwright and poet, is to intuit inner reality via external demeanor."[1] *Lear*'s homeostatically chaotic characters externalize physiological experiences in both circumstance and language, contributing to the reunification of form and function through the acknowledgment of corporeal instability.

Lear is critically regarded as one of Shakespeare's most anatomical plays, but its appearances in discourse tend toward a compartmentalization of the aging body which separates psychological experience from physical.[2] In Jonathan Sawday's foundational work of corporeal materialism, *The Body Emblazoned*, the play comes up only once in a passing

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[1] Michael C. Schoenfeldt, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 75.

[2] For *Lear*'s prevalence throughout anatomical discourse, see: Janet Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays, Hamlet to the Tempest* (New York: Routledge, 1991); Devon L. Hodges, *Renaissance Fictions of Anatomy* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1985); Hillary M. Nunn, *Staging Anatomies: Dissection and Spectacle in Early Stuart Tragedy* (Florence: Routledge, 2005).

point of comparison to Donne.[3] Although nominally present in the conversation, the full extent of *Lear*'s visceral corporeality is yet to be thoroughly investigated. An important branch of these investigations comes in Holly Dugan's recent work on olfactory elements of *Lear*. Dugan argues that "Lear's body (and its perfume) performs his fallen status" especially when, "marked by his own excrement," he signals to London's plague addled audiences of 1606 the familiar "smell of mortality."[4] The sensorial impact of the king's deteriorating body contributes to readings which attempt to read the physical symptoms of his aging in conjunction with the psychological.

David Hillman establishes an important reversal of the tendency toward compartmentalization to instead urge an acknowledgment of the innately somatic nature of early modern psychology. He argues, "It would be more accurate to say that for Lear (as for much of the early modern world) all feelings *are* bodily: indeed, the notion that he transforms feelings into somatic terms is an index of the pressure being placed on the relations between psyche and soma in this period – and in this play."[5] This empirical investigation into a more corporeal *Lear* is continued by Valerie Traub and Muriel Cunin.[6] Traub identifies the close ties between *Lear* and its contemporary medicine in one of the play's most significant references to anatomy:

> With his direct injunction to 'anatomize Regan,' Lear expresses the hope, not only that bodies and behaviors ultimately will be rendered intelligible by reference to a nature ordained by the

[3] Jonathan Sawday, *The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995), 34.
[4] Holly Dugan, "The Smell of a King: Olfaction in *King Lear*," in *Shakespeare/Sense*, ed. Simon Smith (London: Arden, 2020), 135.
[5] David Hillman, *Shakespeare's Entrails: Belief, Scepticism and the Interior of the Body* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 120.
[6] Traub's article comes as a response to Michael Neill, "The Exact Map or Discovery of Human Affairs," in *Putting History to the Question: Power, Politics, and Society in English Renaissance Drama* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000) and Muriel Cunin, "King Lear: Fabric of the Human Body and Anatomy of the World," in *"And that's true too": New Essays on* King Lear, ed. Francois Laroque, Pierre Iselin, and Sophie Alatorre (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009) on the relationship between cartographical and anatomical metaphor. Cunin's work will be engaged more directly later in the chapter.

> gods, but that previously unknown truths of human nature might be revealed by the empirical procedures of human dissection being institutionalized in anatomy theaters across Western Europe.[7]

Traub's assessment of Lear's hopes for the answers empirical anatomy might provide is central to the corporeal value of the play, but it only addresses half the picture. Whatever sense of human nature might be discoverable in the anatomy theatres is crucially lacking in vitality – a frozen image posthumously imbued with hypothesized vitality projected onto the forms of the motionless aftermath. What Lear seeks in Regan's anatomization is to "see what breeds about her heart."[8] Shakespeare's unsettlingly active verb "breeds" carries a sense of movement very different from the regular rhythm of the living heart, transforming the corporeal seat of motion into a festering site. Galenic physiology situates the heart as "the furnace which fired all animal and human life."[9] If the heart's natural beating is what creates the body's heat, Lear imagines a more grotesque and sinister motion to fuel the movements of such cold "hard hearts."[10] The notion of breeding also subverts the natural morbidity of the anatomy. Whether its tonal connotation is positive or negative, Shakespeare's image of some active force creating life around the hardened heart of Regan infuses vital homeostatic physiology into the otherwise lifeless dissection.

The active capacity of Shakespeare's physiological imagery throughout *Lear* participates in a medical tradition by which the fluidity of language provides a more apt model for describing bodily processes, as opposed to the images used to depict anatomical form. William Harvey deployed active verbs to describe the dynamic vitality of the body in

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[7] Valerie Traub, "The Nature of Norms in Early Modern England: Anatomy, Cartography, *King Lear*," *South Central Review* 26, (Spring 2009), 42.
[8] William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. R. A. Foakes (London: Arden Shakespeare, 1997), 3.6.73-4.
[9] William W. E. Slights, *The Heart in the Age of Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 8.
[10] *Lear*, 3.6.75.

his 1628 *De motu cordis* on the movement of the heart. His work features no illustrations. Unlike Vesalian postmortem morphology, Harvey's focus on physiology relied on language alone to convey his meaning. According to William Slights, "Words, therefore, and particularly verbs denoting action, were Harvey's tools of choice in laying out his careful arguments for the dynamism of the heart…For this purpose, language was more precise and convincing than graphic illustrations."[11] The artistic medium by which knowledge is conveyed prioritizes certain elements: in the case of Vesalius, detailed illustrations facilitated the thorough catalogue of anatomical parts and systems he strove to achieve. For Harvey, the image was too static to convey the motion of the heart.

Like Harvey, Shakespeare crafts a more dynamic living body through language, but with the added benefits of physical bodies on stage and more creative space for imaginative experimentation. His words explore, poeticize, and expose the physiologies of his characters whilst physical performance anchors the anatomical language in the present visceral body. In *Lear*, Shakespeare brings anatomy and physiology together into a grotesque and fantastical vivisection in which the lives of his subjects are preserved throughout their physical destruction. By staging the living body amid language which dissects and analyzes its visceral processes, Shakespeare uses the experimental realm of the theatre to carry out impossible feats of human vivisection. The unreal reunions of life and death, physiology and anatomy, function and form throughout *Lear* constitute more than an anatomical drama; they participate in the creation of early modern body knowledge.

Lear brings more life than death to the discussion of corporeal selfhood by focusing on the vital physiologies of its bodies. Unlike the morphological priorities of *Coriolanus*' external scarring or *Titus*' severed limbs, *Lear* looks deep into the hidden movements of the

[11] Slights, 74.

internal organs to find meaning in the processes mediated by nature. Through submission to nature's unknowability and a foregrounding of internal processes via their degenerative malfunctions, the bodies in *Lear* invest meaning in physiology. Here, Shakespeare's anatomization of corporeal identity turns to vivisection to capture homeostatic vitality during its visible window between life and death.

From the start, physiological processes of respiration and speech reveal Goneril's dishonesty and Cordelia's truth. The eldest daughter presents a constructed form of gratitude in direct opposition to the function of her speech. Through composed breath and spoken words, Goneril proves herself unaffected by "a love that makes breath poor and speech unable."[12] By failing to be mute and suffocated, Goneril's physiology condemns her own lies. This disconnect between form and function prioritizes authenticity in the unmanipulable, involuntary processes of physiology.

In contrast to her elder sister, Cordelia proves herself authentic via her inability to control the involuntary movements of her heart. Her admission that "my love's more ponderous than my tongue" and "I cannot heave my heart into my mouth" links the independent heartbeat to the acutely controlled tongue.[13] The heart's unrelenting autonomic motions give the involuntary muscle an earnestness which the trainable tongue lacks. The emblematic backdrop of the honest heart, "the originator and repository of lasting 'truth,'"[14] and the unreliable tongue from which "malevolent and benevolent discursive agencies emerge"[15] are rooted in the specific functions of the two opposing muscle groups. Shakespeare's deployment of these corporeal images illustrates not a metaphorical

[12] *Lear*, 1.1.60.
[13] *Lear*, 1.1.77-8; 1.1.91-2.
[14] Slights, 78.
[15] Carla Mazzio, "Sins of the Tongue," *The Body in Parts* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 53.

displacement of the body, but an awareness of emblematic tropes and their basis in physiology.

It is significant that Shakespeare unites these corporeal images with their homeostatic functionality because doing so reintegrates the static emblem and lifeless cadaver with their active counterparts in the living body. This physiological grounding underpinning emotional and interpersonal elements of characterization throughout *Lear* further situates notions of selfhood within corporeal materialism. Before diving further into Shakespeare's engagement with physiology, it is important to first establish the model on which physiological processes are understood to take place in the body, particularly in context with their anatomical counterparts.

Homeostasis

Anatomy and physiology are distinct but nonetheless integrated focuses in medicine. The former constitutes the morphological matter of the body including the physical form and arrangement of systems, organs, tissues, and cells. The latter investigates the functional roles anatomy plays in maintaining homeostasis. Anatomy (referred to from this point as "morphology" to distinguish the medical discourse from the more ubiquitous sixteenth-century usage of the term) is the form and shape of the body: it classifies what the body is. Physiology is the function and active purpose of the body: it describes what the body does. The previous chapter briefly touched on Ingrith Deyrup-Olsen's explication of the historical divide between morphology and physiology. It is worth reiterating her point here that "Whereas simple and direct observations early yielded solid knowledge of morphology, especially of human anatomy, little real progress could be made in understanding physiology

until a firm basis of physics and chemistry had been established."[16] As a result, morphology and physiology were separated between the anatomists and the physicians for practicality, to the detriment of an integrated understanding of the whole body.

As previously explored throughout the dismemberments of *Titus*, the notion of a whole body is a myth exposed by anatomy's revelation that the body is, instead, an inventory of parts; wholeness is merely the relative completeness of the collection. Applied to physiology, the interconnectedness of parts is illuminated by their systematic dedication to a shared objective. Each part of the body serves a distinct purpose dictated by its context within the corporeal microcosm, but all the functions taking place throughout the body are pursuing the same goal of maintaining homeostasis. Modern physiology uses homeostasis "to describe regulation of the internal environment of living organisms."[17] The term was coined in 1929 by American physiologist Walter B. Cannon, who recognized the necessity for a concept which acknowledged the fluctuating nature of the body's internal systems. Cannon writes,

> The co-ordinated physiological processes which maintain most of the steady states in the organism are so complex and so peculiar to living beings – involving as they may, the brain and nerves, the heart, lungs, kidneys and spleen, all working co-operatively – that I have suggested a special designation for these states, *Homeostasis*. The word does not imply something set and immobile, a stagnation. It means a condition – a condition which may vary, but which is relatively constant.[18]

Cannon's focus on the variability of human vitals represents a challenge which has remained at the core of physiological studies throughout medical history. The body's instability makes it difficult to define for the purposes of scientific theory.

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[16] Ingrith Deyrup-Olsen, "Five Examples Illustrating the Study of Form and Function," *Integrative and Comparative Biology* 28, no. 2 (January: 1988), 585.
[17] Richard N. Hardy, *Homeostasis* (London: Edward Arnold, 1976), 3.
[18] Walter B. Cannon, "Organization for Physiological Homeostasis," *Physiological Reviews* 9 no. 3 (July 1929) quoted in Hardy, 3.

This variability is what makes physiology so different from morphology. Morphology formed as a distinct field before physiology because the forms of corporeal matter are more constant and observable than the internal processes of physiology. By conceptualizing homeostasis as a variable condition rather than a static equilibrium, Cannon creates a margin for the expectation of instability. Homeostasis is about the body's internal maintenance, not as a concrete answer to the difference between life and death, but as a series of integrated responses to internal and external stimuli working automatically to keep the body within a range of survivability.

Although early modern medicine has no word for this vital maintenance state, the foundational notions of balance underscoring Galenic humoralism communicate the same concept: the body contains fluctuating reactions in response to external stimuli to keep the organism in a specific range of vitality or health. Early modern medical terminology often uses "nature" ambiguously to refer to both the natural state of the healthy body and the realm beyond the answers of medical knowledge.[19] Philip Barrough exemplifies this tendency to locate nature's realm at the outskirts of medicine throughout *The Method of Physick*.

In his chapter "Of panting of the hart" or "*De Cordis Palpitatione,*" Barrough lists the condition's causes as "all such things as do trouble and affect the heart aboue nature (as is) euerie distempure, or the multitude of an humor contayned in the outwarde skinne that goeth about the heart, or else of swelling contrarie to nature and such like."[20] Barrough situates "nature" as a measure of normalcy where aberrations "aboue" or "contrarie to" its parameters constitute disease. The body's alignment with nature in a literal sense therefore facilitates the physiological balance known today as homeostasis. Where homeostasis describes the

[19] Hannah Newton, "'Nature Concocts & Expels': The Agents and Processes of Recovery from Disease in Early Modern England," *Social History of Medicine* 28, no. 3 (August 2015): 465.
[20] Philip Barrough, *The Method of Physick Containing the Causes, Signes, and Cures of Inward Diseases in Man's Body, from the Head to the Foote* (Richard Field: London, 1617), 73.

processes which autonomically keep the body alive, nature is that force beyond the active reason of the subject keeping the body in balance. As a network of largely invisible mechanisms, physiology is often the realm of nature – the point at which medicine must concede its limits and ascribe the answer to the natural properties of the body.

Metaphorical renderings of the bodily interior make the invisible available to contemplation by describing otherwise inconceivable processes via links to familiar stand-ins. However, its substitution of visceral reality for imagery risks displacing the value of the structures and functions within the literal body. Gail Kern Paster prioritizes physicality within corporeal experience, enabling a sense of self which is rooted in the visceral bodily interior. Paster's foregrounding of physiology reasserts materiality into processes which, by necessity, are conceptually abstracted in early modern modes of thought. Paster argues that the "formative effects of physiological theory" require a response to the external constructivism constituted in Marcel Mauss' "external *habitus*"[21] via "an equally formable, if not equally visible, *internal* habitus."[22] In doing so, Paster extends the corporeal canvas of constructivism beyond visible elements of gesture, attire, and social interaction into the invisible, but no less experiential realm of the physiological.

She describes a "locally determined explanatory framework" which situates the process of identity formation within the personal locality of the bodily interior. Paster's "enshrouded domain of the body's internal workings"[23] has the capacity to be perceived, understood, and integrated into the corporeal notion of self through a level of self-awareness in tune with processes which, in ideal working order, should operate without conscious thought. It is for this reason that instances of physiological awareness most readily arise

[21] Marcel Mauss, "Techniques of the Body," *Economy and Society* 2 (1973): 73.
[22] Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1993), 4.
[23] Ibid.

around systematic malfunctions in which the conscious mind must actively participate in the reinstatement of homeostasis.

Homeostasis is achieved in an uncontrollable realm interwoven throughout the body. It is the self-sustaining ecosystem of the bodily interior – the woods beyond the court of medical reason wherein the body fends off death not in grand observable spectacles, but in imperceptible adjustments of pressures and temperatures. The homeostatic margin between life and death houses secrets which, like Holbein's anamorphic skull, may only be fully perceived through the abandonment of logical perspective. Where the anatomist is limited to the motionless landscape of the dead body and the physician is deprived internal evidence by the fragility of the mortal patient, Shakespeare's dramatic engagement with the living and dying body offers a performative vivisection which bridges the two in the formation of corporeal identity.

Although its bodies remain more intact than those of *Coriolanus* and *Titus*, *Lear*'s viscera remains insistently present. The bodily interior is no less real when its physicality is left unexposed; it is only easier to ignore. The conceptual distance of the corporeal elements hidden beneath the skin leave the viscera vulnerable to imaginative speculation. This disconnect tends to form an instinct that the unseen bodily interior is safer when unaddressed by the outside world. As Anne M. Scott describes, medieval understandings of blood rest on "the concept of blood as being bounded, kept in, by the body, and hence contributing to the health of the body when contained, and causing harm to the body, or forming a taboo when it flows out, whether by injury or natural motions."[24] A logical undercurrent of corporeal

[24] Anne M. Scott, "*Piers Plowman* and the Blood of Brotherhood," in *Fluid Bodies and Bodily Fluids in Premodern Europe: Bodies, Blood, and Tears in Literature, Theology, and Art,* ed. Anne M. Scott and Michael David Barbezat (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2019), 76.

understanding established centuries prior to the early modern period, blood outside the body naturally triggers a mortal awareness of the body's vulnerability.

It is a privilege of the healthy, normative body to be luxuriously unaware of the operations of their bodily interior. The failure to address the material body as a component of selfhood is indicative of an absent relationship between the physical body and the conscious experience of inhabiting it. This passive cohabitation of mind with an unacknowledged physiology may be a more comfortable way of muting the fear of mortality, but it also disowns the achievements of homeostasis. Even the involuntary regulatory processes of the unseen bodily interior are a working part of the mind, body, and self. The boundaries which separate these three are illusory constructs which, whilst taxonomically and linguistically beneficial to each field-specific lexis, all refer to the same series of electrical impulses and chemical balancing acts from varying perspectives. In the dissolution of these barriers between mind, body, self, and other throughout *Lear*, Shakespeare illustrates the artificiality of these divisions.

Instead of dismemberment or dissection, the externally perceivable processes of physiology are foregrounded throughout *Lear* to underpin experience with its corporeal roots. The perceptibility of these processes varies along a spectrum of homeostatic disruptions. The more drastic the physiological malfunction, the more predominantly the bodily interior pronounces itself. Poor Tom externalizes his interior experience of faulty temperature regulation each time he announces, "Poor Tom's a'cold."[25] Gloucester foregrounds and foreshadows his sensory experience with his insistence to Edmund, "Let's see, let's see."[26]

[25] *Lear*, 3.4.57.
[26] *Lear*, 1.2.43.

Lear centralizes homeostatic health among his fears when he implores his Fool, "Keep me in temper, I would not be mad."[27] The temperance to which Lear refers connotes as much physiological health as psychological. The Arden Edition of the text offers "mental balance"[28] as an explication of "temper" in the line, but such a definition glosses the interconnectedness of mind and body crucial to both the play and early modern medicine. A well-balanced mental state is inherently dependent on a well-balanced humoral distribution. As the Fool satirically anatomizes the poor choices which put his kingdom and his family in danger, Lear realizes his folly and laments "I will forget my nature."[29] Again, the Arden notes gloss the term as reference to his "natural affection or kindness,"[30] which disregards the medical connotations of "nature" as a measure of health. When read in context with both terms' relevance to physical health, Lear's preoccupation with his waning grasp on his nature and his temper constitutes a plea that his whole body remain in homeostatic balance.

Successful homeostatic maintenance relies on cooperation between morphological structures and physiological actions. In medicine, the tenet built to bridge the gap between morphology and physiology is the principle that "form follows function." Borrowed from architectural theory, "form follows function" states that the specific form (morphology) of the body serves the precise function (physiology) of that part. As cardiovascular surgeon Tirone E. David explains, "The architecture phrase 'form follows function' is also applicable in biology where anatomic structures evolved according to what they are meant to do. Thus, the anatomy of the aortic root represents the optimal form to fulfill its function."[31] The small intestines are long and winding in structure to facilitate as much nutrient absorption as

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[27] *Lear*, 1.5.45.
[28] *Lear* (Arden), 215, note 45.
[29] *Lear*, 1.5.31.
[30] *Lear* (Arden), 214, note 31.
[31] Tirone E. David, "Form Follows Function," *The Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery* 153, no. 6. (February 2017): 1263.

possible. The red blood cell is a concave disc to maximize its surface area for oxygen transportation. The relationship between form and function is what elevates the study of the body from a purely structural analysis to an investigation of the mechanisms of life.

The active vitality of function as compared to the relatively inert form aligns this medical dichotomy with that of subjectivity and objectivity in terms of selfhood. In relation to one another, these two theoretical binaries constitute diametrically opposed states of being whereby the former constitutes the vital, autonomous movements of the conscious self and the latter provides the uninhabited structure of the body. Full of bodies struggling to re-define what they are by what they do, *Lear* deconstructs the subject/object binary via a reintegration of forms and functions. In his introduction to the Arden edition, R. A. Foakes argues, "If an emphasis is placed on Lear as a king, then the play may be seen as primarily about what he does; if the emphasis is placed on Lear as an old man, then the play may be seen as primarily about what is done to him."[32] This focus on Lear's active or passive states aligns the critical tradition founded on the two bodies of the king within subjective and objective classifications. In Foakes' reading, the body politic "Lear as a king" is given priority as the autonomous subject capable of action whereas the body natural "Lear as an old man" is relegated to the realm of the object against which the actions of others are directed.

This isolation of passive, objective morphology from active, subjective physiology informs Shakespeare's framework for discussing the body throughout *Lear*. Whereas Edgar and Edmund foil one another from opposing ends of the physiological and morphological disconnect, the Fool is situated at a rare vantage point which bridges the two. By instilling him with proofs based on the medical linkage of form with function, Shakespeare uses the

[32] Foakes, "Introduction," 29.

privileged perspective of the Fool to reintegrate the divided experiences of form and function embodied in Edmund and Edgar, respectively.

At the end of the first act, the Fool presents the king with a series of riddles designed to comfort whilst gently criticizing his actions. At the heart of each seemingly absurd question is a philosophical reminder of the limitations of man's knowledge and the admission that "I can tell what I can tell,"[33] leaving the rest to the mysteries of nature. One question locates the limits of the anatomist's knowledge with a satirical use of form follows function logic.

> FOOL: Thou canst not tell why one's nose stands i'the middle on's face?
> LEAR: No.
> FOOL: Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose, that what a man cannot smell out he may spy into.[34]

In the context of his rambling, the statement feels like a comical non sequitur suggesting that the function of the nose is to keep the eyes apart. However, in keeping with the tradition of the wise fool, the logic behind the joke aligns with the scientific process of determining relationships between structure and function. By analyzing how the physical organization of the face lends itself to the efficacy of the sensory organs, the Fool effectively argues that the location of the nose serves the purpose of perception by operating in tandem with the eyes.

The central, forward facing position of both nose and eyes provides an evolutionary advantage to the hunter by maximizing directional control over a multitude of sensory inputs. Spoken to an aging old man wary of losing his senses along with his wit, the reminder that one sense can supplement another also provides comfort to Lear whilst quietly foreshadowing

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[33] *Lear*, 1.5.16.
[34] *Lear*, 1.5.19-23.

the sensory deprivation which awaits Gloucester. The Fool's almost extra-diegetic sense of perspective on the unified homeostatic body provides the medical "form follows function" modality which underscores the deconstruction of physiology and morphology throughout the play.

The division is apparent in the foiling of Edgar and Edmund as embodied counterparts of physiology and morphology. Edmund begins, as early modern medicine does, with a focus on morphology. In his first appearance, Edmund defends the legitimacy of his identity based on his corporeal form. He asks, "Wherefore base? When my dimensions are as well compact, my mind as generous and my shape as true as honest madam's issue?"[35] Edmund understands his selfhood in terms of his morphology, investing authenticity in his measurements and shape. Specifically, Edmund understands his shape as having value because of its naturalness. He glorifies nature, "my goddess," as the legitimate authority over the trifles of the court caught up in "the plague of custom" and "curiosity of nations."[36] Like Lear, Edmund sees nature as a realm beyond the limits of human constructs. Where Lear seeks the unattainable immortality promised to him by the doctrine of the King's Two Bodies, Edmund relies on the natural realm outside social constructs to legitimize a notion of himself molded by a natural creationism. However, Edmund fails to recognize the innate link between form and function throughout nature. By severing the two in an over-compensatory prioritization of his legitimacy of form, Edmund loses sight of his natural function within both the political and familial body.

When Edmund betrays his brother to their father, the shocked Gloucester immediately looks to the linkage of form and function in his son's behavior: "My son Edgar, had he a

[35] *Lear*, 1.2.7-9.
[36] *Lear*, 1.2.1-4.

hand to write this? A heart and brain to breed it in?"[37] The son who is legitimate of form must not possess the hand, heart, or brain necessary to execute such corrupt devices. Gloucester reads Edgar's honest form as the primary evidence for his honest function. It is therefore Edmund's corporeal confirmation that "It is his hand, my lord; but I hope his heart is not in the contents," which sways their father's fears. As Edgar's purposes are dissembled by Edmund's manipulation of his hand, Gloucester's own sensory failures cloud his judgement. Shakespeare's focus on Gloucester's sight throughout the letter reading scene is not simply a trick of foreshadowing to the man's gruesome fate. The irony inherent in Gloucester's comment "Come, if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles,"[38] underscores the naïve blindness Gloucester already has well before the loss of his eyes as he fails to recognize the betrayal Lear should have seen in his own child's "Nothing."[39]

Two scenes later, Lear threatens to pluck out his own eyes to stop their tears from revealing his rage and shame at cursing Goneril: "Old fond eyes, beweep this cause again, I'll pluck ye out, and cast you with the waters that you loose to temper clay."[40] Although given in anger, Lear's offering of the emotional secretions of his eye to the creative capacities of nature, "to temper clay" reveals Lear's dedication to the realm beyond the court. Lear's disconnect between his body and mind drives him to pit his physiology against his anatomy, but even in a panicked attempt to stop his body's authentic outpouring, Lear acknowledges his eyes as the morphological agents of emotion. When reflected against Gloucester's manipulated vision, the king's altered perspective offers more sense than Gloucester's supposedly healthy eyes. Like the trajectory Coriolanus fulfils in his visceral dismemberment, Gloucester's blindness to the evidence before him as he urges Edmund

[37] *Lear*, 1.2.56-7.
[38] *Lear*, 1.2.35-6
[39] *Lear*, 1.2.32.
[40] *Lear*, 1.4.293-6.

"Let's see, let's see,"[41] proves him unworthy of his useless eyes. Meanwhile, Lear's blocked tears ultimately find their way to a different kind of visceral fruition with the aid of the storm in the crucial passage to be discussed later in the chapter.

Early modern traditions of embodied morality are reflected in Edmund's defense of self as he cites the absence of visible deformity on his body as evidence of his unblemished integrity. Mark Thornton Burnett refers to "a theoretical paradigm that equates physical appearance with behavioral traits" underpinning the moralizing gaze on the physical subject.[42] According to the classifications of monstrosity, Edmund's "shape as true" would seem to prove him morally upstanding. A monster's "mutually constitutive bodily difference and a damaged moral outlook"[43] exonerates Edmund from an evil disposition by virtue of his "well compact" morphology. However, it is precisely this emphasis on morphological structure which leaves Edmund's character wanting. Lacking the internal temperance of physiology, Edmund makes his way through the play on appearances which dissemble his true purposes, his moral corruption reaping the benefits of his seemingly trustworthy exterior.

By contrast, Edgar abandons his outward appearance by stripping off the garments which sheathed his sensible flesh. Without mediation between his body and the impacts of the elements, Edgar foregrounds his physiological experience. According to Elizabeth Harvey, "The skin or flesh is at once a figure of covering and protection and a sign of the body's vulnerability to erotic or painful sensation. Joined together, these properties of skin emblemize human life and encapsulate the goal of temperance."[44] In Edgar, Shakespeare literalizes this emblem, creating an unadorned body whose physical exchange with nature

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[41] *Lear*, 1.2.43.
[42] Mark Thornton Burnett, *Constructing 'Monsters' in Shakespearean Drama and Early Modern Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 66.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Elizabeth Harvey, "The Touching Organ: Allegory, Anatomy, and the Renaissance Skin Envelope," in *Sensible Flesh,* ed. Elizabeth D. Harvey (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 87.

tests the body's physical boundaries of protection, vulnerability, and self via an unfiltered exposure to sensation.

Whilst disguised in shape, Edgar's performance of madness returns consistently to notions of sensation and function. Lear, Kent, and the Fool witness a litany of observations on Edgar's bodily functions focusing on temperature, pain, and even elements of digestion. The line, "Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind,"[45] engages the naked body of Poor Tom in an acute homeostatic awareness. The persistent refrain which comes to define Poor Tom as one perpetually "a-cold"[46] reinforces the tactile nature of his exposed form. From sharpness and cold, he moves "through fire and through flame" whilst tormented by "knives under his pillow" and "ratsbane by his porridge."[47] Poor Tom is not simply exposed by his nakedness, but rather made hypersensitive to the homeostatic signals of his strained nervous system.

Poor Tom is not Edgar. He is a construct of a fearful man fleeing his own empty identity. The demonic temptations laid before Poor Tom by this "foul fiend" are therefore experienced by Edgar in a displaced capacity whereby Poor Tom's experiences are observed and analyzed in a crafted thought experiment. In this sense, Edgar may be understood as having two bodies. Like the king, one is conceptual whilst the other remains visceral. As the executor of the disguise turned immersive experiment, Edgar fills the role of the scientist testing the boundaries of the body's survival via rigorous fieldwork.

The observing body of Edgar is displaced from the experiential body of Poor Tom by Edgar's consistent third-party references to his alter ego. The displacement of self in lines

[45] *Lear*, 3.4.45-6.
[46] *Lear*, 3.4.57.
[47] *Lear*, 3.4.50-4.

like "Who gives anything to Poor Tom?"[48] and "Do Poor Tom some charity"[49] offer glimpses of Edgar behind his disguise, speaking on behalf of his subject. When Edgar declares again and again that "Tom's a-cold," he traces the progress of his visceral subject, collecting and reporting data on his physiological sensations over the course of the experiment.

In response to Crooke's anatomies, Elizabeth Harvey proposes an interpersonal conundrum: "How does the anatomist or guide position himself in relation to the cadaver he dissects given that he, too, possesses a (live) body similar to the (dead) one being anatomized?"[50] One answer is vivisection, whereby the subject of the anatomy shares, if for a limited time, the vitality of the anatomist. Another answer is the popular self-demonstration illustrated in early modern écorchés as seen in Crooke's *Microcosmographia* as well as the Geminus blood-letting couple, both previously explored in Chapter 2. A flap anatomy published in 1573 appears to copy the portrait of Andreas Vesalius from the front of the *Fabrica* onto the face of the anatomized paper subject (see fig. 4.1).

[48] *Lear*, 3.4.50.
[49] *Lear*, 3.4.59.
[50] Harvey, 81.



Figure 4.1. *Anatomical Fugitive Sheet of a Male Figure,* Wittenberg: 1573. Courtesy of Wellcome Library, London.[51]

In the case of Vesalius, the tension between the anatomist and the cadaver's shared corporeality is resolved through a complete conflation of the two. By splitting Edgar into anatomist and living subject in Poor Tom, Shakespeare responds to the tension with a similar creative experimentation.

[51] See Andrea Carlino, *Paper Bodies: A Catalogue of Anatomical Fugitive Sheets 1538-1687*, trans. Noga Arikha (London: Wellcome, 1999) for full publication details.

Lear's strange vivisections demonstrate the freedom of imaginative thought necessary for thorough analysis. Just as artistic illustration lends communicative freedom to anatomical observations by immortalizing the rapidly decomposing cadaver, Edgar and Poor Tom provide a practically impossible perspective on unobservable physiology. Edgar's ambiguous role as both the rational observer and the tormented subject steps beyond the realm of the anatomist and into the territory of the vivisector. This amalgamation of vivisector and subject hyperbolizes the implications of studies on the living body by applying every pain and prick to the one holding the probe.

The identity of the cadaver prioritized by Vesalius is taken to its extreme. Edgar's anatomical *nosce te impsum* means knowing himself by vivisecting himself. Vesalius' use of his own lively face on the design of his fugitive sheets in the *Epitome* exemplifies the same use of artistic liberty to carry out otherwise impossible experimentation. Lear's own experience of self-vivisection under the natural tutelage of Poor Tom comes charged with the context of the politically biased corporeality imposed on him by the rhetorical model of the King's Two Bodies, which will be explored in more depth later in the chapter. Following on this later section, Lear's realignment with animals along the rhetorical structure of The Great Chain of Being is, in turn, enabled by this focus on vivisection techniques. Experimentation on the living body forms a significant undercurrent throughout *Lear* which echoes the vivisection efforts taking place in early modern medical pursuits.

Edgar willfully embodies a "presented nakedness"[52] as Poor Tom which is distinct from the involuntary exposure of the flesh required of Coriolanus. Where the Roman soldier's nakedness is a violent flaying explicitly constructed to elicit vulnerability, Edgar's nakedness is autonomously displayed as both a successful disguise and a sign of heightened

[52] *Lear*, 2.2.182.

awareness in his closeness to nature. His introduction as "Poor Tom, that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt and the water"[53] illustrates his active efforts to integrate with lower levels of beings in nature by physically consuming them. As Muriel Cunin claims, "Poor Tom is as one with his environment and literally incorporates and interiorizes it."[54] In doing so, he makes macroscopically observable the physical exchange between his body and nature. By eating everything from the frogs to the water itself, Poor Tom literally digests the ranks of The Great Chain of Being – homogenizing their supposedly disparate values into a singular homeostatic purpose. Edgar's experimentation as Poor Tom uses tactile environmental experience to test the rhetorical models seeking to separate man from nature. Edgar presents his nakedness as a conscientious tool for experiencing the cold to which he so consistently refers, perhaps not as a complaint, but as a data report.

The transformation from Edgar into Poor Tom also represents an explicit experience of corporeal selfhood. Upon stripping his clothes, dirtying his face and hair, and pricking his arms with "pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary," Edgar announces his new identity and abandons the old: "Poor Tom, that's something yet: Edgar I nothing am."[55] The nothingness he felt as Edgar is turned to something tangible in Poor Tom's bare and mortified flesh. Edgar finds a sense of selfhood in the process of casting away former accoutrements of symbolic identity until all he is and all he has is a cold corpus. Edgar forms another strand in the thread of nothingness connecting himself, Lear, and Gloucester throughout their corporeal developments. Edgar's self-professed nothingness contrasts with Gloucester's ignorant "if it

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[53] *Lear*, 3.4.125.
[54] Muriel Cunin, "King Lear: Fabric of the Human Body and Anatomy of the World," in *"And that's true too": New Essays on King Lear*, ed. Francois Laroque and Pierre Iselin (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 98.
[55] *Lear*, 2.2.191-2.

be nothing"[56] and Lear's evaluation that "nothing will come of nothing"[57] which both externalize and materialize the absence which Edgar identifies within himself. Lear's economy of nothingness will be explored in more depth in context with the King's Two Bodies model in the next section.

The king's slippage into nothingness is a consequence of his misjudgment that something would still remain after the division of his kingdom. Foiling Lear's angry and violent resistance to his nothing fate, Edgar uses his voluntary physiological immersion into nothingness to reason that "The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune, stands still in esperance, lives not in fear."[58] His hope arises from having entered into a natural nothingness willfully, rationally, and with an anatomist's drive to understand through experience. For Edgar, the nothingness is a trusted ally: "Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace."[59] By investing his notion of selfhood entirely in the unsubstantial concepts of his kingship, Lear's nothingness disregards the corporeal frame that remains when his kingdom is gone. In his physical "embrace" of the non-physical around him, Edgar's nothingness recognizes the continued presence of his corporeal limbs even when he has abandoned everything else. As Poor Tom, he learns to relinquish control and trust the autonomic processes of his bodily interior to maintain the homeostasis keeping him alive without conscious intervention.

Specifically modelled after "Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices, strike at their numbed and mortified bear arms,"[60] Poor Tom elicits a medical perspective which prioritizes the patient's experience. Arthur Frank emphasizes the unifying potential in efforts to share and understand pain. According to Frank, "Other-relatedness as an action problem is

[56] *Lear*, 1.2.35-6
[57] *Lear*, 1.1.90.
[58] *Lear*, 4.1.3-4.
[59] *Lear*, 4.1.7.
[60] *Lear*, 2.2.185-6

concerned with how the shared condition of being bodies becomes a basis of empathetic relations among living beings."[61] Although Edgar does not specifically encounter or converse with Bedlam patients on stage, Shakespeare's inclusion of their plight in Edgar's designs for Poor Tom grounds his disguise in the corporeal experience of othered bodies. The absence of any representative Bedlam beggars from a discussion of madness which nonetheless relies on an idea of their identities reflects the period's institutional "policies of confinement and social reorganization" which primarily functioned to "drive madness into silence."[62] Edgar's attempts to embody the otherwise unspoken experience of the Bedlam beggar may therefore be read as an attempt to circumvent this institutionally imposed silence.

Edgar engages with pain through the physical embodiment of it as opposed to Lear's soporific escapism with sleep and a dose of "simples operative."[63] More than observing the suffering of the Bedlam patients, Edgar reenacts their pain first-hand. Poor Tom is not simply a disguise, but the enactment of corporeal empathy not unlike Titus' reflective hand amputation as an attempt to share the physical burden of grief. Where Titus and Lavinia share parallel dismemberments, Edgar's enactment of sensory deprivation through his other-relatedness with the suffering in Bedlam prepares him to take on an empathetic role when he encounters his own sense-deprived father.

Deadened senses are central to the illness narrative Edgar reads in Bedlam. The pain Poor Tom inflicts on himself reflects the beggars' attempts to feel through their "numbed and mortified" flesh. Here, the experience of living transcends basic states of pain and comfort to acknowledge the necessity for both to maintain homeostasis. The functioning vital body

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[61] Arthur W. Frank, *The Wounded Storyteller* (University of Chicago Press: London, 1997), 35.
[62] Duncan Salkeld, *Madness and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1993), 36.
[63] *Lear*, 4.4.14

requires sensory input to trigger the interconnected responses of the milieu intérieur.[64] Without this input, the bodily interior is isolated from the world it inhabits. Worse, perhaps, than the inexpressible inwardness of pain[65] is the inability to respond to the impacts of life on the flesh. Entering the woods with a balanced homeostasis capable of feeling and adapting to cold and pain, Edgar's nakedness evolves through exposure from an outward presentation into an intimately corporeal part of him.

According to Frank, "The ill body is certainly not mute – it speaks eloquently in pains and symptoms – but it is inarticulate."[66] By exposing himself to the pains and symptoms firsthand, Edgar acknowledges the inarticulate nature of pain. Because language is insufficient to transmit pain, it must be felt to be understood. Edgar's transformation into the wounded body of Poor Tom enables him to join "the common bond of suffering" which Frank identifies as the catalyst for turning the othered experience of disease into a community.[67] This patient-first illness narrative combines with a case study in the homeostatic necessity of pain to set the foundation for Edgar's role as the physician to his blinded father. If form follows function, Edgar's transformation in shape instigates a transformation of purpose by which physical sensation enables a new selfhood born of corporeal empathy.

In the case of sensory deprivation, homeostasis involves the adaptation of other senses to account for the loss. Like the adaptive modes of environmental engagement that aided Lavinia in her reclamation of voice, Gloucester experiences a personal transformation driven by corporeal necessity. His comment that "'Tis the time's plague when madmen lead the

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[64] Melanie P. Hoenig and Mark L. Zeidel, "Homeostasis, The Milieu Intérieur, and the Wisdom of the Nephron," *Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology* 9, no. 7 (July 2014): 1272.
[65] Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 4.
[66] Frank, 2.
[67] Ibid, xi.

blind"[68] may read as a bitter condemnation of society's aimless power hierarchies, but the words carry an ironic secondary meaning when directed toward Edgar. The madness to which Gloucester refers is only a façade hiding the process by which Edgar achieved his natural understanding and the ability to lead. The blindness afflicting Gloucester is perhaps not his literal loss of sight, but his vulnerability to manipulation. The madmen who lead him, in his ignorance, to the loss of his eyes proved the fault between his form and function by revealing that his eyes failed to convey truth to his perception. By literalizing the physical disconnect between Gloucester's eyes and sight before he can heal, Shakespeare links the psychological healing process to the adaptive nature of homeostatic rebalance. Despite Edgar's strategic attempts to convince him otherwise, Gloucester correctly perceives that "the ground is even"[69] and "thy voice is altered."[70] Through sensory deprivation, Gloucester's perception is enhanced. Far from the plague to which he refers, Gloucester and Edgar learn via their respective blindness and madness how best to see and lead.

As his father's physician, Edgar completes his experimental trials and proceeds to assessment and treatment. With a final utterance that "Poor Tom's a-cold," Edgar resolves "I cannot daub it further"[71] and marks the end of his immersive self-assessment to turn his focus toward his new patient. His observation reveals a clear diagnosis: "Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed."[72] More than representative imagery, Edgar's line also describes a practical effect which could be achieved in early modern performance: "*occasion'd by little spunges ty'd of purpose to their middle fingers in the palmes of their hands*."[73] This stage direction

[68] *Lear*, 4.1.57.
[69] *Lear*, 4.6.3.
[70] *Lear*, 4.6.7.
[71] *Lear*, 4.1.55.
[72] *Lear*, 4.6.57.
[73] *Comedies and Tragedies Written by Thomas Killigrew* (London, 1664), 377, quoted in Lucy Munro, "'They Eat Each Other's Arms': Stage Blood and Body Parts," in *Shakespeare's and the Effects of Performance*, ed. Tiffany Stern and Farah Karim-Cooper (London: Arden, 2014) 81.

from Thomas Killigrew's *Thomaso, or The Wanderer* in 1654 indicates the potential for even the relatively small focal point of the eye to remind spectators of the lasting visceral impact of violence. The subtle technique provides an opportunity to foreground viscera, not only in scenes of violence, but even in the tender, healing moments of its aftermath.

The implicit spirituality underscoring early modern medicine affords an interpretive conflation of Edgar's blessing with a medical healing act. As Angus Gowland explains, "Successful treatment depended not only on the knowledge and skill of the physician, but on the will of God and (in the Reformed tradition) his bestowal of Grace. Effective medical *practica*, no less than *theoria*, could therefore possess a spiritual basis – hence the large number of early modern physicians who were also divines."[74]

Through his willfully embraced nothingness, Edgar succeeds in liberating his body and self from the manipulative rhetorical models of the court. Shakespeare uses a line break to split the meaning in Edgar's words, "in nothing am I changed/ But in my garments."[75] That implicit pause briefly isolates the otherwise unspoken reality that Edgar has been changed by the catalyst of nothingness. By voluntarily becoming nothing, rather than violently resisting its inevitability, Edgar affords himself the autonomy of retaining his wits where Lear must relinquish his to discover the same truth.

Using his experience to inform sympathy for a fellow body in pain, Edgar may be read as a representative of Frank's "dyadic body," one which "both offers its own pain and receives the reassurance that others recognize what afflicts it."[76] The awareness of other bodies and the recognition of the shared experience of pain does not solve Scarry's linguistic

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[74] Angus Gowland, *The Worlds of Renaissance Melancholy: Robert Burton in Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 43.
[75] *Lear*, 4.6.8.
[76] Frank, 36.

argument that a genuine communication of specific pain cannot be achieved by language.[77] However, Edgar's transformation into Poor Tom constitutes an effort to unify via the shared inevitability of suffering accompanying the embodiment of a physical corpus. Unlike the sudden and unrelenting shocks of suffering undergone in the brief massacre of *Titus*, *Lear*'s focus on the slow and steady decline of the natural body connects to a more universal fate.

Through the lens of "the other-relatedness continuum," Lear may be read as occupying the opposing realm referred to by Frank as the "monadic body."[78] Rather than perceiving the bodies of others as related to one's own, the monadic body is one of isolation and inwardness, "understanding itself as existentially separate and alone."[79] Lear's vision of suffering is driven by his removal from office; associating his health with his capacity to perform his monarchical duties leaves his sense of self trapped in the political body whilst he retreats into his natural body. In this sense, Lear's corporeal selfhood must be learned via a transference of identity from a political figurehead to natural human being, a process requiring the reintegration of the otherwise externalized self into the physical corpus.

As a result of his divided selfhood, Lear's mental and physical deterioration is compartmentalized and removed from his familial relations. The homeostasis of the kingdom depends on and influences the movements of the king's body politic without regard for his body natural. Lear's retreat into the forest is therefore an abandonment of his homeostatic duties within the context of the body politic. He becomes a monadic body whose suffering is both caused and countered by his isolation from the necessary relatedness of the body politic. The natural reset to which Lear exposes his body in the forest comes in direct response to the

[77] Scarry, 4.
[78] Frank, 36.
[79] Ibid.

material inconsistencies imposed on him by the socio-political structures which attempt to define his body both rhetorically and literally.

The King's Two Bodies: Visceral Fallibility in Rhetorical Constructs

The notion of the King's Two Bodies is a mechanism of mediaeval political theology which, although conceptually beneficial to the establishment of monarchal authority, has, at best, "seemingly ludicrous, and in many respects awkward…physiologically amusing traits."[80] At worst, the inequitable division of a king's corporeality into a dominant conceptual half (body politic) which outweighs the value and meaning of the visceral (body natural) dooms the mortal body natural to enter its inevitable aging process blinded by the assumed immortality of the body politic. In Lear, Shakespeare dramatizes the tragedy of a king whose dedication to the metaphor of the body politic robs him of his opportunity to discover corporeal enlightenment via Vesalian *nosce te ipsum*. Instead of identifying with and striving to understand his body's natural degradation, Lear's insistence on the infallible superiority of his body politic widens the gap between the metaphorical and visceral body.

Ernst H. Kantorowicz describes the structure of the Two Bodies axiom in terms of its political priority. Kantorowicz explains, "The King's Two Bodies thus form one unit indivisible, each being fully contained in the other." The physical paradox that both are "fully contained in the other" is then immediately contradicted by Kantorowicz's assessment that "doubt cannot arise concerning the superiority of the body politic over the body natural."[81] This logic can only exist in the realm of the purely theoretical due to its spatial inconsistencies. Even if the first axiom that two bodies contain one another could be true, the

[80] Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1997), 5.
[81] Kantorowicz, 9.

second suggestion that one is greater than the other disputes the logic that the supposedly smaller body can contain the larger in equal measure as previously suggested.

The inconsistent concepts of size and containment in flux throughout the Two Bodies theory clearly operate outside physical constraints. Despite having just declared that both contain the other, Kantorowicz argues, "Not only is the body politic 'more ample and large' than the body natural, but there dwell in the former certain truly mysterious forces which reduce, or even remove, the imperfections of the fragile human nature." The body natural is therefore relegated to a subservient position which is encompassed by the body politic. These inconsistent boundaries between the spatial makeup of the body politic and body natural underscore the explicit disregard for the visceral body even in the implicit suggestion that the body natural somehow represents the king's physical corporeality.

The central downfall of the King's Two Bodies is its assumption that the body natural is singular. Compared to the body politic, the body natural may appear to be a tidy unit of materialism against which to balance the grand concepts of sovereignty. But political ideology fails to recognize the organic multiplicity of the visceral body it co-opts into its metaphors. By Edmund Plowden's count in his 1588 *Reports,* "the king has in him two Bodies, vis, a Body natural, and a Body politic;" the visceral "Body natural" is consolidated into a singular "Body mortal, subject to all Infirmities that come by Nature or Accident, to the Imbecility of Infancy or old Age, and to the like Defects that happen to the natural Bodies of other People."[82] While the notion of a singular body natural may serve the purposes of political theory, early modern medicine might argue Plowden has miscounted. In medical terms, the natural body is made up of the interdependent but practically discrete

[82] Edmund Plowden, *Les Commentaries, ou Reports de Edmund Plowden* (London: Richardi Tottelli, 1588) quoted in Kantorowicz, 7.

morphological body and physiological body. By the necessity of the anatomy and physiology divide in medical practice, the king may be understood as having three bodies: the body politic, whereby he constitutes an embodiment of governance, the body anatomical, which encompasses the king's physical makeup, and the body physiological, the king's feeling, sensing, and processing functionality.

To read *Lear* as a socio-political commentary on the rights of kings illuminates the relationship of the body politic to the body natural, but tends to leave the complexity of the latter largely unaddressed, preferring instead to situate it as a natural, material foil against which to conceptualize the abstract notions of sovereignty.[83] But, in the context of the early modern body, *Lear*'s corporeality has more to offer than the accident prone, slowly decaying vessel implicated by Plowden.

Shakespeare splits morphology from physiology in Lear's body alongside the split between the body politic and body natural. In the first scene of the play, Lear is forced to confront his body natural in the midst of his most intense embodiment of the body politic when Kent demands, "What wouldst thou do, old man?"[84] The bold replacement of honorific address with a stark reminder of the king's inevitable mortality incites a steady unraveling of Lear's two bodies into the corporeally incompatible body politic and body natural. The isolation of one from the other is partly what drives Lear's escape into the wilderness as he struggles to reconnect his divided bodies into a single physical frame on his "unburdened crawl toward death."[85]

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[83] For these socio-political readings on Lear's kingship via the two-bodies model, see Brian Sheerin, "Making Use of Nothing: The Sovereignties of *King Lear*," *Studies in Philology* 110, no. 4 (Fall 2013): 789-811 and Rebecca Munson, "'The Marks of Sovereignty': The Division of the Kingdom and the Division of the Mind in *King Lear*," *Pacific Coast Philology* 46 (2011): 13-27.
[84] *Lear*, 1.1.147.
[85] *Lear*, 1.1.40.

In this sense, Lear eventually takes Kent's advice to "kill thy physician" as he abandons the logic of the court in favor of the unknowable remedies of nature beyond the shortcomings of the physician.[86] The voice of reason, Kent also illustrates the most integrated understanding of morphology and physiology. Upon being commanded "Out of my sight!" by the king, Kent suggests "See better, Lear, and let me still remain/ The true blank of thine eye."[87] The direct linkage of the functions "sight" and "see" with the literal and metaphorical shape of the "eye" subtly reintegrate physiology and morphology. The "true blank" imbues the latter with a double meaning invoking both the corporeal eye and the center of a target whilst connotations of understanding and comprehension accompany "see." Like double-vision resolving into a singular image at the center, Kent's advice reunites the divided form and function to reveal a whole perspective otherwise rendered incomplete by one-sided obsession.

This notion of vision removed from reason and unity returns in Gloucester's narrative, not only in relation to his literal blinding, but as a way of seeing which is corrupted long before the visceral loss of his eyes. Even as Regan builds toward the mutilation of the man's face with an initial plucking of his beard, Gloucester still fails to see his own oncoming peril and instead begs on behalf of the king's relatively unthreatened eyes: "I would not see thy cruel nails pluck out his poor old eyes."[88] His prioritization of the Lear's absent body over his own urgently, viscerally threatened one is reflective of his belief in the unnatural power of the kingly body. Moments before the loss of his own eyes, Gloucester continues to marvel at Lear's physiology and imagined tears that might "holp the heavens to rain."[89] In a strange interpersonal and cosmic humoral rebalance, the heavenly tears Gloucester imagines just

[86] *Lear*, 1.1.164.
[87] *Lear*, 1.1.159-160.
[88] *Lear*, 3.7.55-6.
[89] *Lear*, 3.7.61.

before the spillage of his own "vile jelly" foreshadows the storm whose rains instead help Lear to weep.[90] A closer analysis on the king's humoral relationship with nature in the storm scene will return in the final section of this chapter.

Lear identifies his body politic on the morphological side of the divide when he tells Goneril, "Thou shalt find that I'll resume the shape which thou dost think I have cast off for ever."[91] Lear's understanding of his kingly body as the purely morphological "shape" which he can either wear or remove disconnects his form from his function. Shakespeare creates an imbalance in Lear's body by ascribing his morphology to the body politic but his physiology to his body natural. In a complete body politic, the form of the political hierarchy should serve the function of successful governance. In a complete body natural, the form of the physical body serves the efficient maintenance of vital homeostasis. By mismatching the form of the body politic with the function of the body natural, Shakespeare destabilizes the connection between morphology and physiology within the cultural contexts of early modern medical thought.

François Ost suggests that "the king renounces action from the very first scene and experiences his own dismantlement as a martyrdom throughout the play."[92] Ost situates Lear's physical deterioration as a political process. Disregarding its naturalness, Lear experiences his body's failings as a reflection of his sovereign status. Forcing the supposedly divine kingly body to feel the physical toll of the storm foregrounds the reality of his natural physiology. The physical sensations brought on by exposure to the storm allow Lear to rematerialize from a king into "a poor, infirm, weak and despised old man."[93] By straining

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[90] *Lear*, 3.7.82.
[91] *Lear*, 1.4.300-2.
[92] François Ost, "Weak Kings and Perverted Symbolism: How Shakespeare Treats the Doctrine of the King's Two Bodies," *Pólemos* 9, no. 1 (April 2015): 8.
[93] *Lear*, 3.2.20.

homeostatic function to the point of its undeniability, Shakespeare stages an abstracted vivisection on the sovereign body: an analysis of the vital body of the king as age and vulnerability make externally visible the otherwise illegible undercurrents of internal physiology.

Ost goes on to describe a diegetic audience surrounding the dissolution of the kingdom: "In *King Lear*, the tone is set by clowns, madmen, blind men and other lunatics (amongst whom is Lear himself observing himself) who look on like third-party observers as the kingdom collapses along with the political fiction that supported it."[94] What unifies these third-party observers in relation to the Two Bodies doctrine is their corporeal otherness. While a king's body may have a theoretical otherness via its theological and political duality, the bodies of madmen, blind men, and lunatics experience a visceral otherness. Madness, blindness, and that lunacy which afflicts even the supposedly untouchable king are all ailments which make legible the internal workings of homeostasis. Healthy homeostasis is invisible because it successfully prevents the body from entering those extremes which result in sensations of pain and suffering. The unwell bodies of the corporeally othered are most qualified to witness the downfall of the fictional body politic due to their heightened awareness of their own corporeal states of homeostatic instability.

The political fictions supporting the kingdom and the king's body are eroded by both rhetorical and material nothingness. In order to join the ranks of the homeostatically unstable and fully inhabit his body natural, Lear must relinquish the physical ownership of his kingdom. In doing so, he tests whether his supposedly innate divine sovereignty will survive in a state of nothingness without something to prove it.

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[94] Ibid.

Struggling to reconcile his dual corporealities, Lear's body natural offers no nurturing to his offspring while his body politic offers no regulation to his kingdom. The post-mortem dissection of the king's body might offer insights into the workings of the state by the analysis of his embodied body politic, but even those insights would be limited to the static equilibrium of death: form without function. Nothing of the living body's function will come of the anatomization of the lifeless cadaver. Lear's sense of betrayal and rage against the ingratitude of his daughters is housed with all the rest of his senses and emotions within the inescapable betrayal being perpetrated against him by his own body.

By situating Lear's progressive decay at the center of a play obsessed with anatomization and nothingness, Shakespeare stages the urgent endeavor to understand and control the body before its mysteries are handed over to death. The struggle is both individual and institutional as the anatomist's efforts are founded in the universal human experience of attempting to maintain control of one's body and self throughout the inevitable progress of aging and death. In *Lear*, Shakespeare brings the Vesalian imperative *nosce te ipsum* full circle, not as a lesson passed down from the anatomist, but as a call to action by the aging and ill for whom the study of the body yielded too few answers.

To know one's self by knowing one's body, as Vesalius suggests in his *Epitome*, only yields as much knowledge as the anatomist has provided in his taxonomy. "Nothing" is the inciting moment for Lear's turn to nature for healing because it encapsulates the oblivion his body must come to. The uselessness of the body politic to stop the degeneration of Lear's body natural drives the corporeally divided king to break down his human and divine corporealities into their animal base. The animalism of *Lear* is embedded in his exposure to nature, not simply by placing the king in the realm of the animal, but via the crucial role of the animal subject in the medical tradition of vivisection.

Vivisection: Dramatizing the Impossible Living Dissection

Lear's drive to anatomize his daughters specifically seeks an understanding of their vital actions. His question of Cordelia, "But goes thy heart with this?",[95] interrogates her heart's homeostatic physiology, not simply its morphological shape. The active verb "goes" situates Lear's investigation in the vital movement of the heart, a function invisible to the anatomist limited to dead cadavers. On the necessity of vivisection to illuminate function, Vesalius echoes Galen's words *On Anatomical Procedures* at the end of Book VII of the *Fabrica*:

> Through dissection of the dead we gain accurate knowledge of the number, position, shape, special substance, and composition of each part of the body; and from dissection of a living animal we learn about the function [*functionem*] of each part, or at least gain information that may lead us to deduce that function.[96]

For both Vesalius and Galen, the living animal bridged a significant gap in the pursuit of body knowledge by standing in for humans in the gruesome task of displaying vital physiology. By engaging in linguistic dissections of vital characters and dissolving the boundaries between animal and man, Shakespeare's dramatization of the imagined bodily interior offers a creative route around that scientific gap.

As Cannon established in his coinage of "homeostasis," the body will be misinterpreted if its mutability is not taken into consideration. The study of the body must therefore rely on both scientifically structured and artistically imaginative tools to fully understand its inconsistent subject. Shakespeare's engagement with the body is not simply a

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[95] *Lear*, 1.1.105.
[96] Andreas Vesalius, *De Humani Corporis Libri Septem*, trans. Frank William Richardson and John Burd Carman (Novato: Norman Publishing, 2009), 263.

response to the isolated world of medicine. It is a necessary component of the early modern exploration of the body armed with the resources of imaginative experimentation to stage the clinically impossible. In the case of *Lear*, that impossible case study is the exposure of physiological processes via non-fatal vivisection of human subjects.

Vivisection is a method of examining physiological processes in the living body. It was a popular, if controversial, method in sixteenth-century medicine intended to reveal both living physiology and the alterations to the body in death. Debates raged as to whether dissection could reveal anything about the living body on the basis that it is too altered by death to prove anything about its workings in life. According to Domenico Bertoloni Meli:

> Although dissection and vivisection were practiced and the knowledge they provided was deemed essential, some argued that dissection was useless because the body changed with death, others believed that cutting open a living body altered it to such an extent that no reliable knowledge could be drawn from studying it, while others still were opposed to cutting the animal body altogether, whether dead or alive.[97]

The perpetual fluctuations of temperature, color, pressure, and moisture driving humoralist observations of the living body justify this stance that death's alterations could be as drastic. Morphology was more observable in-tact compared to the physiology halted by death, but both were analyzed with a critical skepticism which kept the scientific method free from unfounded assumptions.

The value of a dead body to the illumination of a living one has been debated since the first century. *De medicina*, the only extant writings of Roman encyclopedist Aulus Cornelius Celsus, recounts the story of a sect of physicians who objected to dissection and vivisection on the grounds that the properties of the body change too dramatically upon death

[97] Domenico Bertoloni Meli, "Early Modern Experimentation on Live Animals," *Journal of the History of Biology* 46 no. 2 (July 2013): 200.

or intervention to provide any useful insight. Instead, Celsus argued that only "the serendipity of wounds" offered an unaltered glimpse into the body.[98] These medical debates were passed down throughout the early modern period via Berengario da Carpi's commentary on the fourteenth-century anatomical treaties of Mondino de Liuzzi. Published in multiple editions between 1514 and 1522, Berengario's illustrated annotations on Mondino predated Vesalius' *Fabrica* by two decades and are regarded as the first anatomical texts to be printed with illustrations.[99] Alongside conceptual derivations of his work throughout Berengario and Mondino, Celsus' *De medicinia* was reprinted twice during the fifteenth century: in Florence in 1478 and Venice in 1497.[100] The question of vivisection and the natural alterations to the body through death are therefore traceable into the public consciousness of popular medicine which forms a part of Shakespeare's cultural context.

R. Allen Shotwell pinpoints a revival of vivisection techniques in the early sixteenth century despite its questionable validity: "Early sixteenth-century anatomists, however, accepted that validity and invoked vivisection to confirm or deny the specific details about differences between the living and the dead."[101] This necessary acceptance helped both anatomy and physiology move forward through the collection and comparison of data. It also enabled the execution of theoretical principles in empirical practice. As Shotwell explains, "For Vesalius, vivisection was a practice that focused specifically on how parts of the body worked as opposed to dissection which focused on the structure of those parts."[102] Hence, the divide between anatomy and physiology is also the divide between dissection and vivisection,

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[98] R. Allen Shotwell, "The Revival of Vivisection in the Sixteenth Century" *Journal of the History of Biology* 46, no. 2 (July 2013): 176.
[99] Ibid.
[100] I. M. L. Donaldson, "Celsus: *De medicina*, Florence 1478. Part I" *The Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh* 44, no. 3 (2014): 252.
[101] Shotwell, 172.
[102] Shotwell, 172.

methodologically. The latter concerns itself with an examination of the active processes otherwise ceased by death, requiring the living sacrifices of many non-human subjects throughout medical history.

The closest early modern medicine gets to human vivisection is the helpful fluke of a revealing accident. According to Shotwell, Vesalius "described his observation of the still-beating heart of a man freshly executed…but this was more a matter of happenstance than the controlled and planned vivisections he described elsewhere in the book."[103] In several accounts throughout the history of cardiology, the story of Charles I introducing William Harvey to the young Viscount Montgomery arises. Montgomery's beating heart was exposed through a large thoracic wound into which Harvey was invited to reach his hand. According to Harvey biographer Robert Willis in 1847, the experiment proved "the heart was without the sense of touch; for the youth never knew when we touched his heart except for the sight or the sensation he had through the external integument."[104] These gruesome incidents offered physicians otherwise impossible perspectives on the vital workings of the bodily interior.

But the alternatives to vivisection are not limited to lucky, often nonetheless fatal accidents. The non-standard, unwell, and diseased bodies of the corporeally othered have a unique perspective on their physiologies via the malfunctions which make them legible. Corporeal selfhood is heightened through crisis as the self must confront the abnormality. Through conscious awareness of the normally imperceptible background functions of the body, the malfunctioning body creates a heightened level of corporeal selfhood by making the self a participant in homeostasis.

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[103] Shotwell, 181.
[104] Robert Willis, *The Works of William Harvey, M.D.* (London: The Sydenham Society, 1847), 382.

An example of this non-standard homeostatic mind/body integration occurs in the life of Teresa de Cartagena, a deaf medieval nun whose meditative writing on her sensory experience crafts a personal ownership of her othered corporeality. Estimated to have been writing circa 1475, de Cartagena's first-person narrative "Arboleda de los Enfermos" ["Grove of the Infirm"] recounts her physical experience of deafness interwoven with its impact on her spiritual and intellectual life. De Cartagena writes:

> When I look at my suffering in temporal terms, it seems very painful and anguished, but when I turn my thought from these concerns, drawing it unto my breast, and I see the solitude that my suffering imposes, separating me from worldly transactions, I call it a kind of solitude, a blessed solitude, a solitude that isolates me from dangerous sins and surrounds me with sure blessings, a solitude that removes me from things harmful and dangerous to both my body and soul.[105]

The literary tools she uses to express her sensorial reality bridge the gap between interior function and exterior observation by translating her inner sensations into externally legible communication. Jonathan Hsy pinpoints de Cartagena's metaphor of drawing thoughts into her breast as a transformation of "mental processes into embodied actions," identifying that "Teresa portrays the intellectual and bodily process of adapting to an ever-shifting world of sensory experience."[106] This adaptation process constitutes a conscientious involvement in homeostatic balance as the subject's awareness of her altered sensory functions creates an autonomous space for her to participate in her otherwise autonomic auditory input processing.

The automatic nature of homeostasis precludes awareness because the myocardial contractions, vasodilations, and temperature adjustments constantly occurring throughout the

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[105] Teresa de Cartagena, "Arboleda de los Enfermos," in *The Writings of Teresa de Cartagena,* trans. Dayle Seidenspinner-Nuñez (Cambridge: Brewer, 1998), 21.
[106] Jonathan Hsy, "Disability," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Body in Literature* ed. David Hillman and Ulrika Maude (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 25.

body would overwhelm the mind if each action had to be consciously executed. Physiological function is therefore a non-entity in the discussion of corporeal selfhood for healthy bodies. Meaning is difficult to invest in a process which is imperceptible. Only when the body is in crisis does physiology become legible in its malfunctions. These experiences of homeostatic malfunctions invite an acute corporeal self-awareness as the conscious mind must process the imbalance and take action to rectify it.

An elegant example of personal agency interceding on malfunctioning physiology occurs in the fourth act of *Lear* in which a messenger describes Cordelia sighing at the sight of the letters from home. He describes how "she heaved the name of father pantingly forth as if it pressed her heart."[107] Cordelia's pressed heart illustrates the tendency in Shakespearean characters to "draw attention to internal somatic feelings in order to interrogate their relation to the world around them."[108] The physical sensation of a constrained heart expresses the psychological weight of Cordelia's grief somatically, and the accompanying sigh reconnects the bodily interior to its surrounding atmosphere. Alongside its role as a communicative signifier of her emotional state, Cordelia's heavy sigh moves fresh air around the heart to cool its overheated agitation. By heaving her father's name from her heart all the way up through her breath, Cordelia willfully enacts a medicinal remedy which resolves her initial inability to heave her heart into her mouth at the start of the play. Like de Cartagena's poetic articulation of physiological experience, Shakespeare crafts a textual vivisection whereby the living subject displays their physiological function through voluntary participation in homeostatic balance.

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[107] *Lear,* 4.3.26-7.
[108] Hillman, *Entrails,* 48.

Shakespeare dramatizes verbal vivisection to capture the body between life and death. When Lear curses Goneril for admonishing the behavior of his knights, he focuses his attack on her fertility: "Into her womb convey sterility, dry up in her the organs of increase."[109] He condemns the function, rather than the form, of her uterus. By imagining the organs dried of the humors balanced by her living homeostasis, Lear pinpoints the vitality of Goneril's body, not in its inert shape, but in its active capacity to create. This focus on the stagnation of fluid exchange injects Goneril's living body with the coagulated humors of the anatomized cadaver. Unlike the dismemberments throughout *Titus* which displace parts from the living body, *Lear* responds to the shortcomings of post-mortem dissection by anatomizing the body before death renders its physiology invisible.

The termination of function preceding the anatomist's work skews the image of the body with a lack of vitality. Although Deyrup-Olsen's focus on cellular biology precludes some of her examples from applying directly to sixteenth-century practice, her description of the physiology missing from cadaver dissection is nonetheless illustrative of the rapidly transitioned divide between the living and dead body:

> Even in the case of organs and tissues such as skin, muscles, and bones which persist apparently intact after death, when this occurs details of structure fade out. It would be impossible to know, from the dead bone in the hand, that this was an active, dynamic structure building and remodeling continuously during the course of life. Nor would the dead skin be recognized as having, as it did in life, the rapidly fluctuating blood supply, and layers of cells actively dividing to replace the surface during use, and migrating, dividing, and repairing after injury.[110]

[109] *Lear,* 1.4.270-1.
[110] Deyrup-Olsen, 587.

Despite the non-applicable references to cellular regeneration, the point of Deyrup-Olsen's description remains relevant to the struggle of medical practitioners throughout history: the separation of physiology from morphology dooms the physician and anatomist to see two isolated halves of an otherwise whole picture. As a result of the historical divide between the observable shapes of the body after death and the investigations into those functions only present in living bodies, it is an imperative of medical pursuits to actively reunite morphologies with their relevant physiologies. Neither dead nor alive, Goneril's dried up organs of increase suspend her body between the vital subject and scientific object in an anatomical fantasy to explore the bodily interior whilst preserving the legibility of its homeostatic functions. Although most expire by the play's conclusion, the sectioning and analyzing of the bodies in *Lear* takes place while they still live. Goneril's curse, Gloucester's blinding, Poor Tom's exposure, and Lear's ongoing deterioration each constitutes a kind of vivisection whereby the suffering living body provides insights into homeostatic function unavailable to post-mortem investigations.

Vivisection was a necessary tool for catching a glimpse of physiology before death altered the body into a state of rapidly degenerating morphology. The progressive deterioration of Lear's body throughout the play instills an urgency to understand and control his interior before it slips into oblivion. When Cordelia says "Nothing,"[111] she confronts a man railing against physical and mental deterioration with a terrifying image of his fate. When her "nothing" is read as the nothingness her father's dead body will become, Lear's response that "nothing will come of nothing"[112] refers not simply to what he cannot give his

[111] *Lear,* 1.1.87.
[112] *Lear,* 1.1.90.

daughters in death, but also to what his body cannot provide to the observations of physicians after the cessation of homeostasis.

Lear's retreat into nature is therefore also underscored with an effort to make something of his oncoming nothing. The baseness he seeks in order to unravel the rhetorical constructs misreading his body carries an innate animalism. By becoming an animal, Lear joins the lower ranks of The Great Chain of Being more well-suited for vivisection. In doing so, he attempts to shift the value of his body from the empty nothingness of a withering and ineffectual monarch to a vital corporeal subject of immense physiological value.

The Human Animal

William Harvey's findings on the movement of the heart and circulation of the blood in his *De motu cordis* of 1628 were largely reliant on dogs, although he occasionally branched out to other animal structures. In one instance, Harvey reports a ligature demonstration on the vena cava of a snake, employing the simplicity of the snake's vascular system to prove that the technique mechanically blocks the flow of blood, as opposed to attracting it, as was popularly believed.[113] In another case, he describes transparent shrimp found in the Thames whose hearts could be observed in motion "with the least possible impediment."[114] These alternative routes through animal bodies to construct a better understanding of human physiology in a post-Vesalian and, by extension, post-Galenic era reasserts the animal body back into comparative human medicine.

When Vesalius disproved the inaccuracies of Galen's comparative anatomies, he focused on the disparity of shapes and missing parts, a reading focused primarily on the form

[113] Meli, 206.
[114] Harvey, "De Motu Cordis," quoted in Meli, 205.

of the functionless dead body. An example of Vesalius' explicit disagreement with Galen over animal anatomy occurs in *The China Root Epistle*:

> To this should be added the difference between man, ape, and dog regarding the fleshy membrane occurring at the sides of the thorax. In those animals the membrane there is nourished by fleshy fibers and is made so muscular that Galen makes a special muscle of it, responsible for motions of the upper arm. But man has nothing in that part in common with cattle, sheep, and the animals just mentioned. It should therefore not appear surprising that I say man does not have this muscle, although with Galen I observe that fleshy place in simians and dogs.[115]

Vesalian anatomy differentiated man from animal by giving specificity and nobility to its parts. The moral elevation of man above animal is rooted in the biblical foundation of man's dominion: "Let vs make man in our image according to our likenesse, and let them rule ouer the fish of the sea, and ouer the foule of the heauen, and ouer the beastes, and ouer all the earth, and ouer euery thing that creepeth and moueth on the earth."[116] The taxonomy delineating man from other categories of fish, fowl, and beast lends structure to the Chain of Being, which formalizes the distance in moral value between animal and man. Vesalius endorses this categorical elevation in his assessment of man as "the most perfect of all creatures,"[117] a stance reinforced by his prioritization of the human cadaver in anatomical taxonomy.

Morphologically, man was reimagined as corporeally separate from animal. Physiology, however, returns to the Galenic reliance on animal bodies, this time not as a sub-par stand-in for human interiority, but as a resource for observing the more universally shared

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[115] Andreas Vesalius, *The China Root Epistle*, ed. and trans. Daniel H. Garrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) 66.
[116] Gen. 1:26 (Geneva Bible).
[117] Andreas Vesalius, "To the Divine Charles V," in *"On the Fabric of the Human Body" An Annotated Translation of the 1543 and 1555 Editions of Andreas Vesalius' "De Humani Corporis Fabrica,"* ed. and trans. Daniel Garrison and Malcom Hast (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2003).

vital processes. As Laurie Shannon argues, "A more systematic classificatory effort, of course, requires as much likening of creatures as differentiations of them."[118] Although Harvey's snake and shrimp feature anatomies incomparable to human organizations of form, they nonetheless share the physiological necessity to move blood through the body, regardless of its vascular system's shape. Shannon identifies Harvey's adherence to a non-binary conflation of man and animal in translation: "It is as likely to translate Harvey's Latin term 'animal' and its declensions as 'creatures' or 'living creatures' as it is to use the 'English' term 'animal.'"[119] The closeness of man and animal as members of the category "creature" finds particular relevance in physiology as the two are not simply measuring sticks for one another, but actively share necessity for homeostasis.

Although Harvey's works emerged in the decades after Shakespeare's life and work, *De motu cordis* represents a critical point in the trajectory of medical advancement throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The development of vivisection techniques began as early as Galen with sixteenth-century anatomists relying on his multiple descriptions of an operation on the recursive (laryngeal) nerves.[120] The crucial difference in the early modern period was the prioritization of first-hand empirical evidence over written descriptions. Even after Vesalius disproved Galen's attempts to map the findings of animal-based experiments onto human bodies, the inclusion of comparative animal dissection and vivisection remained necessary, if understated.

According to Shotwell, "Most anatomical texts of the early sixteenth century were written from the perspective of human, not animal, anatomy and contained only scattered

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[118] Laurie Shannon, "Poor, Bare, Forked: Animal Sovereignty, Human Negative Exceptionalism, and the Natural History of *King Lear*" *Shakespeare Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (July 2009): 180. See also Laurie Shannon, *The Accommodated Animal: Cosmopolity in Shakespearean Locales* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).
[119] Shannon, 174.
[120] Shotwell, 173.

references to animal dissections."[121] In physiological pursuits, living animals were necessary resources for vivisections which could not be performed on human subjects. Despite this unavoidable point of comparison driving physiological studies, the findings were "often described in the context of human bodies without reference to an accompanying vivisection of an animal."[122] The early modern construction of the physiological human body was therefore necessarily dependent on an amalgamation of human and animal properties. Erica Fudge warns against the dangers of ignoring the role of animals in human life. Fudge argues, "Animals can be agents within culture; they are never always only objects."[123]

The entanglement of humanity and animalism underscores and, in some ways undermines, medicine's attempts to elevate the notion of the human body as a noble beast occupying a distinct link on The Great Chain of Being. But even within the structures of the Great Chain distancing humans from animals, humanity is nonetheless dependent on their presence. As Fudge points out, "Humans cannot think about themselves – their cultures, societies, and political structures – without recognizing the importance of nonhumans to themselves, their cultures, societies, and political structures."[124] Shakespeare engages with the underlying hypocrisy of erasing animal influence from the conception of human corporeality via *Lear*'s various preoccupations with beastliness.

More than a short-hand for baseness, references to the beast throughout *Lear* are inexorably linked to humanness. Like the animal's role in medicine, the beastliness of *Lear* is a critical point of comparison against which humanity defines itself through negation. Shakespeare draws on the utility of animal comparison in humanist pursuits, but critically

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[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Erica Fudge, *Renaissance Beasts: of Animals, Humans, and Other Wonderful Creatures* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004) 4.
[124] Ibid.

deconstructs the dichotomy, situating the two not as antithetical extremes, but as cooperative occupants of the same link in The Great Chain. Shannon establishes a "countertradition on the question of species" which situates *Lear* within a leveled framework of being, making a "larger fabric or 'general throng' its frame of reference – rather than making man the measure of all things."[125] Decentering man as the standard measure of nature is crucial to a corporeal reading of *Lear* because the intimate relationship between animal and man in the morphological and physiological construction of the body renders meaningless which is the point of comparison for the other.

Amid Lear's rage in "O, reason not the need!" is an explicit comparison: "Allow not nature more than nature needs: Man's life is cheap as beast's."[126] Although the quarto connects the two lines with a comma, the folio divides them with a colon, setting the simile off as a stand-alone statement. The comma may suggest a reading that man's beastliness comes as a dangerous result of disallowing human nature more than the needs of the animal. However, the distinction of the second line as a self-contained epigram levels the valuation of man and beast.

Lear's obsession with humanity's beastliness reaches beyond the moral categorizations of The Great Chain of Being. By revising the perception of humanity as beast within a specifically physiological context, Shakespeare reasserts man's visceral reality as an animal. Upon witnessing Edgar's naked state, one he specifically crafted as "the basest and most poorest shape that ever penury in contempt of man brought near to beast," Lear affirms the animalism of Edgar's exposure.[127]

> LEAR:
> Why, thou wert better in a grave than to answer with thy
> uncovered body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more

[125] Shannon, 170.
[126] *Lear,* 2.2.458.
[127] *Lear,* 2.2.178-180.

> than this? Consider him well. Thou ow'st the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha? Here's three on's us are sophisticated; thou art the thing itself. Unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings: come, unbutton me here.[128]

Genesis again provides the foundations of the "uncovered body" constituting the crucial "distinguishing principle between 'man and beast'" as "knowledge and sin triggers the shameful onset of a new estate: nakedness."[129] Edgar's awareness of his nakedness inverts the knowledge production in the Garden of Eden. Where Adam understood the shame of his nakedness upon the acquisition of knowledge, Edgar seeks knowledge by unashamedly utilizing his nakedness to understand the effects of nature on the body.

The foregrounding of the "uncovered body" and "unaccommodated man" exposed to the natural elements reinforces the observations of physiological responses to extreme duress. Lear's contemplation of Edgar's unusual state constitutes another non-fatal vivisection in which homeostatic processes are made visible by both the literal exposure of the unclothed body and the strained operations of temperature regulation. When Lear asks "Is man no more than this?" he echoes the comparative methodology of the vivisecting physiologist relying on a continuity between animal and human functions despite their disparate forms. Where the anatomist labels forms in order to delineate man from animal, the physiologist seeks the shared vital needs of all creatures in order to apply readings of animal functions to the human animal.

Shakespeare's specific reference to sheep echoes the point of contention between Galenic and Vesalian comparative anatomies. The *rete mirabile* (previously discussed in

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[128] *Lear*, 3.4.99-107.
[129] Shannon, 190.

Chapter 1) which Galen attempted to locate at the base of the human brain was expressly disproved by Vesalius in his *Fabrica*: "We see it in the heads of the sheep and oxen. I have here set them out lest any think that I do not know the difference between those animals and man."[130] By referencing sheep in Lear's comparative analysis of man and beast, Shakespeare brings the progress of Vesalian medicine full circle to trace the physiological animalism of man back to Galenic conflations. This intentional conflation of animal and man serves to prove that, although morphological structures diverge, physiological processes all strive for the same homeostatic equilibrium.

The ambiguous "beast" to which Lear and Edgar refer as a transformative goal links the term to human baseness, imbuing it with a connotation of humanity in its unsophisticated, natural animalistic state. The Great Chain of Being arranges the moral standing and ascribed value of every life form from plants at the bottom to angels at the top with subdivisions within each category to rank "apes above reptiles above amphibians above fish."[131] Lear's list of worm, beast, sheep, and cat respectively may therefore be read as situating beastly man between the ignoble ranks of worm and sheep. In doing so, Shakespeare breaks down not only the distinction between human and animal, but also the hierarchical system of the Great Chain of Being.

This dissolution of moral ranking is reinforced by Lear's assessment that "Unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art." Alongside this reminder that man's livery masks his true animal nature, Shakespeare's use of "forked" takes on an appropriately duplicitous meaning. Whilst the term literally refers to man's bipedal anatomy, it also carries a connotation of division like the one Lear

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[130] Andreas Vesalius, *On the Human Brain: Introduction, Translation of Text, Translation of Descriptions of Figures*, trans. Charles Singer. (London: Oxford University Press 1952) 621.
[131] Sean Nee, "The Great Chain of Being," *Nature* 435, no. 7041 (May 2005): 429.

deconstructs between animal and man. It also evokes images of other forked anatomy like the serpent's tongue or the goat's cloven hoof, animal emblems both heavily charged with satanic imagery. In Shannon's reading, "calling man 'forked' deflates the normally valorizing accounts of upright status, accounts…that stressed the vertical vector of the human body as enabling both a contemplative gaze and an ontological movement toward divinity."[132] By inverting the upright nobility of man's bipedal nature into a forked image of the duplicitous split tongue, Shakespeare reaches below Edgar's double superlative "basest and most poorest shape" to dredge up the beast occupying the lowest rung on the Great Chain in Satan himself.

The collapse of the Great Chain in Lear's speech is both moral and mortal. His insistence on nakedness as the primary catalyst for levelling man and beast arises throughout the passage, ending with a fatal foreshadow in the Folio edition.[133] As he tears at his clothing and struggles to cast it off, Lear bemoans the restriction with the call to "unbutton here."[134] The explicit precursor to his later request, "Pray you undo this button,"[135] is defined by its dependence on others to assist in the removal of an obstruction to Lear's natural transformation: a request left unfulfilled in the third act which must come to fruition in the fifth.

Shakespeare locates the passage from man to beast within the transitive clasp between the sophisticated and the unaccommodated in the button: a device requiring human dexterity to operate. As his naturalness strengthens in the forest, Lear's courtly dexterity wanes until he must call on the support of others still entrenched in their socio-political ranks to unlatch the constructed gate between worlds. Lear's transformation into this naked embodiment of nature connotes the passage into death as Kent and the Fool restrain him within his garments and

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[132] Shannon, 170.
[133] According to Foakes, line 107 of the 1608 Quarto reads "come on bee true." *Lear* (Arden), 279, note 107.
[134] *Lear,* 3.4.107. *F*
[135] *Lear.* 5.3.308.

insist he "be contented."[136] By contrast, the fulfilment of the request textually evidenced by Lear's reply, "Thank you, sir," in the final act confirms the unbuttoning process and the disrobing it entails as the catalyst by which the body breaches its unnatural livery, breaks its link on the Great Chain, and returns to its natural role integrated with plants, animals, and the cycle of life and death.

Nature: Filling the Gaps of Human Knowledge

In the fourth act, the king introduces himself whilst crowned in flowers: "No, they cannot touch me for coining. I am the king himself."[137] Like the king's body, these sentences hold a dichotomous identity in a single line. The ambiguity of the word "coining" refers both to the royal prerogative to make coins and the act of fabricating ideas and words.[138] In his natural pursuits outside the court, Lear's "coining" describes his fabrication of new perceptions as he casts off traditions that have betrayed him. However, his declaration that "I am the king himself" nonetheless relies on the court he rejects in order to claim his privileges. All this is pronounced whilst he is wreathed in a flower crown of his own fabrication to replace the one he lost by breaking with the traditions of the court.

Where meaning escapes the aging sieve of his mind, Lear patches the gaps with the blossoms of nature to form an identity cobbled together into a hybridization of Shakespeare's classic dichotomy of natural and courtly spheres. The resignation of gaps in human knowledge to nature's domain is an undercurrent of medical science not unlike Lear's revelatory transformation in the forest. As Hannah Newton explains, "Since the body was conceived as a microcosm of the world, the Nature in the body was seen as a miniature

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[136] *Lear,* 3.4.108.
[137] *Lear,* 4.6.83.
[138] *Lear* (Arden), 333, note 83-4.

version of the wider Nature that maintained the order of the universe."[139] Whether dividing the landscape of a kingdom or partitioning the microcosms of the flesh, the pursuits of man turn to the natural structures and movements of nature to explain what human logic cannot.

The Great Chain of Being and The Wheel of Fortune integrate intellectual constructs with elements of nature to secure a place for humanity among overwhelmingly diverse manifestations of life. The body discourse of *Lear* polarizes morphological form and physiological function within civilized and natural spaces to renaturalize the organic corpus in an era of medical systemization. By aligning the court and nature dichotomy with the form and function dichotomy, Shakespeare illuminates the interconnectedness of not only animal and man, as Lear discovers, but also of corporeal shape and homeostatic purpose.

Lear's nature is simultaneously inherent in the notion of health and at odds with the art of medicine. The king's observation that "Nature's above art in that respect"[140] echoes Celsus' account of the "Empirici" physicians who contend "that inquiry about obscure causes and natural actions is superfluous, because nature is not to be comprehended."[141] The relegation of the body's mysteries to the secrets of nature traces the outer borders of medical understanding with an admission that science may access only as much as nature reveals. This contentedness to be ignorant of nature's purpose underscores Lear's healing process through the words of the Fool who casually admits to his limited human knowledge:

> FOOL: Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?
> LEAR: No.
> FOOL: Nor I neither.[142]

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[139] Newton, 470.
[140] *Lear*, 4.6.86.
[141] Aulus Cornelius Celsus, *De Medecina,* trans. W.G. Spencer (London: Heinemann, 1935), 27.
[142] *Lear,* 1.5.25-7.

In the exchange, which comes amid the Fool's satire on the anatomist's guesses at the function and placement of the nose, Shakespeare folds unknowable nature into a comedic moment. Whilst lightening the mood brought about by Lear's tragic revelation that "I did her wrong,"[143] the Fool's contemplations on oyster shells and the circuitous comparisons "as a crab does to a crab"[144] offer the king the freedom of the Celsian perspective, rebuffing his attempts to understand his wrongs with a suggestion that, in their naturalness, some things are simply "not to be comprehended."

In context with early modern medicine's relationship to nature, *Lear* responds to the philosophical debates on the limits of human comprehension. Madness is perhaps not an illness, but rather a liberation from dogmatic modes of thought and a prerequisite to knowledge previously thought unattainable. Aubrey C. Kail suggests that "Lear's deterioration is a case history of senile dementia, of mental and physical decay, brought on and aggravated by misfortune and advancing years."[145] Kail's projection of modern diagnoses onto a fictional, historical character is both unproductive and limiting. By forcing Lear into a modern medical context, Kail misreads the early modern relationship of mind, body, and soul which prioritizes the inherent interconnectedness of all three. Summarizing Lear as a simple case of dementia also fails to understand the value of the medical humanities as a cooperative, creative process.

Kail's diagnosis dictates a historically irrelevant solution to a nonexistent problem. The real value of the play is not in the classification of a singular character's specific ailment. From a recontextualized early modern medical perspective, *Lear* offers a creative space in which to experiment with the outermost boundaries of knowledge which pass into the

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[143] *Lear,* 1.5.24.
[144] *Lear,* 1.5.18.
[145] Aubrey C. Kail, *The Medical Mind of Shakespeare* (Balgowlah: Williams & Wilkins, 1986) 61.

inexplicable realm of nature. Hsy identifies a critical movement away from diagnoses like Kail's in his work on Disability literature. Hsy points out, "Current literary approaches to disability turn away from such medical models, urging readers to avoid pathologizing texts and attend to works on their own terms."[146] Although slightly displaced by the fictional subject in the case of *Lear*, Hsy's prioritization of the patient's perspective still stands. When Kail goes on to suggest "his cure begins by the medically accepted means of music and complete rest," she specifically disregards the king's time spent in nature as a potential curative method undertaken by Lear on his own terms. By investing Lear's only means for cure in the hands of the "acceptable" physician, Kail misses the point that Lear's exploration of corporeality and selfhood in nature comes specifically as a reaction to the shortcomings of the physician's knowledge.

According to Celsus, "The Art of Medicine was not a discovery following upon reasoning, but after the discovery of the remedy, the reason for it was sought out."[147] In order to progress, medicine must make its starting point the admission of ignorance and openness to the inexplicable. The transplantation of Lear's logical body politic into the madness of nature represents a crossover from reason-driven systematization to discovery-driven revelation. More than a romantic escapist narrative, Lear's exploration of his body natural in the wilderness participates in a scientific tradition retold since the first century. By situating the king's abandonment of reason as a prerequisite to his discoveries of selfhood, Shakespeare aligns the anatomies of *Lear* with the inverted scientific method of the empiricists. Lear in his madness, Edgar in his exposure, and Gloucester in his blindness are all forced to prioritize experience over reason in the natural laboratory of the wilderness.

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[146] Hsy, 36.
[147] Celsus, 36.

This prioritization of observable experience over theoretical imaginings reflects the progress of medicine from its morphological origins. Morphology comes first because it reveals itself to empirical observation. Physiology comes second because it relies on a combination of shape and imaginative reasoning to determine function. The adage that "form follows function" is a trick to justify medicine's best guesses at explaining the unobservable processes of Celsus's unknowable nature. The functional elements of homeostasis, whilst subject to reason, are nonetheless partly submerged in nature's mystery.

Lear is infused with broad constellations of interdisciplinary influence, some of which may be traced to Shakespeare's potential familiarity with Phillip Barrough's *Method of Physic*, as traced in Chapter 1. Barrough's influence bears repeating here regarding his linked approach to morphology and physiology. As F. David Hoeniger explains, "[Barrough] was licensed by Cambridge University to practice medicine and surgery, one of the few examples of men who engaged in both."[148] With Barrough's work steeped in both physiological medicine and morphological surgery, the *Method of Physic* offers a reunification of form and function.

Shakespeare identifies this link between homeostatic functions, mental and physical health, and the effects of both on the self in a passage of the second act. Upon his daughters' denials to speak with him, Lear shifts suddenly from a hateful outburst of "Vengeance, plague, death, confusion!"[149] to surprisingly lucid reasoning on the importance of health to the selfhood and diligence of the king.

> LEAR: No, but not yet, maybe he is not well;
> Infirmity doth still neglect all office
> Whereto our health is bound. We are not ourselves
> When nature, being oppressed, commands the mind

[148] F. David Hoeniger, *Medicine and Shakespeare in the English Renaissance* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992), 48.
[149] *Lear,* 2.2.284.

To suffer with the body.[150]

The conception of illness as oppressed nature situates homeostasis as a natural state, aligning nature with the physiology side of the morphology and physiology dichotomy. The link between "infirmity" and "ourselves" situates selfhood corporeally via Lear's argument that one may lose their selfhood when the office by which they are defined is forcefully abandoned by the unwell body. Lear also displaces himself from his suffering with the ambiguous pronoun in "maybe he is not well." Despite this attempted dissociation, the king is nonetheless forced to recognize the inevitable interconnectedness of mind and body in shared suffering. Political and natural, mind and flesh, self and other, are all inexorably linked in his singular body. His efforts to escape sections of the taxonomically and metaphorically divided body expose the fallacy of constructed binaries in the fluctuating organic body. The breakdown in Lear's logic may therefore be read as the result of his discovery that the structures science and politics build to organize knowledge and power are imaginary.

Lear's replacement of court logic with his own fabrications is illuminated when Edgar confronts him with a body metaphor. Anguished at the disheveled appearance of the declining monarch, Edgar calls upon a synesthetic metaphor to express his grief: "O thou side-piercing sight!"[151] His analogy makes a logical connection between the shock of witnessing a once-regal man's decline and the physical sensation of a knife wound. The specificity of the pierced side also alludes to Christ's torment on the cross by the blind, spear-wielding centurion, Longinus. As the late medieval allegorical poem *Piers Plowman* tells it, "'The bloed sprang down by the spere and vnspered the knyghtes yes' (The blood poured down by the spear and unsealed the knight's eyes)."[152] By linking sight to the side wound,

[150] *Lear,* 2.2.294-8
[151] *Lear,* 4.6.85.
[152] William Langland, *Piers Plowman*, quoted and modernized in Scott, *Fluid Bodies,* 89.

Shakespeare draws on Longinus' miraculously cured blindness to situate Lear as a Christ figure whose deterioration holds restorative powers.

Despite Shakespeare's reliance on Christian iconography, Lear's god is not explicitly Christian. As Foakes notes, "*King Lear* refers directly only to pagan gods."[153] Lear's response to Edgar's comment unravels the logic of the body metaphor and recenters the religious allusion onto the secular deity governing his rehabilitation in the forest. When the king replies, "Nature's above art in that respect"[154] he literalizes "side-piercing sight" as a confusion of sensory and pain reception. To such an affliction, he offers the commiserative advice that there are some natural processes of the body which the art of medicine may never understand. Again, Lear's prioritization of nature over art echoes Celsus and concedes medicine's shortcomings in the effort to explain the organic complexities of the body. Shakespeare parallels the miraculous epiphanies yielded by nature above the art of man with Christ's miraculous bloodshed. In this religious context, "side-piercing sight" is not a description of a painful display, but of a new perspective gained through the physical exchange of blood and tears at the end of Longinus' spear.

As the rhetorical models of the King's Two Bodies and the Great Chain of Being confront Lear with a division between humanity and nature, the king finds new sight in nature by repositioning his body within, rather than above it. Neil Rhodes explains of humoral theory: "This physiological model was located within a wider cosmology in which the human and natural worlds reciprocated each other."[155] Shakespeare's focus on physiology and nature in Lear's journey builds up to a grand reciprocity in which the king who once misinterpreted himself as isolated divinity realizes his communal role in a universal humoral ecosystem.

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[153] Foakes, 32.
[154] *Lear*, 4.6.86
[155] Neil Rhodes, "The Science of the Heart: Shakespeare, Kames, and the 18th Century Invention of the Human," in *Posthumanist Shakespeares* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2012), 26.

Planetary Homeostasis

Critical responses to Lear's madness often gloss the visceral elements embedded in the language and, in so doing, disconnect mind from body. Foakes argues of Lear's entrance into the storm that, "The violence done to Lear thus far is psychological, symbolically figured in the storm that mirrors his inner turmoil and pushes him into madness."[156] The tumultuous interiority Foakes situates as purely psychological disregards the physiology integral to the storm scene. It is a flaw of binary mind/body separation that "inner turmoil" supersedes corporeal meaning and refers wholly to the king's mental health in isolation from the physical. The corporeal language of the speech reintegrates mind, body, and nature. If the storm mirrors Lear's interiority, then its reflection reveals a material corporeality at the core of the king's struggle.

Hillman's visceral contextualization of Shakespeare in the "somatic precariousness of the age" includes "the gradually changing understanding of the relation of the body to its environment, a shift that eventually cordoned off the interior of the body from the surrounding cosmos in ways which profoundly influenced the birth of modern subjectivity."[157] In Lear's relationship to the storm, Shakespeare reflects on the early modern preoccupation with somatic boundaries between mind, self, and environment by dissolving them to reinstate subjectivity's continuity between individual and cosmic bodies. Emotion, its physiological manifestations, and the cosmic reciprocation of those physiological fluctuations all come together as Lear enters the storm.

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[156] Foakes, 65.
[157] Hillman, *Entrails*, 2.

The physiological body is material, but formless. Like the humoral body, physiology balances temperatures, pressures, and moistures. Paster's notion of the passions as "liquid forces of nature" describes the natural microcosm of the physiological body and its corresponding meteorological macrocosm.[158] The linkage of the humoral body to natural elements of air, water, fire, and earth is not restricted to a metaphorical abstract. The elemental foundation of humoralism arises from the body's natural states of dryness, wetness, heat, and cold. The body and the storm are not symbolic parallels; they are physically contained within one another, even more literally than the body politic is alleged to reside within the king's body natural.

Lear personifies the storm by directly addressing it and imbuing it with physiological properties of respiration and digestion. "Blow winds and crack your cheeks"[159] elicits cartographical images of the Anemoi, the classical Greek gods of the four winds whose breath whips up storms and churns the seas (see fig. 4.2).

[158] Gail Kern Paster, *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 4.
[159] *Lear,* 3.2.1.



Figure 4.2. Anonymous German, *Von den Winden* 1534. Courtesy of The Warburg Institute Library. https://library.artstor.org/asset/AWARBURGIG_10313248614.

But Shakespeare does not address the Anemoi by name. Instead, he adopts their tradition of atmospheric embodiment and allows Lear to build his own notion of corporeality for nature's outpouring. Where the Anemoi are fragmented into mouths capable only of breath, Lear witnesses the whole body of the storm spitting and striking and groaning: "Rumble thy bellyful! Spit fire, spout rain!"[160] In this address to the sound and elemental secretions of the storm, Shakespeare moves beyond the one-sided personification of the wind and fleshes out an atmospheric body capable of digestive rumblings and salivation.

The loud, leaking, massive body of Lear's storm expands the personification of the blowing wind to encompass a complex, multi-system body. Unlike the idealized godly bodies

[160] *Lear,* 3.2.14.

of the Anemoi or Jupiter,[161] the body of Lear's storm is chaotic and arguably unwell. Read against the physiologically strained king, the storm may be read as the nauseated and sighing sick Nature with whom Lear identifies. The storm is not a symbol of the psychological toll of the court or a manifestation of Lear's emotional inner demons. It is the body of Nature made visible by its homeostatic functions. It is a culmination of physiological processes without shape, made up of temperatures, pressures, and moisture which balance the elements of the body.

The storm is the physiology of the body natural and that body is female. Paster examines "a culturally familiar discourse about the female body" which "inscribes women as leaky vessels by isolating one element of the female body's material expressiveness – its production of fluids – as excessive, hence either disturbing or shameful."[162] In context with early modern gendered body conventions, the attention paid to overflowing, uncontrolled, and therefore threatening fluids of the embodied "drenched" and "drowned" storm are implicitly encoded as female.[163] The hydrodynamics of the feminine body and the atmospheric fluctuations of the earth function in tandem with humoralism's universal balance. The natural body is not only an isolated organic microcosm, but a part of the macrocosm of Nature.

Anne M. Scott explains of premodern bodily fluidity, "Individual complexion was not really stable, being subject to constant disruption through disease. In its constant negotiations for a variable and unique balance, always under some threat, the fluidity of the body reflected both the promising and dangerous malleability of the world." Scott goes on to argue that "the human body mirrored the transformations of the world and vice versa."[164] While the image of

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[161] *Lear* (Arden), 263, note 5-6.
[162] Paster, *Humoring the Body*, 25.
[163] *Lear*, 3.1.10.
[164] Scott, 2.

the microcosmic body as mirror provides a helpful framework for understanding the relationship between the body and nature in early modern thought, it is nonetheless isolating in its conceptual division.

A core tenet of humoralism is exchange. In order to maintain balance, free movement must be allowed not only within the body, but between bodies and environments. As Scott points out, the ability to change is a critical component of the body's defenses against illness. However, to situate these changes as a reflection of the world rather than a component of it displaces the body from its role in the macrocosmic exchange of natural matter. In its warmth, moisture, and movement, a single breath participates in the great chemical exchange which forms the homeostatic ecosystem of the planet.

To centralize ecocriticism within corporeal discourse, it is useful to turn to Gabriel Egan for his Shakespearean readings through the lens of James Lovelock's Gaia Theory. Egan describes Lovelock's contested 1972 theory as "a chemical model of a complex interconnected chain of reactions whose ultimate effect was to regulate the conditions on Earth for the benefit of its life-forms."[165] Gaia Theory has influenced a variety of ecocritical perspectives from natural philosophy to the modern climate change debate. Its central relevance to the discussion of *Lear* rests on its formulation of Earth's atmosphere as a body of vitality and exchange. The notion of "vitality" is not to be confused here with the "organic" as Gaia crucially includes inorganic matter in its chain of chemical regulations. Egan argues that any distinction between organic matter ("the biota") and "the inanimate oceans, rocks, and clouds"[166] is artificial because interactions between all elements on the planet constitute the full cycle.

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[165] Gabriel Egan, "Homoeostasis in Shakespeare," in *Posthumanist Shakespeares* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 78.
[166] Egan, 78.

According to Egan, "These inanimate parts are coupled in chemical processes with the biota, and the proper perspective is to treat the entire Earth as a super-organism composed of many kinds of subsidiary organisms."[167] The Earth is a body and, just as the body's inventory of parts resists the myth of wholeness, it is comprised of a unified but diverse interdependent collection which includes the biota as well as the inanimate matter of land, sea, and sky. The result (or goal, depending on one's evolutionary perspective) of this interdependency is the creation of an atmospheric maintenance state. As Egan puts it, "The Gaia hypothesis treats the Earth's chemical and thermodynamic processes not as life itself but as a collection of tightly coupled feedback loops producing planetary homeostasis, or self-regulation."[168] The applicability of the term "homeostasis" to both the natural cycles of planetary regulation and the vital mechanisms of the body is neither coincidence nor reflective of parallel systems, but rather a singular system including the input and output of both body and environment.

Shakespeare relies on this system of exchange between body and environment as the storm's fluidity tempers Lear's homeostasis. The lack of control manifested in the excessive leaky vessel are, in turn, parallel to the symptoms of Lear's declining health. As the king rails against his increasingly out of control body, his thoughts and speeches overflow into fluid babbling reflective of a womanly "excessive verbal fluency."[169] Such liberal outpourings are strictly denounced in the political sphere in order to barricade dangerous emotions from diplomacy. As Scott illuminates of Catherine de' Medici's political tears: "the use of tears, whether in women or men, was traditionally viewed as a sign of weakness. But Catherine's tears became a strategic tool, which she wielded in the face of the fears experienced by male

[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Paster, *Humoring the Body,* 25.

diplomats: fears of emotional contagion, including the dangerous power of empathy in the diplomatic moment."[170] For Catherine, this strategy reclaims power in an act socio-politically framed as feminine. For Lear, the same strategy is blockaded by gendered bias.

Lear's anxieties about becoming female in his liquid physiology arise throughout the play as he consistently admonishes his eyes for spilling tears. His threat to his own eyes in the first act – "Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck ye out"[171] – comes to an obsessive climax as the storm builds into an explicitly gendered fear through the end of the second act: "Let not women's weapons, water-drops, stain my man's cheeks."[172] As Lear's body threatens to betray his masculinity by overflowing, the pregnant storm prepares to shower him in the excess he fails to dam up. His insistence, "You think I'll weep, No, I'll not weep. I have full cause of weeping, but this heart shall break into a hundred thousand flaws or e'er I'll weep,"[173] betrays the façade failing to hide his emotional blockage moments before breaking.

Lear's emotional blockage manifests viscerally in a dangerous humoral imbalance requiring purgation. As Schoenfedt describes, "Under the Galenic regime of the humors … soundness of mind and body is achieved not by immuring bodily fluids, but rather by carefully manipulating them," underscoring treatment methods with a "critical link between health and flow."[174] Schoenfeldt responds to Paster's pathologized leaky body by reading the act of physiological regulation, not as an embarrassment, but as an opportunity for corporeal constructivism, casting "all acts of ingestion and excretion as very literal acts of self-fashioning" via a "self-control that authorizes individuality."[175] Lear's emotional engagement with the storm constitutes a regulatory process driven by an autonomous sense of self.

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[170] Scott, 6.
[171] *Lear,* 1.4.294.
[172] *Lear,* 2.2.459.
[173] *Lear,* 2.2.
[174] Schoenfeldt, 14.
[175] Ibid, 11.

His challenges to "rage, blow!" seem to antagonize, but as the storm's spouts drench and drown, Lear's refusal to seek shelter creates an alliance with the storm whereby he is allowed to share in the overflowing emotion embodied in the humoral excess of the deluge. Nature allows him the freedom denied within the gendered boundaries of the court to feel his heartbreak to its most excessive extreme. By wetting his cheeks with her rain, Nature invites the blocked channels of the king's emotional physiology to open whilst she hides the tears Lear feared to shed. The fool affirms Lear's necessity to escape his maleness in the freedom of the storm when he asserts, "Man's nature cannot carry th'affliction, nor the fear."[176] Although "man" may be read as "human," the line's context of fluid excesses evokes a gendered reading in humoral terms. The affliction of excessive fluid production conventional to female physiology is situated as an unbearable burden to the natural homeostasis of the male body. Shakespeare infuses Lear's retort with images of a shaken and insistently gendered "man's life" which must:

> Close pent-up guilts
> Rive your concealing continents and cry
> These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man
> More sinned against than sinning.[177]

In these "pent-up guilts" and "concealing continents," Lear imagines the dams men build against their emotional excesses and sets himself apart as one who has broken through and survived the female power of the storm's fluid excess. While his challenge to "cry these dreadful summoners grace" invokes confession and a plea for mercy, Shakespeare's alignment of the bursting "cry" beyond continents and his reassertion "I am a man" at the ends of adjacent lines confirms Lear's transcendence of gendered physiology by the storm's

[176] *Lear,* 3.2.48-9.
[177] *Lear,* 3.2.57-9.

invocation of his male tears. Alongside his revelatory return to a natural healing process outside the court, Lear transcends the social structures of gender in his exchange with the storm and reintegrates his once politically displaced self with his corporeal body in its homeostatic continuity with Nature.

Conclusion

For all the conceptual anatomization throughout *King Lear*, the visceral body remains central. The corporeal selfhood of *Lear* is built on complex inner mechanisms progressively exposed by homeostatic malfunction and vivisecting words. Shakespeare's deconstruction of the boundaries between man, animal, and nature connect a circuit which began with the comparative anatomies of Galen, progressed in Vesalian, political, and theological elevations of the noble human body, and returned to a reintegration of humanity's basic animalism. The reliance on non-human subjects to make homeostasis visible through vivisection was not a compromise to human nobility, but a revelation that the human is an animal. No matter how disparate the realms they occupy along the moral or intellectual strata of The Great Chain, human and animal yield equivocal value on the anatomy theatre's examination table.

Lear's description of Kent's corporeal fate as "dead and rotten" in the final scenes reinforces a visceral return to nature.[178] However, even with his newfound respect for the enlightened animalism of Poor Tom, Lear's personal trajectory into "unaccommodated man" affords him a perspective on the value of human life which ultimately informs his love and grief for Cordelia. Fulfilling the quiet foreshadow of "unbutton here" with Edgar in the woods, Lear's final breath seeking someone to "undo this button" is prefaced by the king's full rehabilitation. In the end, Lear learns to reconcile humanity's value over beasts by

[178] *Lear,* 5.3.283.

turning his introspective monadic body toward the other-relatedness of the dyadic body. Lear's response to Cordelia's death is specifically focused on her elevated human value on the Great Chain which Lear himself rejected in the forest: "Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life and thou no breath at all?"[179] In this moment, five lines before his death, Lear expresses an outward compassion in which the nihilistic fate he resolves for himself is deemed unworthy to claim his daughter.

Lear uses the formal "you" in his first address to Cordelia – "What can you say to draw a third more opulent than your sisters?"[180] – situating her as a subject rather than family. This subtle feature of tone proves significant by contrast with these final lines. The familiar "thou" in the end signifies Lear's final transcendence beyond his consuming political body into the ownership of his natural body whose divine and political roles are eclipsed by his natural role of fatherhood.

Lear finds that what separates man from animal is not a lack of baseness – in the forest, he still has access to that baseness within himself – but rather the rational capacities for forgiveness and compassion. This distinction is grounded in the corporeal makeup of humans in the form of rational spirit, a physiological substance which, unlike vital and sensitive spirit, appears only in humans. As Karin Sellberg explains of Crooke's hierarchy of spirits, "the purest and hottest rational spirit is delivered to the brain through the nerves or sinews."[181] The human rational spirit enables the rational thought which delivers Lear to his reconciliation.

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[179] *Lear,* 5.3.305-6.
[180] *Lear,* 1.1.85-6.
[181] Karin Sellberg, "'Bloody Business': Passions and Regulation of Sanguinity in William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *King Lear,*" in *Fluid Bodies and Bodily Fluids in Premodern Europe,* ed. Anne M. Scott and Michael David Barbezat (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2019) 119.

The literal dead body in the anatomy theatre and the performative one in theatre share visceral value by displaying the purely corporeal to observe its innate meanings. In the conclusion of *Lear*, the dead bodies on stage occupy a realm which prioritizes the bodies over the spectacle of death. Albany heralds the posthumous entrance of Goneril and Regan with the call, "Produce the bodies, be they alive or dead." His equivocal ascription of "bodies" to both alive and dead states of being forges a continuity between living subject and dead object. Foakes points out that "Shakespeare had to find a way to have them die so that the last scene could display Lear with the bodies of all three daughters, destroyed by a process he started with the division of the kingdom."[182] His focus on the "display" of the bodies draws attention to their inert objectivity. Their presentation on-stage despite their off-stage demises invests value in the corpus as opposed to the machinations of vitality so intently pursued throughout the play.

Actively carrying dead bodies out onto the stage for display takes a step beyond the on-stage deaths which decorate the final scenes of *Titus* and *Coriolanus* because the presence of the body is not simply a symptom of the death. Cordelia, Goneril, and Regan's bodies are more important than their deaths because the dead bodies, rather than the death, are staged. The bodies contain the meaning, not the events of their demise. After a play full of imagined, linguistic, and experimental vivisections focused on vital physiologies, the purely morphological forms of the dead bodies also reinforce the shortcomings of anatomical pursuits when the processes of the living body are erased from the dissected cadaver.

The re-emergence of the three daughters on-stage as dead bodies makes their deaths more than by-products of their father's choices. Having all died off-stage, their deaths threaten to stand as consequences linked solely to the effect on Lear, rather than events

[182] Foakes, 43.

concluding the lives of the women themselves. The intense focus on the body as the site of identity formation throughout the play, however, imbues the women's dead bodies with not only echoes of their lives, but physical evidence of their corporeal identities. Their active return to the stage, therefore, reads not as a grotesque display of Lear's consequences, but as a reverential prioritization of the person inherent in the body. The fate of the daughters' bodies at the end of *Lear* is not the head on the spike outside the Tower of London warning criminals of the punishment awaiting them. It is, instead, an echo of the person-first respect paid to the cadavers, even the criminal ones, whose contributions to the work of the anatomy theatre formed the early modern notion of the body which, in turn, provided the resources for the humanities to imbue its knowledge of self with a corporeal grounding.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to establish a way of reading identity in the visceral material of the body through individual agency, resistance to metaphorical usurpation, and the investment of personal meaning into anatomical and physiological properties of being. As Holbein's anamorphic skull demands, the standardized assumptions of art, science, and both fields' relationships to one another must be dismantled in order to read the body within its crucially interdisciplinary and transhistorical context. Along with this reorganization of categorical disciplines, the body also requires a deconstruction of the governing principles of space, composition, and mechanics across intersecting planes of interiority and exteriority, part and whole, and form and function. In breaking down this system of binaries which strive to define the limits of the body, this thesis has sought a route to the self embedded in the visceral flesh. That route is mapped out in the exemplary execution of corporeal selfhood throughout the Shakespearean canon.

The early modern body in general and the Shakespearean body in particular both represent crucial steps in the incremental continuum of body knowledge which reaches back through Galen and forward into the present. Vesalian empiricism drove the corporeal imperatives of *nosce te impsum* throughout the early modern period with hands-on accessibility in the form of the *Fabrica* alongside wider reaching vernacular publications from physicians like Barrough and Moulton. These dissemination efforts enabled laypeople like Samuel Pepys to distil an acutely personal notion of the individual body derived from empirically tested scientific foundations.

Shakespeare makes use of both the scientific debates emerging out of the universities and the personalized notions of the body developing throughout the arts to dramatize the corporeal self. In *Coriolanus*, he stages the conflict between outdated modes of physically displaced theoretical bodies and the urgent visceral presence of the wounded and bleeding. Through Menenius, the material body of Coriolanus is exposed to the manipulation of political rhetoric. Coriolanus rejects his forced ascension into the conceptual tool of the state and emerges triumphantly revisceralized by orchestrating the physical dismemberment of his materially manifested body politic. From the primary interiority of the womb to the integral constructivism of scar tissue, *Coriolanus* traces the outer-most limits of the flesh and finds them far beyond the permeable and transitory skin envelope. The titular soldier exemplifies the power of a strong corporeal selfhood to combat the objectifying and dehumanizing force of standardized, rhetorical, and theoretical bodies.

The investment of meaning into the visceral flesh is most ripe in its severed parts. Through hands, heads, and tongue, *Titus* concentrates corporeal identities in the isolated fragment. By foregrounding both the incomplete bodies and their detached parts, Shakespeare situates the corporeal fragment not simply as a vessel for the self, but as a liberated site of ongoing selfhood. The constructivism throughout the play rests on a corporeal selfhood based on adaptive reorganization. Titus and Lavinia's complimentary wrist disarticulations forge a corporeally materialized familial bond whilst nonetheless remaining distinct experiences encoded by incongruous experiences of gendered agency. Poetic conventions, rather than political rhetoric, serve as the antagonistic theoretical body threatening to replace the visceral. Shakespeare's satirical take on the blazon tradition confronts the stylized, objectified, and conceptually fragmented female body with the brutal consequences of the viscerally fragmented one.

By dismantling the mythological whole body into a compendium of parts, the binary deconstructions of *Titus* raise the question of whether the body can ever be reunified when the primary means of investigation requires its systematic destruction. In their reassertion of vital function, *Lear*'s homeostatic bodies revivify the analyzed cadaver. Indebted to the sacrificial dogs on the vivisection table and aligned with the atmospheric pressures of planetary homeostasis, the king's body is neither singular man nor collective state, but instead an integral element of a collapsed Great Chain of Being. Lear's return to nature is not simply a disavowal of the rhetoric of the court, but a reassertion of the inherent naturalness of the body prior to its systematic taxonomies and the social, political, and poetic reinterpretations they engender.

The systematization of the body necessary to lend structure to medical analysis carries inherent limitations which objective science lacks the means to address. The participation of the arts in the development of the body is a crucial means of processing scientific revelations and reintegrating those objectively displaced findings into the living, experiential, personal body. Self knowledge is inherently comprised of corporeal knowledge in every breath we pause to take, every gut feeling we consider, and every heartbeat that makes itself known by jumping a little bit out of sync. These details of corporeal existence which our homeostatic maintenance works to hide from conscious thought comprise a literally vital element of human identity. No metaphors or emblematic layers of meaning are necessary to imbue the body with the value it inherently provides to the composite self simply by being. A poet unbound by convention with an eye for the inherent value of the physical body, Shakespeare engages a visceral craftsmanship borne of his contemporary science, art, and nature to dramatize a self which is intimately and irrevocably corporeal.

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