Introduction
An Amber Casket

> While a viper crawled among the weeping branches of the Heliads, a drop of amber flowed onto the creature in its path. As it marveled to find itself stuck fast in the viscous liquid, it stiffened, bound of a sudden by congealed ice. Be not proud, Cleopatra, of your royal sepulcher, if a viper lies in a nobler tomb.
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> – Martial[1]

Writing in the late fifteenth century, the humanist Giovanni Pontano recalled a diminutive monument presented to King Alfonso of Naples by the merchant and antiquarian, Cyriac of Ancona: a piece of amber that contained a fly with its wings open; "a thing so small," he wrote, "but one whose rarity rendered it most great in the eyes of the king" ("succino eum donovit quo pansis alis musca includebatur, parva immo pusilla sane res, at raritas apud principem").[2]

I begin with Cyriac's memorable gift to offer a parable, a figuration, and a myth that, collectively, define the central concerns of this study. The inclusion and its textual transmission tell a story of the anxiety and ambivalence attending the retrieval and reuse of remnants of the past. The artifact presents figuration of the phenomenal interrelations of subjects and objects, particularly as religion creates communities that join the faithful with each other and with the material accessories of belief.[3] The mythic origins of amber, finally, are rooted in women's mourning and commemoration, positing a suggestive alignment of femininity with

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[1] Martial, *Epigram*s, 4:59: "Flentibus Heliadum ramis dum vipera repit, / fluxit in obstantem sucina gutta feram: / quae dum miratur pingui se rore teneri, / concreto riguit vincta repente gelu. / ne tibi regali placeas, Cleopatra, sepulchro, / vipera si tumulo nobiliore iacet."

[2] Pontano, *Opere*, fols. y5^v-y6^r. For a modern Latin-Italian edition, see Pontano, *I libri delle virtu sociali*, 212–13. On Pontano, see Hersey, *Alfonso II*; and Welch, "Public Magnificence." On Ciriaco de' Pizzicolli (Cyriac of Ancona) (1391–1452), see Bodnar and Foss, eds., *Cyriac of Ancona*; Saxl, "Classical Inscription"; and Kokole, "Cyriacus of Ancona."

[3] I adopt Braidotti's definition of figuration throughout as "no metaphor" but a representation that expresses materially embedded subject positions: see *Nomadic Subjects*, 10–11.

materiality that invites one to see gender as both embodied in and produced by memorial acts and objects.

This book explores the visual, textual, and material monuments that characterize the culture of remembrance in post-Reformation England. In the chapters following, I investigate how commemorative objects and texts were used in innovative ways to preserve memory; negotiate shifts in religious belief and practice; and craft personal, national, and confessional narratives in the century stretching from the Elizabethan Settlement to the English Civil War. Whether situated in churches or circulating in more flexible, mobile works – manuscript and printed texts, needlework, jewels and rosaries, personal bequests, or antique "rarities" – monuments were ubiquitous in post-Reformation England. Beginning in the sacred space of the parish church, this study moves beyond that location to argue that in this period of religious change, the unsettled meanings of sacred sites and objects encouraged a new conception of remembrance and, with it, changed relationships between devotional and secular writings, arts, and identities.

The amber inclusion preserved in Pontano's text is emblematic of Renaissance antiquarianism itself, a project initiated by "the founding father of archaeology," Cyriac, and his humanist redactors and continued, albeit with different motives, in the chorographic activities of the English Society of Antiquaries a century later.[4] The relic is a morsel to whet the appetite for greater riches promised by archaeological and mercantile enterprises in the Mediterranean world. Like the object, Cyriac's drawings and transcriptions of classical monuments made during his travels throughout the region document the wondrous but woefully ephemeral traces of a past available only in fragments. Writing from Heraklion in October 1445, Cyriac admires one such marvelous fragment in terms that suggest his attraction to the inclusion (see Figure I.1). He begins by transcribing the object's Greek inscription – an epitaph commemorating its maker – and goes on to describe the "wondrous beauty" of "a splendid crystalline signet seal the size of a thumb that is engraved in deep relief with a bust of helmeted Alexander of Macedon, the marvelous workmanship of the artisan Eutyches."[5] This tiny, translucent object, like the inclusion, artfully encloses a figure that hovers between myth and ancient

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[4] Bodnar and Foss, eds., *Cyriac of Ancona*, ix. On the Society of Antiquaries, see Evans, *History;* Woolf, *Social Circulation*, esp. 141–82; Schyler, "Antiquaries"; Harris, *Untimely* Matter, 95–118; and Parry, *Trophies of Time*.

[5] Quoted and translated in Bodnar and Foss, eds., *Cyriac of Ancona*, 196–9.

Figure I.1   Roman Gem with Portrait of Pallas Athena by Eutyches (first century AD).
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matter; the signet created by a skillful engraver, the inclusion by a more mysterious art. These remnants of "untimely matter" permeated early modernity, spectral tokens of the transience of artifacts and the impenetrability of their meanings.[6] This semiotic threat was poignantly realized in Cyriac's misreading of the figure on Eutyches' intaglio: not Alexander but Athena. Although Cyriac visited and recorded the intact Temple of Hadrian at Cyzicus in 1431 (see Figure I.2), he reported despairingly that it was in ruins when he returned thirteen years later.[7] The loss of antiquities prompted the feverish collection of inscriptions and epitaphs: Cyriac's work alone, compiled in his *Commentarii*, filled six manuscript volumes. Inspired by the desire to preserve fragile remains, Cyriac's textual monuments were themselves lost in 1514, when the Sforza library in Pesaro housing the only holograph copies was devoured by fire.[8]

While Cyriac and the Italian antiquarians following him aimed to preserve the remnants of a remote classical past, English antiquarians were

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[6] Harris, *Untimely Matter*, 11–12.
[7] See Saxl, "Classical Inscription," 32; and Ashmole, "Cyriac of Ancona."
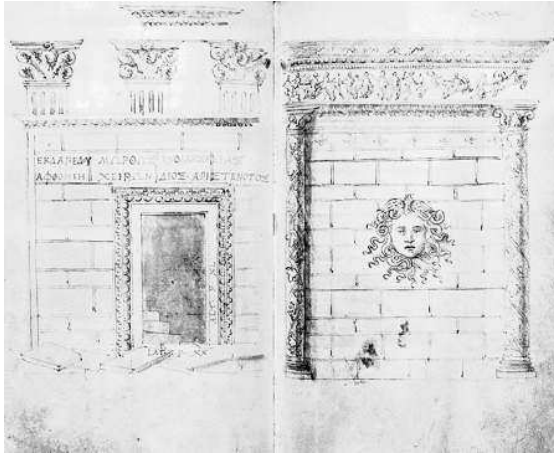[8] Saxl, "Classical Inscription," 19; and Ashmole, "Cyriac of Ancona," 26.

Figure I.2   Bartolomeo Fonzio, "Collectanea Epigraphica" (late fifteenth century),
Temple of Hadrian at Cyzicus, after Cyriac of Ancona.
The Bodleian Libraries, The University of Oxford. MS. Lat. Misc. d.85,
fols. 133ᵛ–134ʳ.

motivated by the loss of monuments closer to home. In 1600, Francis Tate
recounted to the Society of Antiquaries an event some twenty years earlier,
when servants plowing a field in Norfolk "found a vault, and therein a man
lying buried, and a booke with bosses on his brest; the body and the booke
being touched fel into dust."[9] This grim archaeology suggests time's ability
to erase subjects and objects, monumental texts and tombs alike. Tate's
tale of inadvertent disinterment is an exception among more violent and
jarring exhumations. In 1549, the Pardon Chapel at St. Paul's, "whose
Monuments in number and curious workmanship passed all that were in
the Cathedral," was pulled down by Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset,
"and the materials carried to the Strand, toward the building of that stately
fabrick called Senate House."[10] "The bones of the dead, couched up in a
Charnill," John Stow writes, "(by report of him who paid for the cariage)
were convied from thence into Finsbery fielde, amounting to more then
one thousand cart loades."[11] Prompted by "the woefull experience" of
iconoclasm, William Dugdale recorded "what Monuments [he] could" in
St. Paul's, "that the Shadows of them, with their inscriptions, might be

⁹ Hearne, *Collection*, vol. I, 217–18.   ¹⁰ Dugdale, *History of St. Paul's*, 132.
¹¹ Stow, *Survay* (1598), 268.

preserved for posteritie, forasmuch as the things themselves were so neer unto ruine."[12] As Alexandra Walsham writes, Dugdale hoped "to pictorially repossess spaces that had been desecrated [and] to commemorate a structure . . . facing a sentence of execution."[13]

Against the threat of iconoclasm and archaeological dismay that prompted and beset early modern antiquarianism, Cyriac's inclusion is an optimistic emblem of recovery and preservation that resonates in secular and spiritual registers. An "eternal sepulcher," the inclusion promises that one might fix memory in material form. "We see, how Flies and Spiders, and the like, get a Sepulcher in Amber," Francis Bacon muses, "more Durable, than the Monument, and Embalming of the Body of any King."[14] As Girolamo Cardano puts it, the "flies, ants, little fish, leaves, scrapings – captured by the tenacious moistness of the amber . . . cannot decay, and shine out from their eternal tomb, a grander one than the Mausoleum Artemisia built."[15] Yet if the inclusion is a figure of entombment, it is also a sign of salvation. To the early modern world, amber was a substance capable of quasi-miraculous works, valued for its curative properties, mysteriously endowed with a magnetism that could coach matter into motion, and emitting a sweet smell that enhanced the religious experience of worshippers in fragrant incense and rosaries.[16] Its mythic origins lay in an act of commemoration, often repeated in representations of women's mourning and remembrance: the sisters of Phaethon, grieving at their brother's tomb, were transformed into poplars whose tears fell into a nearby river and hardened into amber.[17] For Pontano, the material was inherently precious and potent, displaying its power in its miraculous preservation of the fly, a translation of the humble to the exalted. The inclusion is a tomb where a body sleeps, perhaps awaiting resurrection. It is a sacramental: as the Catholic Eucharist contains the body of Christ, or a relic enfolds the essence of the saint, the inclusion's meager body is preserved in a supernatural operation that mimics and encodes divine grace.

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[12] Dugdale, *History of St. Paul's*, fol. A3ᵛ.   [13] Walsham, "'Like Fragments,'" 98.

[14] Gilbert, *De magnete*, 47; and Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum*, 33.   [15] Cardano, *De subtiltate*, 307.

[16] De Acosta's *Naturall and Morall Historie*, 287, describes the qualities of amber as "sweete and medicinall . . . and a good perfume." See also Pliny, *Historie*, 607–9; Gilbert, *De magnete*; and Cardano, *De subtiltate*, 304–5. On rosaries, see King, "'Beads'"; TNA PROB 11/24/113, fol. 67ʳ, for Katherine Styles's bequest in 1530 of a "payer of beades of white aumber"; and Salter, *Six Renaissance Men*, 117–29, for commentary. An amber rosary hangs on the wall behind the subjects in Jan van Eyck's *Arnolfini Wedding*

[17] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 2:319–65. The myth gained authority for early modern readers through Pliny's reiteration, *Historie*, 607–8. For discussion, see Kelley, "Amber."

Amber's enigmatic properties made it a popular image in religious polemics. In Reformation Europe, Protestants and Catholics alike saw amber as figuring collective religious experience. For Anabaptist Ulisse Aldrovandi, human flesh "involved in the vanities of the world, does not lack the softness of pleasures, but at the time of the resurrection, having been hardened by divine heat, it will appear the image of amber." Alternatively, creatures involved in amber, like Cyriac's fly, are heretical avatars "engulfed by the stickiness of transgressions." Amber's magnetism figures Christ's, who "burning with the heat of his love draws vain sinners to himself."[18] Severin Goebel compares the prophets and apostles to "poor fishermen, just like those who gather amber that has been cast on the shore"; the Christian community, in this figure, is comprised of bits of amber, transformed to solidity by the frigid seas of God's law and redeemed on the tranquil shore of God's mercy.[19] When a piece of amber larger than the body of an ox ("una massa di quest Electro, ò ambra, maggiore del corpo di un bue") washed ashore in Buchan, Scotland, in 1546, the Italian expatriate Petruccio Ubaldini reported that the shepherds who found it, smelling a sweet odor pervading the air, took it to the local priest to use as incense ("à ridirlo al prete della loro prossima Chiesa allegramente, mostrandogli d'haver ritrovato una cosa cosi utile come l'incenso per la sua Chiesa").[20] William Camden's account of the episode sixty years later displaces Ubaldini's superstitious shepherds' adornment of the Catholic Mass with a sober, if unsure, natural history: "A mighty masse likewise of Ambar as big as the body of an horse, was not many yeers since cast upon this shore. The learned . . . supposed that it was a certaine juice or liquor which distilleth out of trees in Britaine, and runneth downe into the sea, and is therein hardned."[21]

It is in the context of religious debate that Cyriac's inclusion entered England. Dedicating his collection of daily devotions, *The Key of Knowledge*, in 1572, Puritan Thomas Achelley borrowed Cyriac's rarity as an emblem for his book:

> Pontanus in his 19. Chapter *de magnificentia* . . . maketh mention of one
> Anconitanus, that presented unto Alphonsus, King of Calabria, a Box of

[18] Aldrovandi, *Musaeum*, 414–15; translated King, "'Beads,'" 165. This discussion is greatly indebted to King's research.
[19] Goebel, *Pia commonefactio*, n.p.; quoted and translated King, "'Beads,'" 156.
[20] Ubaldini, *Descrittione del Rigno di Scoti*, 52.
[21] Camden, *Britain [Britannia]* (1610), fol. Dddd6ᵛ.

> Amber, very curiously and artificially wrought, which being opened by the King: had nothing else but a fly enclosed within.[22]

Achelley's attempt to deploy the object as a figure for his text grows tortured when he insists that his book agrees in one respect with the amber box but differs from it in another. "It agreeth . . . in baseness," he reasons:

> but it differreth only from the Amber Box, which proffered a glosing and beautiful show to the outward view, and yet had nothing with in it but a thing of nought. Whereunto the thing that I offer is clean contrary, for it yieldeth no glorious nor glistering glose nor any colour of delight unto the eye: notwithstanding . . . the matter therein contained shall suffice to commend it without the help of any external ornaments.[23]

Achelley's book reverses the structure and symbolism of its defining image. The "glose" of Cyriac's curious box holds a meaningless triviality. Achelley's modest text, by contrast, is "a thing of nought" that nonetheless contains the key of knowledge. Against the idolatrous surface of a box that is merely a tomb, Achelley's devotions are a humble fly, a lowly embodiment of the reformed faith's sincere essence.

Misreading the inclusion as a box, Achelley indicts the object's "glose" as distorting and denying the somber but instructive *memento mori* within. His indictment echoes the nervousness of his reformed countrymen with regard to religious idols and images, whose "bewytchyng . . . colors enticeth the ignorant."[24] This concern, implicit in Achelley's dedication, becomes explicit in the devotions that follow: thus he praises the "poore flock" of true believers who serve God "in lowlines and purenesse of hart, ab[an]doning all the rabble of Romayne traditions, and idolatrous ceremonies."[25] Once the Reformation troubled the link between outward form and inner essence in religious objects and images – a movement of which the international debate on transubstantiation is archetypical – icons were condemned as empty idols.[26] Achelley's vocabulary is symptomatic of iconoclasm: the words "curious," "wrought," and "artificial" held potentially diabolical meanings in post-Reformation England, while "glose"

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[22] Achelley, *Key of Knowledge*, sig. B7^{r-v}. Achelley was a minor poet and dramatist: see Freeman, "Writings."

[23] Achelley, *Key of Knowledge*, sig. B8^{v}-C1^{r}.

[24] Church of England, *Homyly agaynst peryll of Idolatry*, fols. 61^{v} and 16^{v}.

[25] Achelley, *Key of Knowledge*, 62–3.

[26] On iconoclasm, see Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*; Aston, *Broken Idols*; and O'Connell, *Idolatrous Eye*; and MacCulloch, *Reformation*, 558–63. For a summary of the vast literature on transubstantiation, see Wallace, *Long European Reformation*, 82–114.

carried the sense of flattery, deceit, false show, and pretense.[27] The opulent exterior of the amber box renders it an idolatrous tomb, as worthy of destruction by the iconoclast's hammer as the statues of saints. If Pontano's inclusion shimmers with the promise of miraculous salvation, Achelley's amber casket is an icon turned idol; a false sacrament signaling death.

Pontano's textual recollection and Achelley's recovery of the inclusion suggest the improvisational character of religious and commemorative practices following the repudiation of Catholic rites and beliefs. In redefining the relationship of the living to the dead, the English Reformation required a new understanding of monuments and memorial sites: when the monumental cartography of chapels and chantries no longer mapped the recitation of prayers for the dead, focus shifted from the spiritual efficacy of remembrance toward a proliferation of its material displays.[28] Although we often envision post-Reformation churches as whitewashed and austere, most were busy with commemorative objects in all media. Churches were galleries crowded and densely hung with monuments of marble, brass, wood, vellum, and glass. Memorials were painted on walls and pillars of churches, and manuscript poems, pinned to the pall during funerals, were posted on or near monuments, creating sites for spontaneous poetic rivalries, parodies, and debut publications by new poets. Memorial glass sparkled in the windows and hung from pillars. Textiles donated in remembrance of the dead hung from pulpits and adorned chapel walls. With the loss of the familiar Catholic rituals and liturgy attending remembrance, memorial sites became improvisational, open-ended spaces, while new Protestant practices, themselves continually in flux, created locations for "the meeting-up of histories," to borrow Doreen Massey's terms, "a simultaneity of stories-so-far."[29] Church interiors were dynamic sites of interaction between subjects and objects and between the living and the dead, where acts of memory were continually reenacted with unpredictable results as congregations and beliefs changed over time. The image of the speaking stone was a staple of post-Reformation epitaphs, instructing readers to perform any number of impromptu memorial

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[27] Acrasia's Bower of Bliss exemplifies this corrupt (most often Catholic) imagery pervasive in Spenser's poem: see Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, in *Poetical Works*, 2:12. All subsequent references to Spenser's works are to this edition. On "glose," see *OED*; and on its usage in Shakespeare's and Wilkins's *Pericles*, see Chapter 5.

[28] I am indebted to Scodel, *English Poetic Epitaph*, 21, who notes that the removal of sacred images in the Reformation led to the proliferation of monuments. I build on this research by expanding the scope of my study to embrace a wide variety of texts, artifacts, and practices.

[29] Massey, *For Space*, 4 and 11.

gestures: "tread soft," "trace his tombe," "sit downe and thinke," "reade theis lynes," "looke on this vault."[30] Church buildings and fabric were profoundly polychronic and multi-temporal.[31] The recovery or retention of Catholic sites and objects within Protestant churches influenced parishioners who erected memorials, and those who experienced them as (sometimes unwelcome) attendants to worship.

This book takes account of post-Reformation monuments erected in sacred spaces as a starting point for exploring how changed notions of remembrance within religious beliefs and practices permeate and influence the secular sphere. Enfolded in the confessional movements of the Reformation, the term "remembrance" also inflects secular experience and expression.[32] These modulations in sense and context are interwoven throughout my study, moving and expanding my focus beyond that explored in more exclusive approaches to monuments.[33] Rather than pursuing documentary concerns, I remove monuments from limited antiquarian and parochial interests to locate them in provocative relationships with early modern texts, from masques, poems, and plays to religious and devotional writings. I reimagine monuments as profoundly and pervasively involved with other commemorative works, not least literary works by our most canonical authors. From this perspective, Shakespeare's Marina (a daughter lost and found in *Pericles*) and Milton's Sabrina (Genius of the Severn in *Comus*) both incarnate the losses registered in monuments and the recoveries to which they aspire.[34]

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[30] Stow, *Survey* (1633), 789; 792; and Mosse, *Monumental Effigies of Sussex*, 151.

[31] Harris, *Untimely Matter*, 3.

[32] Studies in early modern memory inform my discussion throughout. See Carruthers, *Book of Memory*; Yates, *Art of Memory*; Hiscock, *Reading Memory*; Summit, *Memory's Library*; Gordon, *Writing Early Modern London*; Bolzoni, *Gallery of Memory;* Beecher and Williams, eds., *Ars Reminiscendi;* and Engel, Loughnane, and Williams, eds., *Memory Arts*. See also Gordon and Rist, "Introduction," in *Arts of Remembrance*, who note of the omnipresent arts of remembrance in early modern culture, "In their material diversity, these works testify to a habit . . . that sees in the created object the enactment of remembrance" (1).

[33] This study supplements two recent studies of early modern monuments. See Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments*, for an authoritative, comprehensive account which locates church monuments within the historiography of English art; and see Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory*, which studies the material culture of memory in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England in a narrower range of monuments.

[34] Shakespeare and Wilkins, *Pericles*, ed. Gossett; and Milton, *Maske*, in *Complete Works, Volume III: The Shorter Poems*, ed. Lewalski and Haan. All subsequent references to *Pericles* are to this edition unless otherwise noted. All subsequent references to Milton's works are to this edition unless otherwise noted.

This interdisciplinary study considers the sacred and secular aspects of remembrance as they influence artifacts, texts, and the individuals who created and experienced them. As such, this work is aligned with scholarship in historical phenomenology, making use of the flexibility of this approach not only to accommodate history and theory, but also to join the three critical strands of inquiry – religion, materiality, and gender – that combine within and mutually structure this project.[35] Pursuing phenomenology's blending of subject and object into its inflection by "new materialism," moreover, I adapt Rosi Braidotti's view of the posthuman subject as "constituted through embedded and embodied sets of interrelations," and I emphasize the centrality of acts of remembrance – of oneself and of others – to ensure "the inner coherence" of the self.[36] Thus, I situate "remembrance" between subject and object, life and death, exploring the dynamic networks in which early modern men and women experienced loss and recollection. The arts of remembrance, then, are the material and textual remains of living webs of connection – "the close-woven fabric of the true world," as Maurice Merleau-Ponty puts it – in which creators and creations are enmeshed.[37] Accordingly, these chapters present a series of linked cartographies of discrete locations within the interrelational field of early modern remembrance.[38] These maps strive to be accurate and precise in capturing the situated character of memorial works and, in doing so, to chart the changing terrain of post-Reformation remembrance. For example, when John Milton eulogizes the Marchioness of Winchester with the assurance, "This rich Marble doth enterr," his printed monument – uprooted from the literal site of burial – relies upon successive acts of reading and remembrance to instantiate presence. Supported by the scaffolding of shared

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[35] Works aligned with this method include Smith, "Premodern Sexualities"; Smith, *Phenomenal Shakespeare*; Paster and Floyd-Wilson, eds., *Reading the Body*; Harris, *Untimely Matter*; Shannon, *Accommodated Animal*; Curran and Kearney, "Introduction," and all the articles in *Criticism*'s special issue, *Shakespeare and Phenomenology*. Lupton, "Macbeth's Martlets," 365, offers an inclusive description of the strand of phenomenology deployed in my project: "Phenomenology attends to how the world of things manifests itself in a single flow of emergent and continuous processes that dissolve (human) subjects and (nonhuman) objects in shared fields of causation, movement, ambience, intentionality, and perception."

[36] Braidotti, *Posthuman*, 99. Curran and Kearney, "Introduction," 357, note the confluence of phenomenology with anti-dualist theorists including Deleuze, whose work has been foundational for "Deleuzian feminists" such as Rosi Braidotti and Elizabeth Grosz. See also Braidotti, *Metamorphoses*, 111. While I make use of concepts derived from critical posthumanism, I agree with Campana and Maisano, *Renaissance Posthumanism*, 3, that "ideas of the human as at once embedded and embodied in, evolving with, and de-centered amid a weird tangle of animals, environments and vital materiality" are to be found in the early modern period.

[37] Merleau-Ponty, *Visible and Invisible*, 5–6.   [38] See Braidotti, "Critical Cartography."