Imagining septentrional etymology: a first theorisation of the role of experience in early modern philology on words of the north European past

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CHAPTER 25

Imagining Septentrional Etymology: A First Theorisation of the Role of Experience in Early Modern Philology on Words of the North European Past

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Abstract

This chapter presents a first theorisation of the vital role that affective, experiential understandings play in septentrional etymology, early modern scholarly word studies of medieval North European literatures. The chapter's theoretical underpinnings include philosophy of animation, enactive approaches to cognition, and cognitive criticism on the neuroaesthetic, sensory-kinesic effects of images and imagery in a reader-beholder. Involving these theories, it explores how to conceive of septentrional etymologies as experiential images that actualise as live moments via an experiential philological process, conceptualised here as "etymological rhyme". Etymological rhyme strikes a scholar affectively, offering the reward of pleasure at its experience. A scholar's experience is constitutive of a word's etymology. The chapter envisions early modern etymological practice as an ongoing conversation that plays out live as it is read and reflected on. We must evaluate it for its significance as a live event. As scholars, we, too, are implicated and thus have a responsibility for how our experiencing shapes our studies. By performing a reading of 'pearl' in Francis Junius's *Etymologicum anglicanum* (1743; composed 1650s–1670s), the chapter offers possibilities for including experiential dimensions in early modern studies. For a felt understanding of 'pearl"s expressive force, we must enter its entangled dimensions of signification. Septentrional etymology is an affective, experiential scholarship.

Keywords

Septentrional etymology – affective response – experiential imagining – cognitive criticism – Francis Junius F.F. (1591–1677)

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1 'Peerless pearl'

While browsing Francis Junius's *Etymologicum anglicanum* (posthumously published in 1743, yet composed in the 1650s–1670s),[1] and musing over Junius's remark that one can get carried away by 'etymologiarum amoenitate' (the pleasantness of etymologising),[2] I was suddenly struck by a derivation that states, deep in the considerations at the entry PEARL, that 'pearls' comes from 'peerless'. Junius asserts:

> Nemo [...] non videt Romanum nomen Unionis nostra voce **perle** vel **peerle** commodissime exprimi; quandoquidem Uniones nostratibus videantur dici **peerlen** & Anglis *pearles*, ex B. **paereloos**, vel Angl. *peerless*; quod parem atque indiscretae similitudinis baccam vix inveniant, quotquot inciderunt in unionem, in quo singulare quid, et quod admirationem excitet, deprehendunt.[3]
>
> Nobody will fail to see that the Roman word 'unio' (pearl, unique gem) is expressed most suitably by our word 'perle' or 'peerle'; seeing that 'uniones' seem to be called 'peerlen' by our people and 'pearles' by the English, from Dutch 'paereloos' or English 'peerless', because anyone who finds an exceptional pearl that inspires wonder will hardly find another one that is equal and of indistinguishable quality.

In the PEARL entry, pearls' peerlessness is affirmed, as we shall see, by Pliny the Elder's words from his chapters on pearls in *Natural History* 9.53–60. It is also affirmed in the entry by Gavin Douglas, who addresses Virgil as 'peerless pearl' in his Older Scots *Eneados* (1513):

> Maist reverend Virgil, of Latine poetis prince,
> Gem of ingyne, and flude of eloquence:

1 Junius Francis F.F., *Etymologicum anglicanum, ex autographo descripsit et accessionibus permultis auctum edidit Edwardus Lye* [...] *Praemittuntur vita auctoris et grammatica anglo-saxonica*, ed. Edward Lye (Oxford, Sheldonian Theatre: 1743). I have not yet been able to see Junius's autograph dictionary in Oxford.

2 Idem, *Observationes in Willerami abbatis francicam paraphrasin Cantici canticorum* (Amsterdam, Christophorus Cunradi, for the author, at Adriaan Vlacq: 1655) 162.

3 Idem, *Etymologicum*, Kkkk r – v, at v. See Figs. 25.1–2; this passage in Fig. 25.2, right column.

> Thou peirles peirle, patron of poetry,
> Rois, register, palme, laurere, and glory, etc.[4]

'Videturque mihi', Junius says, 'ad hanc etymologiam [...] allusisse G. Douglas' (and I think that Gavin Douglas has alluded to this etymology).[5] So does Edmund Spenser, Junius adds, when in the pastoral "Colin Clouts come home again", he calls his sweetheart 'The pearle of pearless grace and modesty'.[6]

How can 'pearls' derive from 'peerless'? I mean, how can 'pearls' do so for Junius?[7] Not only was Junius a scholar educated in the robust early seventeenth-century Leiden philological tradition,[8] and the author of the art theory *De pictura veterum* (1637) on the imagination and the visual arts composed from classical authorities,[9] but he was also a philologist. Junius was and is still admired today for his keen, thoughtful understanding of early medieval North European literatures, and an impressive legacy in manuscript and print, which includes Frisian, Old Saxon, Old Dutch, Old and Middle English, and Old High German word studies, and the *editio princeps* of the Gothic Gospels with an annotated dictionary.[10] True, early modern etymology can appear

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4 Ibidem. See also Douglas Gavin, *The xiii. Bukes of Eneados of the famose Poete Virgill Translatet out of Latyne verses into Scottish Metir, bi the Reuerend father in God, Mayster Gawin Douglas Bishop of Dunkel 7 unkil to the Erle of Angus. Euery buke hauing hys perticular Prologe* (London, William Copland: 1553) fol. B r (line 5); Dekker K., "The Other 'Junius' in Oxford, Bodleian Library Ms Junius 74: Francis Junius and a Scots Glossary by Patrick Young (1584–1652)", *Scottish Language* 35 (2016) 1–42.

5 Junius, *Etymologicum*, Kkkk r – v, at v; see Fig. 25.2, right column.

6 Ibidem. See also Spenser Edmund, *THE FAERIE QVEEN: The Shepheards Calendar: Together with the other Works of England's Arch-Poët, Edm. Spenser: / Collected into one Volume, and carefully corrected* (London: [Humphrey Lownes], for Mathew Lownes: 1613) fol. A 5 r (line 471).

7 For Junius, see Bremmer R.H. Jr (ed.), *Franciscus Junius F.F. and his Circle*, DQR Studies in Literature 21 (Amsterdam – Atlanta: 1998); Romburgh S.G. van, *'For my Worthy Freind Mr Franciscus Junius'. An Edition of the Correspondence of Francis Junius F.F. (1591–1677)*, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 121 (Leiden – Boston: 2004).

8 Miert D. van, *The Emancipation of Biblical Philology in the Dutch Republic, 1590–1670* (Oxford: 2018).

9 Junius Francis F.F., *De pictura veterum libri tres* (Amsterdam, Joan Blaeu: 1637), also in English (1638), Dutch (1641), and second edition (1694). Among excellent studies, see, for instance, Weststeijn T., *Art and Antiquity in the Netherlands and Britain: The Vernacular Arcadia of Franciscus Junius (1591–1677)*, Studies in Netherlandish Art and Cultural History 12 (Leiden – Boston: 2015); Nativel C. (ed. – trans.), *Franciscus Junius*. De pictura veterum libri tres (Roterodami: 1694). *Edition, traduction et commentaire du livre I* (Geneva: 1996).

10 For an overview, see Breuker P.H., "On the Course of Franciscus Junius's Germanic Studies, with Special Reference to Frisian", in Bremmer, *Franciscus Junius* 129–157; van Romburgh,

imaginative, if not downright fanciful from today's linguistically informed perspective. Yet, even if it is, how does its etymological thinking process work in practice? Why does Junius even propose the etymology "pearls from peerless" when there is already a sensible derivation for French 'perle' (and closer to correct, from today's perspective) by Claude Saumaise, no less, who derives it from Latin 'pilula, pirula' (little ball, tip of the nose)?[11] Also, how can we today access these imaginative dimensions of scholarship and gauge them responsibly, studying septentrional etymologising on its terms, without losing our own? How can one share in the pleasantness of septentrional etymology?

In this chapter, I employ Junius's PEARL entry for a first theorisation of the role of experience – felt, affective, embodied dynamics – in septentrional etymology, early modern scholarly word studies of medieval North European literatures. I shall explore, as a sample of a bigger project, how it serves our studious interests to conceive of septentrional etymologies as animated, indeed experiential images.[12] It is through resonances of experiential understanding – affective, embodied, imaginative, cultural, including here, natural-historical knowledge – that a scholar feels out a word's original signification by the intensity of a word's expressive force. A word's expressive force consists in part of a scholar's experiencing. I suggest that the process is affective. It revolves around a pleasurable turning toward the intensity of what I shall call "etymological rhyme", a felt similarity of soundplay in tandem with other dimensions of experiential knowledge that strikes a scholar affectively. I will explore how to practise engaging with these imaginative etymologies experientially, in order for us to better appreciate the felt understandings that drive the early modern etymological process. To do so, my theoretical inspirations enmesh philosophy of animation, interaction theory, and enactive approaches to cognition by,

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'For my Worthy Freind', 19–41. Among diverse excellent studies, see, for instance, Dekker K., "'That Most Elaborate One of Fr. Junius': An Investigation of Francis Junius's Manuscript Old English Dictionary", in Graham T. (ed.), *The Recovery of Old English: Anglo-Saxon Studies in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Kalamazoo, MI: 2000) 301–344; Berryman M., *Franciscus Junius's* Etymologicum Anglicanum: *Scholarship and Historical Linguistics in the Seventeenth Century* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota: 1996).

11 Saumaise Claude (ed.), *Historiae Augustae scriptores VI*: [...]*Claudius Salmasius ex veteribus libris recensuit, et librum adiecit natorum ac emendationum; quibus adiunctae sunt notae ac emendationes Isaaci Casauboni* (Paris, [s.n.]: 1620), "In Trebellium Pollionem Notae", 323 a.

12 See also Romburgh S.G. van, "Slow Reading on the Wing: Entangling Enactive Literary Criticism, the *Energia* of Early Modern Imagining, and Artistic Research", in Haar A.D.M. van de – Schulte Nordholt A.E. (eds.), *Figurations animalières à travers les textes et l'image en Europe: Du Moyen Âge à nos jours. Essais en hommage à Paul J. Smith*, Faux Titre 453 (Leiden – Boston: 2021) 422–434.

among others, Shaun Gallagher, Daniel Hutto, and Maxine Sheets-Johnstone; criticism developed by G. Gabrielle Starr, Guillemette Bolens, Terence Cave, and Barbara Maria Stafford on the neuroaesthetic, sensory-kinesic effects of images and imagery in a reader-beholder; and, as my focus is on scholarship, studies on an expert's calibrated precision in imagining.[13] For my illustrations of the *Etymologicum*'s PEARL entry in Figs. 25.1 and 25.2, I have prompted Adobe's Firefly text-to-image AI to generate "scientific photo[s] of beautiful marine life deep underwater", finding its unconcernedness about scientific fact to evoke what pearly marine life *feels* like to us in ways resembling early modern illustrations of natural history.[14] Moreover, throughout the chapter, I shall use 'septentrional' and 'septentrionalist' to refer to the early modern scholarly perception of the medieval North European past.

2 Experience theory

Recent understandings of enactive cognition maintain, especially in the thinking of Shaun Gallagher and Daniel D. Hutto, that cognition is not in the head, nor in the body, nor in the person in an environment, but rather in an ongoing dynamic coupling of a 'form of life' and an environment.[15] Environment is more than context or influence or causal; it is actually constitutive of cognition, such that not only one's thinking, imagining, or acting, but also one's subjectivity, free will, and intentionality are thought to be not in or of a person, but instead 'out in the world'. In thinking about the 'enactive imagination', furthermore, José Medina contends that '[i]magining is an embodied activity that happens in the real world, and the emotions we experience in our

13 See below for references.

14 Adobe Firefly, firefly.adobe.com. See, for instance, Enenkel K.A.E. – Smith P.J. (eds.), *Early Modern Zoology: The Construction of Animals in Science, Literature and the Visual Arts*, Intersections 7 (2 vols.) (Leiden – Boston: 2007); and see, for an analysis of a 'pearl from an oyster shell' emblem contemporary to Junius's PEARL entry, Smeesters A., "The Secretion of a Pearl as a Symbol for the Birth of a Prince", in Enenkel K.A.E. – Smith P.J. (eds.), *Emblems and the Natural World*, Intersections 50 (Leiden – Boston: 2017) 254–472.

15 Gallagher S., *Enactivist Interventions: Rethinking the Mind* (Oxford – New York: 2017); idem, *Action and Interaction* (Oxford – New York: 2020); Gallagher S., *Performance/Art: The Venetian Lectures*, ed. Carlos Vara Sánchez, Philosophy 41 (Sesto San Giovanni: 2021); Hutto D.D., "Overly Enactive Imagination? Radically Re-Imagining Imagining", *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 53, Spindel Supplement (2015) 68–89; Hutto D.D. – Myin E., "Going Radical", in Newen A. – De Bruin L. – Gallagher S. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of 4E Cognition* (Oxford: 2018) 95–116.

imaginative activities are real'.[16] Cognition and feelings are continuous: affects, motions, bodily conditions, and muscle tonicity are pervasive throughout cognitive processes. These include such affective responses as awe, disgust, and delight. Enactive approaches to cognition conceive of such affective intensities as occuring mostly below the level of conscious awareness, yet inextricably entangled in cognition's ongoing dynamics. This implies that one cannot simply leave affective responses out of consideration by focusing, for instance, on factual, analytical knowledge only. Intellectual knowledge is irreducibly experiential and affective.

We do well to be attentive to what Sheets-Johnstone delineates as the qualitative dynamics of our moving and movements in our ongoing, animated, energic life.[17] How, in an immediate affective response, we turn toward what attracts or delights, and turn away from what disgusts or frightens.[18] How affects move through the body differentially, such that grief 'fold[s] the body inward in spatially contorted and rhythmically writhing ways', and joy 'spatially expand[s] the body outward and infuse[s] it in a lightness and buoyancy that are spatially and temporally open-ended'.[19] Likewise, 'when reaching out for an apple', Gallagher explains to illustrate action kinematics, 'what you are going to do with the apple shows up in the dynamics of your reach and variations in your grasp'.[20] We respond similarly kinesthetically to perceiving these motions in others.[21] One can even feel minute kinesthetic distinctions, probably in one's hand and fingertips, when reading about grasping that apple and picking up a pearl. Apple and pearl have different action affordances for us, and that is because we have creative skills to do diverse things with apples and pearls, Erik Rietveld and Julian Kiverstein maintain.[22] Usually, we are not aware of our own kinesthesia, but, Sheets-Johnstone observes, '[a]ny time we care to turn our attention to it, [...] there it is'.[23]

16 Medina J., "An Enactivist Approach to the Imagination: Embodied Enactments and 'Fictional Emotions'", *American Philosophical Quarterly* 50.3 (2013) 317–335, at 330.

17 Sheets-Johnstone M., *The Primacy of Movement*, expanded 2nd edn (Amsterdam – Philadelphia: 2011).

18 Ibidem 502–504; idem, "Why Kinesthesia, Tactility and Affectivity Matter: Critical and Constructive Perspectives", *Body & Society* 24.4 (2018) 3–31.

19 Sheets-Johnstone, *The Primacy of Movement* 395.

20 Gallagher, *Action and Interaction* 123.

21 Sheets-Johnstone, *The Primacy of Movement* 21.

22 Rietveld E. – Kiverstein J., "A Rich Landscape of Affordances", *Ecological Psychology* 26.4 (2014) 325–352.

23 Sheets-Johnstone, *The Primacy of Movement* 448, 383 n. 42.

Experiential understandings of cognition have invited criticism to rethink images and imagery, and stimulated a renewed interest in a reader-beholder's engagement. Guillemette Bolens focuses on one's kinesic responses – embodied responses to the perception of gestures in the arts, and urges critics to bring them to reflective awareness, as they influence, via sensorimotor simulation, one's readerly and critical appreciations.[24] Taking up the gauntlet, Terence Cave exemplifies in his admirably thoughtful and stimulating cognitive literary criticism how such an 'alert, attentive, responsive [...] shift of perspective' energises literary text.[25] In her neuroaesthetic work, G. Gabrielle Starr theorises the hedonic value of aesthetic experience, examining how aesthetic experience creates pleasurable value in the unexpected, novel connections of multisensory imagery, especially imagery of motion, and especially for the 'vivid reader – one with a keen facility to enact verbal imagery'.[26] Regarding '[t]he aesthetics of imagery', Starr notes that 'its pleasures are something for which readers and viewers must work'.[27] Junius likewise focuses, in *De pictura*, on a reader-beholder's experiential role and sensitivity in bringing an image to life in the imagination.[28] His learnings strikingly resonate with current affective, cognitive, embodied, kinesic, sensory-kinesthetic criticism.[29] My explorations into septentrional scholarship are joyously inspired by and benefiting from these works.

3 'Live' conversation

The cognitive, experiential turn is as exciting as it is challenging to implement comprehensively in today's scholarship. It requires a radical overhaul of our research. This is not because experience theories are radical, but because

24 Bolens G., *The Style of Gestures: Embodiment and Cognition in Literary Narrative*, foreword by A. Berthoz, Rethinking Theory (Baltimore: 2012); idem, "Kinesis in Literature and the Cognitive Dynamic of Gestures in Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Cervantes", *Costellazioni* 5 (2018) 81–103; idem, "Kinesic Intelligence, Medieval Illuminated Psalters, and the Poetics of the Psalms", *Studia Neophilologica* 95:2 (2023) 257–280.

25 Cave T., *Thinking with Literature: Towards a Cognitive Criticism* (Oxford: 2016), quote at 1; see also van Romburgh, "Slow Reading on the Wing" 427–429.

26 Starr G.G., *Feeling Beauty: The Neuroscience of Aesthetic Experience* (Cambridge, Mass – London: 2013) 108.

27 Ibidem, 98.

28 Weststeijn, *Art and Antiquity* 245–287.

29 I have outlined this in my paper "Some Kinesic-Enactive Implicatures of Reading 'Energia' in Early Modern Septentrional Philology", *Making of the Humanities VII*, Amsterdam, 15–17 November 2018.

our studies have long depended on a fundamental representationalism that I suspect future scholarship will consider to have been rather extreme. There is no observer's position 'on the sideline' from where scholars can investigate and analyse their materials. As scholars, we have been part of the dynamics 'out in the world' all the time. Jan Slaby and Gallagher maintain, moreover, that the mind – cognition – is extensive, shaped by what they call cognitive institutions, such as science and language.[30] The apparatus of humanities scholarship thus forms our knowledge not just causally, but constitutively. We are implicated in our research objects, both intellectually regarding research approaches and methodologies, and experientially. It is us, scholars today, then, who must modify and expand our understandings of what counts as scholarly knowledge, and how. Experience has co-constituted our studies all along. We'd better give it recognition.

This is not some self-reflexive meta-perspective. The notion of extensive cognition affords openings for us to access the experiential dimensions to which septentrional etymologisations pertain, and to do so in accordance with experience theory, so we will stay academically sound. Working with these learnings, I propose firstly, we understand septentrional etymology as a conversation: not just as a discourse, but a conversation that plays out live as it is read and reflected on, and whose primary meaning is *live*. Therefore, secondly, we should engage with and assess septentrional etymology (perhaps, early modern scholarship?) for how it works and signifies *as* a live event. The PEARL entry compares to this conversation, arguably, like a musical score: an important component of music, surely, but not to be taken for music; the music is live. Rather, take a dictionary entry as a conversation session that scholars can revisit and experience afresh, with conversation partners ancient and contemporary each bringing in their understandings.

As conversations go, these understandings are not conclusive. It is more valuable for this early modern scholarship, I aver, to keep the conversation going than to seek closure in a definitive derivation that rejects alternatives. That is why there is room for Junius's etymology of 'pearls' from 'peerless' next to Saumaise's 'perle' from 'pilula', 'pirula', as also for Junius's reading of 'meregrot', one of the Old English words for 'pearl', as we shall see, besides Gerardus Joannes Vossius's etymology for 'margarita' (pearl). That is why, furthermore, we can participate in their etymological conversation today on our own academic terms, while acknowledging that we are, still, part of the originally intended readership as conversation partners. And we must, to do it justice.

30 Slaby J. – Gallagher S., "Critical Neuroscience and Socially Extended Minds", *Theory, Culture & Society* 32.1 (2015) 33–59.

FIGURE 25.1 Sophie van Romburgh, *PEARL 1*, annotated reproduction of Francis Junius F.F.'s PEARL entry in *Etymologicum anglicanum* (1743) and Adobe Firefly AI imagery, 2024. Collection of the artist

FIGURE 25.2 Sophie van Romburgh, *PEARL 2*, annotated reproduction of Francis Junius F.F.'s PEARL entry in *Etymologicum anglicanum* (1743) and Adobe Firefly AI imagery, 2024. Collection of the artist

The scholarly conversation is an irreducible dimension of the etymologisations. It shapes the very etymologies, those shimmering word meanings and the pleasantness of etymologising, as live moments. Septentrional etymologies signify first and foremost experientially.

4 Septentrional etymology

Septentrional etymology exemplifies early modern scholars' conception of the North European medieval vernacular past, a perceived septentrional antiquity often encountered through learned poets and scholars of the medieval North, whose Christian and classical knowledge resonated with an early modern scholar, and to which poets, such as Douglas and Spenser, bore witness by their poetic sensibility for words' etymological expressivity.[31] Like etymological imagery,[32] septentrionalist word studies are concerned with the expressive force of words ('vis', vigour, word energy), following Isidore of Seville in his *Etymologies* 1.29.1, whose words Junius adduces in the *Etymologicum*: 'origo vocabulorum, cum vis verbi vel nominis per interpretationem colligitur' (the origin of words, when a verb's or noun's expressive force is gathered by explanation).[33] Expounding their derivational rationale in discursive narratives,[34] septentrionalists follow the style of etymology for Latin developed by Julius Caesar Scaliger in *De causis linguae latinae* (1540) and Gerardus Joannes Vossius in *De arte grammatica* (1635, or *Aristarchus*) and *Etymologicon*

31 Dekker K., *The Origins of Old Germanic Studies in the Low Countries*, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 92 (Leiden – Boston – Cologne: 1999); Romburgh S.G. van, "How to Make the Past Age Present: Some of Ole Worm's and Francis Junius' Humanist Efforts", in Molinari A. – Dallapiazza M. (eds.), *Mittelalterphilologien heute: Eine Standortbestimmung. Band 1: Die germanischen Philologien* (Würzburg: 2016) 157–172; idem, "*Hyperboreo sono*: An Exploration of Erudition in Early Modern Germanic Philology", *Erudition and the Republic of Letters* 3.3 (2018) 274–313; Considine J.P., *Dictionaries in Early Modern Europe: Lexicography and the Making of Heritage* (Cambridge: 2008), for Junius, see 216–235.

32 O'Hara J.J., *True Names: Vergil and The Alexandrian Tradition of Etymological Wordplay*, new and expanded edition (Ann Arbor: 2017); Crawforth H., *Etymology and the Invention of English in Early Modern Literature* (New York: 2013); Sluiter I., "Ancient Etymology: A Tool for Thinking", in Montanari F. – Matthaios S. – Rengakos A. (eds.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, 2 vols. (Leiden: 2015) vol. 2, 896–922.

33 Junius, *Etymologicum*, s.v. ETHIMOLOGIE, Oo v. For Isidore, see, among others, Amsler M., *Etymology and Grammatical Discourse in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science, series III: Studies in the History of the Language Sciences 44 (Amsterdam – Philadelphia: 1989) 133–172.

34 Considine J.P., "Narrative and Persuasion in Early Modern English Dictionaries and Phrasebooks", *The Review of English Studies* n.s. 52.206 (2001) 195–206.

linguae latinae, whom Junius references also.[35] They take words and word origins to be neither divine, ideational, nor logical, but to derive from usage. On this understanding, a word's origin is the name with which primeval people, ancestors in a distant pastoral past, had called something for how it stood out or what it was like to them. A word's expressive force or energy is expressive of the original name. It bespeaks the salience something had in an ancient lifeworld.

An early modern philologist may be able to gauge a word's original signification and force by savouring how primeval peoples experienced something, what affordances and affective valences something had for them. Early modern etymology hinges, I say, on a sensitive, imaginative process: to etymologise well, a scholar must engage with a word not analytically as a mute thing or disembodied piece of evidence, but as the name of something that signifies experientially, as part of the ongoing dynamics of life in full swing. Word force is live. To this end, a philologist exerts the imagination, by which I mean the faculty of affective, enactive, kinesic, sensory-kinesthetic imagining – let me call it experiential imagining – and exerts it expertly: robustly yet with great attentiveness, refinement, and precision, as I suggest by developing Bolens's theorisation of 'kinesic imagination' in the arts.[36] Junius's art theory on imagining in *De pictura* offers excellent learnings for doing so.[37] The practice calls on the full range of a scholar's imaginative sensibilities, with due calibration of their etymological imagination and in accordance with what ancient peoples would have known.

The etymological imaginative process resembles the critical process for – dare I say "other" – imaginative arts. In early modern etymology, a philologist engages in an extremely condensed micro-world of a word-name for a thing, such as 'meregrot' for a pearl, whose underspecification leaves much to a scholar's imagination.[38] This compels an etymologist to involve themselves with great imaginative, animated, experiential effort. This way, the affordances of etymological imaginings are comparable to a sketch, which is appreciated, in Junius's art theory, for how it makes a strong appeal to a beholder's sensitive

35 Junius, *Etymologicum*, s.v. ETYMOLOGIE (*sic*), Oo v. See Padley G.A., *Grammatical Theory in Western Europe, 1500–1700. 1: The Latin Tradition* (Cambridge – London – New York – Melbourne: 1976), esp. 58–77, 118–131; Jensen K., *Rhetorical Philosophy and Philosophical Grammar: Julius Caesar Scaliger's Theory of Language*, Humanistische Bibliothek Reihe 1, Abhandlungen 46 (Munich: 1990), esp. 129–158, 179–184.

36 Bolens G., "Embodied Cognition, Kinaesthetic Knowledge, and Kinesic Imagination in Literature and Visual Arts", *Frontiers in Communication* 7.926232 (2022) 1–15; idem, *The Style of Gestures* 1–49; idem, "Kinesis in Literature".

37 Weststeijn, *Art and Antiquity* 245–310.

38 Cave, *Thinking with Literature* 27; see also van Romburgh, "Slow Reading" 428.

involvement for the image to come to life.[39] An etymology needs a scholar's experience for it to be brought to actuality, and for its expressive force to be forceful and energetic, which is, after all, how a scholar may savour a word's origin, its original signification.

Expert etymological imagining seems particularly pertinent for septentrional words, as most were new for scholarship, without a learned tradition for a septentrionalist to fall back on. For instance, what is an early modern scholar to make of 'ercnastan', another Old English name for a pearl that is discussed at PEARL? 'Ercnastan' translates the biblical pearl in the Parable of the Pearl of great Price (Matthew 13:45–46) and 'pearls before swine' (Matthew 7:6), as well as the psalmist's 'topaz' (Psalms 119:127 [118:127]).[40] Its morpheme '–stan' is easily read as 'stone, gem'; but what about 'ercna–'? Nowadays, 'ercna' has been related to words meaning 'the best'.[41] For Junius, it involves contemplation of Pliny in an etymological process I will presently introduce as "etymological rhyme" to read 'ercna' as 'earcna' (of arks, chests), and suggest that 'ercnastan' means:

> 'arcarum lapis', sive 'gemma, quae in arcis asservatur'; ut vox haec proprie exprimat Graecorum 'κειμήλιον', [...] quicquid in tota supellectili caeteris est pretiosius, ac tale, quod magna cura reponi recludique soleat.[42]

> 'a chest's gem', or 'gem, which is kept in coffers'; so that this word properly expresses the Greeks' 'κειμήλιον', [...] whatever in all the paraphernalia is more valuable, and such as are usually stored and locked up with great care.

Experiential imagining of words' origin(al meaning) and force brings a septentrionalist agreeably close to the ancestral ancients, affording intimacy with their experience. Therefore, a scholar's etymological imaginings had best be genuine and calibrated, neither fantastical, nor inflated, dull or flat, lest the etymologies, thence words' original significations, thence the ancestors' life-world, be dull or fantastical also. There is thus a septentrional pride in reading the expressive force of words of medieval Northern Europe experientially, as images from the past.

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39 Weststeijn, *Art and Antiquity* 270–271; see also van Romburgh "*Hyperboreo sono*" 295.

40 Junius, *Etymologicum*, s.v. PEARL, Kkkk v; see Fig. 25.2, left column.

41 Lacy A.F., "Gothic *weihs*, *aírkns* and the Germanic Notion of Holy", *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 7.3–4 (1979) 287–296.

42 Ibidem.

By referring to septentrionalist etymologies as experiential images, I do not mean pictures, nor representations. Instead, I mean that an etymologist read words, such as 'pearl', as animated, affective, sensory-kinesthetic, yet very condensed scenes or worlds. Such word-worlds actualise as expressive, moving, live moments through a scholar's experiential involvement, in a dynamic that embodies and enacts the word's expressive force, and of which a scholar's experience is a requisite part. Septentrionalist etymologies are based in motion, gestures, and action possibilities. In this respect, they are like ekphraseis. As Cave explains, 'that's not because [ekphrasis] "paints pictures" for the imagination [...]: kinesic response is immediate and pre-reflective, so it *seems* vivid'.[43] Thus, think of reading septentrional etymologies as an act of actualisation that probes, rekindles, and releases the energies of words' expressive force purposely for etymologising, in order to enable one to experience them live, as live moments that one participates in experientially, that is, constitutively. Moreover, as Cave continues:

> Miniature kinesic details embedded in a context that is non-descriptive (e.g. a dialogue) can energize that context as a whole: the very economy of the means used [...] ensures that the expressive direction of the passage will be communicated to the reader with maximum effect.[44]

That is why it is important to see the dictionary entry as a live event. Otherwise, one might experience a word's force muted and disembodied as an item in a list, instead of for the expressiveness it has in the world.[45] A scholar is not an observer, but one who shapes the expressive intensity of septentrional etymological derivations.

5 Etymological rhyme

The process of septentrionalist etymology is affective. I suggest that it revolves around a septentrionalist's pleasurable turning toward the intensity of a word's expressive force experienced in what I introduce here as "etymological rhyme". I use "etymological rhyme" to conceptualise an experiential early modern scholarly process whereby the *feel* of the force of two (or more) words is so similar that they strike a scholar as a rhyming bond that exposes etymological

43 Cave, *Thinking with Literature* 81, original emphasis.
44 Ibidem; see also van Romburgh, "Slow Reading" 429.
45 Bolens, "Kinesis in Literature" 93.

origin and derivation, such as 'peerless' and 'pearls', 'earc' and 'ercnastan', and, as we shall see, 'geroded' (delivered) and 'meregrot'. It involves more than rhyming sounds. The process of etymological rhyme comprises a philologist's similar, that is, "rhyming" experience of sonic, sensory-kinesthetic imagery (including voice, mouthfeel, breathing),[46] in conjunction with all kinds of other resonant dimensions of signification – affective, moral, cultural, kinesic, spiritual, imaginative, multi-sensory, and including intellectual, such as here, natural-historical knowledge about pearls. It is a scholar's experiential imaginings of words – of word-worlds – that correspond: the septentrionalist's experience "rhymes". That is why an early modern etymologist must exert their imagination with nuance and acuity,[47] so their word imaginings may match. Etymological rhyme is experiential.

Etymological rhyme strikes a septentrionalist with immediacy, its expressivity arresting, affording hedonic reward at its rhyming correspondence, and inspiring wonder at its felicity, as I suggest following Starr's analyses of the pleasurable reward of aesthetic experience and its 'dynamics of surprise'.[48] The process of etymological rhyme is not a well-considered choice between possible etymological derivations. Much of it is pre-reflective, or just goes unnoticed, if we recall Sheets-Johnstone's remarks on one's usual lack of attention to one's kinesthesia.[49] As an etymological rhyme catches a septentrionalist's attention, it dulls the intensity of other such rhymes in the process. Those need not be deemed faulty or invalid, but they simply lose salience and recede into the background. After all, many words can be felt to rhyme experientially, but not all rhymes strike one equally at all times. This is so in part, I suggest, because a scholar is integral to, that is, constitutive of the moment of experienced intensity. Perhaps unexpectedly, then, septentrionalist etymology finds word origins or "essences" qualitatively. Word derivations pertain to a qualitative dimension: the "what it is like" of felt experience, of imaginings, of thoughts and things and their signifying names.

In its pleasurable attending to intensities of words' expressive force, septentrional etymology is thus a license for a scholar to enter an expansive realm of poetic resonances, a singing, ringing, image-ful space of moral and cultural

46 Starr, *Feeling Beauty* 78–90, 111–115; idem, "Theorizing Imagery, Aesthetics, and Doubly Directed States", in Zunshine L. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Literary Studies* (Oxford: 2015) 246–268, at 248–249; Tsur R., *What Makes Sound Patterns Expressive? The Poetic Mode of Speech Perception* (Durham – London: 1992).

47 Bolens, *The Style of Gestures* 3–5, 8.

48 Starr, *Feeling Beauty*, e.g. 46–51, quote at 128; idem, "Theorizing Imagery" 249–251.

49 Sheets-Johnstone, *The Primacy of Movement* 448, 383 n. 42. Bolens, *Style of Gestures* 11–19; idem, "Kinesis in Literature"; idem, "Embodied Cognition".

significations. In its midst, the etymologist is receptive to deep rumblings of language, actualising word intensities, calibrating their responsiveness to how precisely word force signifies, then disseminating its significant resonances as rhyming origins and derivations in annotations for the scholarly world to experience. That is why poetry and poets, such as Douglas and Spenser, have vital things to say about a word's etymology. Poetry bears witness to a word energy's expressiveness, from out of the imagination, where words speak truth. Junius, for one, heeded these affective demands of etymological resonances and gave them recognition in his scholarly reflections.

6 Scholarly responsibility

Therefore, septentrional etymologies require our own experience as scholars, also. You and I are implicated. We are participants. Not only the septentrionalists, but we too are constitutive of the word origins studied in septentrional etymology. While the etymologies may be faulty from today's perspective, the "how" of one's imagining and experiencing them, as I gather from Medina, is real.[50] There is no examining septentrional etymology without our experience, movement, and feelings, no reading images from the past without our affective involvement. We are co-constitutive of these scholarly practices in an experiential dynamic that is, I aver, as critical to septentrional etymology as it is usually being ignored today, both regarding the early modern scholarship studied, and regarding one's practice as one pursues one's research. As scholars, we have a responsibility for the sophistication of septentrional etymologies, images, and imagery. We have, Medina asserts, an 'experiential and agential involvement in the deepest sense, that is, […] *complicity*'; we do well to be more aware of our agency in an image's or etymology's actualisation.[51] This ethical dimension is part of the aesthetics that Junius adumbrates in *De pictura*, also.[52]

If we read early modern etymologies experientially, imaginatively, and as one of the conversation partners – affectively, seeking to actualise etymological imaginings as live moments – can our doing so serve as a form of recognition of the other,[53] as a way to respond to an ethical demand that is needed for a conversation to be genuine? Instead of a third-person observer mode,

50 Medina, "An Enactivist Approach".

51 Ibidem 330–333, quote at 332, original emphasis.

52 Weststeijn, *Art and Antiquity* 289–312.

53 Bolens, *The Style of Gestures* 23–25; Gallagher S., "In Your Face: Transcendence in Embodied Interaction", *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* 8 (2014) 1–6.

we can acknowledge and embrace that we are "second-person" experiencing participants,[54] and by not reifying early modern scholars(hip), not reify ourselves. In effect, this is a call for flexing one's imagination in one's scholarly practice, an ethical imperative for one's imaginings to be complex and refined, one's imagination responsive and limber in one's early modern examinations. Let us understand 'the power of the imagination', following Medina, 'as a critical tool for interrogating our *sensibilities* – our embodied cognitive and affective attitudes, and our propensities for action […] and self-improvement'.[55] The following reading of Junius's PEARL entry seeks to put this to practice.

7 Pearl

Pearls of many colours wash up on Britain's shores,[56] as the Venerable Bede narrates at the beginning of his *Ecclesiastical History of the English Peoples* 1.1 and its version in Old English, in Abraham Wheelock's dual-language edition (1644): 'margaritam omnis quidem coloris optimam […] rubicundi et purpurei et hyacinthini et prasini, sed maxime candidi / þa betstan Meregrotan ælces hiwes' (the best pearl of every colour […], red, purple, violet and green, but mostly white / the best pearls of every colour).[57] These 'meregrotan' could well have been named, as they are thought to be today, after 'mere' (mere, sea) and 'grot' (grit, particle): Pliny notes in *Natural History* 9.57, in a passage Junius leaves unmentioned, that British pearls are numerous, but less prized because they are small – bits of sea grit, as it were. But Junius is struck by a different etymology, as he finds the psalmist praying in the Old English psalms edited in 1640 by Sir John Spelman: 'þu gerodest sawle mine of helle', 'Eruisti animam meam ex inferno' (thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell, 86:13 [85:12]).[58] This has etymological impact: 'unde non incongrue vocem

54 Idem, *Action and Interaction* 98–120, 187–211.

55 Medina, "An Enactivist Approach" 332, original emphasis.

56 See Figs. 25.1–2 for my reading, in this section, of the PEARL entry in Junius, *Etymologicum* Kkkk r – v. See, for a cultural-historical study of ancient through early modern pearls and pearl diving, Donkin R.A., *Beyond Price. Pearls and Pearl-Fishing: Origins to the Age of Discoveries*, Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society 224 (Philadelphia: 1998).

57 Wheelock Abraham (ed.), *Historiae ecclesiasticae gentis anglorum libri v a Venerabili Beda presbytero scripti; ab* […] *anglo-saxonum rege Aluredo* (*sive Alfredo*) *examinati; eiusque paraphrasi Saxonica* […] *explicati* […] (Cambridge, Roger Daniel, at Cornelius Bee: 1644) 21.

58 Spelman John (ed.), *Psalterium Davidis Latino-Saxonicum vetus* […] *D. Hen. fil. editum. E vetustissimo exemplari Ms. in bibliotheca ipsius Henrici, & cum tribus aliis non multo minus vetustis collatum* (London, Richard Badger, for Philemon Stephens and Christopher

['meregrot'] factam putabimus' (whence it will not be inconsistent for us to suppose that the word ['meregrot'] is formed), Junius suggests, 'ex "mere", "mare", et "gerod" vel "geroded", "erutus", prout legimus ps. lxxxv, 12' (from 'mere' [sea] and 'gerod' or 'geroded' [plucked, delivered], just as we read in Psalm 85:12).[59] Junius adumbrates:

> vocem 'meregrot' contendamus esse originis Teutonicae; ut nempe uniones ita nuncupaverint patres nostri, propterea quod ex imo mari magno urinatorum periculo eruantur; nam conchae maximas habentes margaritas, non modo generantur in profundo, sed ipsi quoque fundo tenaciter adhaerent, ut saepe necesse est margaritiferas illas conchas petentes [...] mergi ad XX orgyarum altitudinem.[60]
>
> Let us assert that the word 'meregrot' is of Teutonic origin; namely, that our ancestors called pearls thus because they were plucked from the bottom of the sea at the divers' great peril; as the shells that hold the largest pearls are not only born in the deep, but they also adhere tenaciously to the bottom, so that it is often necessary for divers searching those pearl-bearing shells [...] to plunge to a depth of 20 fathoms.

The pearl diver's peril is, however, toned down by Josephus Justus Scaliger in his commentary to Manilius' *Astronomica* 5.400–408.[61] Scaliger notes that, true, if divers stick their fingers in a pearl shell, the shell will likely snap shut and that is painful, but hardly life-threatening; besides, an expert diver knows to pry the shell loose by grabbing it from the side. If this were all there was to delivering pearls, 'grot' and 'geroded' would not rhyme expressively to the measure of precision that, I aver, drives etymological derivation. It is the assertion that divers plunge 20 fathoms deep – according to Isidorus of Charax in Athenaeus' *Learned Banqueters* 3.93e, rather than Isidore of Seville, as the *Etymologicum* prints – that foregrounds and makes fully salient the peril of the prized pearl's deliverance, so that, I suggest, its *feel* is so similar to the psalmist's words, 'thou hast delivered ('gerodest') my soul from the lowest hell', that 'grot' and 'gerod'

Meredith, at the sign of the Golden Lion in St Paul's Churchyard: 1640) fol. Dd r. English translation from the *Authorized King James Version*.

59 Junius, *Etymologicum* s.v. PEARL, Kkkk r; see Fig. 25.1, right column.

60 Ibidem.

61 Scaliger Josephus Justus (ed.), *M. Manili Astronomicon a Iosepho Scaligero ex vetusto codice Gemblacensi infinitis mendis repurgatum. Eiusdem Iosephi Scaligeri notae* [...]; *Castigationes et notae in M. Manili Astronomicon* (Leiden, Christophorus Raphelengius, for Jan Commelin: 1599–1600), *Castigationes* 440–441.

rhyme strikingly. Feel this peril's affective push and pull: it is 32 metres down on a single inhale to deliver one prized pearl. Is it dark, reader, in your depths, as you grope for the best pearl without hurting your fingers, while fending off sharks?[62] This 'meregrot' is truly a pearl of great price, which 'our ancestors' named in their native tongue 'Teutonic', to boot, precursor of Junius's Dutch and Old English.[63] It simply lets fade the 'meregrotan' as small pearls gleaned by beachcombing British shores, like the 'margaritas' that Vossius reports are called after grains, 'gargerim' in Hebrew.[64] In the PEARL entry, Bede is merely mentioned, Vossius's etymology for 'margarita' barely discussed, and Pliny on British pearls not cited.

Would one get such pearls of price, delivered perilously from the depths, just to adorn oneself top to bottom, clack them together like castanets, even decorate one's shoe soles with them and walk on them, the way Pliny criticises ladies in decadent Rome, in passages from *Natural History* 9.56 presented in the PEARL entry, for flaunting pearls to excess?[65] Pearls have, after all, these action affordances for us, as we have the skills, following Rietveld and Kiverstein's argument, to use them in many different ways.[66] It would not be inappropriate to respond, 'Hell, no!'. Push away such wantonness; turn away from exhibiting these pearls to excess, or treading them with the feet. Imagine these abuses of precious pearls in Pliny's moral criticism, but only to reject them. A morally upright person shuns such decadence, also in their imaginings. The PEARL entry thus offers moral warning, a good temptation one can bolster oneself with.[67] It is more proper, therefore, to keep a precious pearl carefully stored in a chest, as we saw, as 'ercnastan', on Junius's reading. 'Ercnastan's' affective, sensory-kinesthetic dynamics are a turning toward, cherishing, caring for, like a mother-of-pearl shell. One can feel the protective gesture experientially. Evidently, the Anglo-Saxons knew how to treasure their precious pearl. Junius, one may note, had been a minister of the Word in his

62 Pliny, *Natural History* 9.55, passage not quoted in the entry.

63 Romburgh S.G. van, "Why Francis Junius (1591–1677) Became an Anglo-Saxonist, or, the Study of Old English for the Elevation of Dutch", in Shippey T.A. – Arnold M. (eds.), *Appropriating the Middle Ages: Scholarship, Politics, Fraud*, Studies in Medievalism 11 (Cambridge: 2001) 5–36.

64 Vossius Gerardus Joannes, *Etymologicon linguae latinae: praefigitur eiusdem de literarum permutatione tractatus* (Amsterdam, Ludovicus & Daniel Elzevier: 1662), s.v. MARGARITA, 311.

65 Junius, *Etymologicum*, s.v. PEARL, Kkkk v; see Fig. 25.2, left column.

66 Rietveld – Kiverstein, "A Rich Landscape".

67 Fish S., *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost* (London – Melbourne – Toronto – New York: 1967) 38–56.

younger years.[68] While 'ercnastan' and 'meregrot' are different images, with different affective, experiential dynamics, both are expressive of a perilously delivered precious pearl as narrated by Pliny and Isidorus of Charax, and resonating in Matthew and the psalms.

Then, an expressive rhyme strikes the etymologist, as we have seen, for 'pearl': Douglas's address of Virgil as 'peirles peirle' exposes the precious, perilously delivered pearl as peerless, thus expressing, Junius suggests, the word force of Latin 'unio' (pearl, unique gem).[69] Pearls' uniqueness is illustrated by Pliny, who offers a rare opportunity, in *Natural History* 9.56 presented in the entry, to assay an exceptional pearl's material qualities in the imagination, by calibrating one's sensibility through close scrutiny and attentive expertise up to material peerlessness of a kind that is 'singulare quid et quod admirationem excitet' (something singular that inspires wonder).[70] Note that we have the imaginative capability to assay an imagined pearl's exceptionality.[71] The exercise is a sophisticated imagining, as this pearl is, reader, unique and superior to all 'in candore, magnitudine, orbe, laevore, pondere' (in brightness, size, roundness, smoothness, [and] weight).[72] Take your time to assay this peerless pearl's size, then – not fantastical, but genuinely exceptional; inspect it scrupulously for its superb, all-over orient white colour; sense your muscles' alertness as you gently roll it to prove its perfect roundness; graze its surface to indulge its shining smoothness; feel its weight in the cup of the hand. Imagine its outstanding qualities up to true peerlessness, stretching the imagination to a rarefied extreme. How often does one have legitimate reason to sojourn here, in these lofty reaches of one's imagination? What riches! One may care to return here sometime by oneself. Now hold on to the experience of this exceptional pearl's peerlessness, yet let go of its material affordances to imagine what peerlessness, like Virgil's, *feels* like. Indulge! Should this exceptionality get one to the head, reader, there is Colin Clout the shepherd to land one on the feet with his 'pearle of pearless grace and modesty'.

Septentrional word studies may serve experientially as meditations. For this praxis, an etymologisation comprises rather more than fewer derivations. A better early modern etymology is, therefore, I suggest, one that is more comprehensive, including a diversity of aspects up for consideration,

68 Rademaker C.S.M. ss.cc., "Young Franciscus Junius: 1591–1621", in Bremmer, *Franciscus Junius* 1–17, at 12–16.

69 Junius, *Etymologicum*, s.v. PEARL, Kkkk v; see Fig. 25.2, right column.

70 Ibidem.

71 Scarry E., *Dreaming by the Book* (New York: 1999).

72 Junius, *Etymologicum*, s.v. PEARL, Kkkk v, quoting Pliny, *Natural History* 9.56; see Fig. 25.2, bottom left column.

whose affordances-with-names do not cancel one another out, but at the least accrue, as we have seen, if not sheerly enhance one another exponentially to express how a word-name and thing signify in a dynamic with all other words, things, significations, and experiential understandings that make the world. A septentrional word study is an open-ended conversation, whose arc of discussion is not evenly conveyed, which may end abruptly, and some of whose reflections may receive scant mention. For instance, as Dekker indicates, references to Douglas's *Eneados* were added late in Junius's entry writing.[73] As such, a word study's compositional structure rather resembles the 'composite image', 'blazon-type formats' such as the emblem that Barbara Maria Stafford theorises in her examination of the 'cognitive work of images'.[74] It is exactly 'the craftlike ways in which they solicit attention', Stafford posits, that 'stimulat[e] the beholder to reenact the gathering, compounding, and synthesizing of information into a compact idea-thing'.[75] For a comprehensive and enduring experience of a name and thing, such as pearls, 'meregrot', 'ercnastan' and 'pearl', one would want to be able to touch on poetry, history, people's imaginings and experiences, including cultural practices, Christian resonances and, here, natural history knowledge.

8 Open-ended

Affective, experiential understandings are critical to septentrional etymology. By way of PEARL in Junius's *Etymologicum anglicanum*, I have here offered a first theorisation of the imaginative, experiential dynamics in this early modern philology of words of the North European past. Septentrional etymology gives pleasure. It involves a savouring of words' expressive force as condensed animated, experiential images or imagery that actualise as live moments through a philologist's reading, toward whose intensity they turn, and whose entangled resonances they spread in their annotations. Its process of word derivation is moved by what I have conceptualised as "etymological rhyme". Etymological rhyme is not just sonic, but experiential: it is a septentrionalist's experience of words that "rhymes". Etymological rhyme strikes a scholar affectively, offering the reward of pleasure at its experience. While the early modern derivations 'pearl' from 'perle' and 'meregrot' from 'margarita' rhyme etymologically, they lose salience vis-à-vis the rhyme of 'peerless pearl' with

73 Dekker, "The Other 'Junius'" 4.

74 Stafford B.M., *Echo Objects: The Cognitive Work of Images* (Chicago – London: 2007) 206, 1.

75 Ibidem 206.

its intertwining significations: the pearl's perilous deliverance from the deep sea like a soul delivered from hell; its preciousness that compels one to cherish it the way a mother-of-pearl shell cares for it by keeping it in its treasure chest, and heed Pliny's moral warnings; its superior material affordances, experienced at the rarefied extreme of one's imaginings; a truly felt peerlessness, embodied by 'pearl', a pearl of great price, thence pearl of grace and modesty – and all this in the septentrionalists' ancestral tongue. Septentrional etymology is affective. A philologist's experiential understandings are constitutive of a word's etymology, shaping a word's expressive force, which is felt most intensely in one's native language. The etymology of 'pearls' from 'peerless' rhymes *simply* expressively.

My reading of its rhyming etymological process is not just a(n entertaining) thought experiment, but an actualisation of the scholarship as a live event, of which you and I are constitutive parts. This actualisation aims to enable us to experience and include experiential dimensions in our studies that energise them, that we miss out on in an observer mode, and that were vital in both early modern philology and the septentrional past with which it engaged. If we reify ourselves, making our engagement dull, 'pearl' loses its lustre, and our assessment of septentrional philology will be more reified. For a felt understanding of 'pearl"s expressive force, we must enter the word's entangled dimensions of signification. While these experiential dynamics are usually pre-reflective, etymological practice brings such nuances and feelings to conscious awareness, as one pauses at and savours a word. Experience is an energetic and constitutive part of septentrional etymology (perhaps of early modern scholarship *tout court*), shaping the dynamics whereby philology signifies, word and image signify, and the past signifies as a live present.

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