NON/HUMAN ENTANGLMENT IN SHAKESPEARE’S TIMON OF ATHENS

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I explore the contours of the non/human through Shakespeare’s *Timon of Athens*. A term that describes a figure that is simultaneously human and non-human, “non/human” puts pressure on the boundary between categories of existence by suggesting that human and non-human share and exchange certain features. Timon, the protagonist of the play is a non/human. Throughout the play, his subjectivity is transferred onto non-human objects such that these objects begin to reflect aspects of his humanness. Likewise, he is able to live through these objects and experience life beyond what his human body allows. I suggest that Timon’s hybridity challenges traditional Renaissance humanism which saw the human as complete and agential. Timon, however, is fragmented and dynamic—qualities that enable him to surpass the limits of what it meant to be a human. At the same time that this project highlights the philosophical sophistication of one of Shakespeare’s most overlooked plays, I also attend to how *Timon* can help develop present-day conversations around the term “non/human.”

In the first chapter, I explore who or what is the non-human. I focus specifically on the ways in which Timon’s body is de-prioritized as the primary container of his subjectivity and humanness. I look at the ways in which Timon’s gravestone, a wax impression of his epitaphs, and gold modify Timon’s capabilities in the world. In examining how these non-human objects fragment and distribute Timon throughout Athens, I also think about how Timon’s relationship with gold creates an alternative economy in which the gold has both financial and affective
significance—that is, the gold is not just money but also a symbol of Timon’s feelings and desires.

In the second chapter, I investigate the consequences of Timon’s fragmentation in time and space as a result of inhabiting multiple material bodies. I employ ecocriticism and René Descartes’ theorization of the mind-body dualism to understand how Timon’s existence is impacted by his non/humanness. This chapter is organized around an insult by the play’s churlish philosopher Apemantus, who says to Timon, “Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself / A madman so long, now a fool.”
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This thesis is dedicated to my loved ones who patiently endure my obsession with the non/human.

Maria E. Vrcek
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A Bad Thing

No century has been particularly kind to *Timon of Athens*. Indeed, the play hardly deserves it. Depicting the ugliness of mankind, *Timon* is about a lord who gives extravagantly and indiscriminately until his creditors come demanding repayment. Suddenly, his friends have vanished and Timon, sick over this betrayal, flees Athens. Meanwhile, one of Timon’s friends, Alcibiades, visits the Athenian senators seeking pardon for a fellow soldier who has committed murder. Unable to secure the pardon, Alcibiades is banished by the senators; he leaves Athens, promising revenge. In the woods on the outskirts of Athens, Timon crowns himself Misanthropos, hater of mankind, but he is unable to escape visitations from Athenians who hear he has discovered a store of buried gold. Timon braves these visitations, almost every time giving the greedy Athenians gold but making them promise to incite social revolution. In the last visitation, two senators ask Timon, who is in the process of constructing his gravestone, to return to protect Athens against Alcibiades’ imminent invasion. Timon’s refusal is the last thing we hear from the former lord.

There are no records of the play being performed in the seventeenth century, and its inclusion in the First Folio (the first time it was printed) owes a debt to a copyright dispute over *Troilus and Cressida*.¹ This is, to my mind, one of the most fascinating aspects of the play’s history because it means that even before its tentative inclusion in Shakespeare’s canon, there was something unsettling about the play. Like *Pericles* and *Two Noble Kinsmen*, the other Folio rejects that are now accepted in the canon, authorship has been a particular sticking point for


Eventually, *Troilus and Cressida* was printed at the beginning of the tragedies section, but non-sequential pagination gives away obstacles in the assembly and production of the First Folio. See Appendix A for the Folio pages.
Timon. Now the play is generally acknowledged to have been coauthored by Shakespeare and Thomas Middleton; in fact, the title page of the most recent Arden edition lists both authors. But I suspect there was much more than authorship that troubled the compilers of the First Folio. For one, contradictory epitaphs on Timon’s gravestone have convinced the Arden editors and many critics of the play that it was left unfinished, that Shakespeare meant to cancel one of the epitaphs. Also, the play’s genre may have confused the Folio editors, for unlike all the other dramas included in the Tragedies section, Timon is the only one described as “The Life of” as opposed to “The Tragedy of.” Timon combines allegory, satire, and pessimistic tragedy, but the reader never gets the sense that Timon is a typical tragic hero like Hamlet, King Lear, or Julius Caesar. He is not noble in birth or character, nor is he a member of the aristocracy or ruling class, and his downfall is not caused by simply an error in judgment that his friends would help him in his time of need. Rather, Timon is ruined by his unscrupulousness and blind generosity.

These are just a sample of the issues of form and content that seem to have deterred critics from paying much attention to the play before the twentieth century—so little, in fact, that the only two book-length studies of the play were written in 1966 and 1979. But even these books don’t engage with how these oddities of form and content might make the reader rethink what the play is doing. Contested authorship, analyses of Timon’s misanthropy, comparisons to Shakespeare’s other protagonists, and observations about the play’s incompleteness dominate the scholarship in the twentieth century, not questions like “If Timon is not a tragic hero, what is he?” or “What might the hybridization of genre suggest about the play’s moral(s)?” or “What if the myriad irreconcilable issues of form and content are not meant to be reconciled?”

The play is often thought of as inferior or a failure because critics do not judge the play on its own terms; they do not think, for instance, about the possibility that the contradiction of
the two epitaphs might be deliberate and indicative of a larger pattern of irreconcilable contradiction in the play. Rather, they attempt to make the play make sense, either by revising the text or by attempting to excuse its inconsistencies as symptoms of Shakespeare’s psychological state. Indeed, one of the two books devoted to Timon, Rolf Soellner’s Timon of Athens: *Shakespeare’s Pessimistic Tragedy*, summarizes three centuries of critics who agreed that either Shakespeare’s psychological breakdown or, at the very least, a deep disappointment in humanity led him to write such a pessimistic tragedy.\(^2\) Attempts to imagine Shakespeare’s motivation for writing *Timon* include conflating the bard with his protagonist by reasoning that Timon’s departure from Athens mirrors Shakespeare’s supposed feelings upon his departure from London and the theatre at the end of his career. Another theory is that Shakespeare, “[b]itterly resenting the commercialization of his deepest thoughts. . . hurriedly sketched a play that allowed him to give vent to his nausea.”\(^3\) When he recovered from this despair, he was no longer able to recreate his ire and so abandoned the project.

I am not interested in making the play make sense. I ignore the principle of the Arden editors that “we need first to make sense of the action itself before we can appreciate, or even seen, what else is going on”\(^4\) in the play because I believe that if we let *Timon* speak unmitigated by our impulses to edit or amend it, we hear contradiction, not just in the epitaphs but also in aspects of Timon’s character.\(^5\)


\(^3\) Soellner, 8.

\(^4\) Dawson and Minton, 109.

\(^5\) In “Close but not Deep: Literary Ethics and the Descriptive Turn,” Heather Love describes a new mode of reading called “descriptive reading.” One of the principles of this method is to consider “what texts do say, rather than what they don’t or can’t” (383). While I do not trace the merits or weaknesses of descriptive reading in this piece, letting the play speak for itself is fundamental to my project of not attempting to reconcile contradictions but rather exploring what we can learn from them.
Here I focus specifically on the contradiction inherent in thinking of Timon as a non/human, a creature that is human and non-human simultaneously. In this play, non-human objects are non-organic objects—specifically Timon’s gravestone, gold he hands out or launches at his rude visitors, the contradictory epitaphs, and the wax impression of these epitaphs. I want to emphasize that I do not view these objects as inanimate, for while they may not breathe or have independent and conscious agency, they acquire a kind of animacy or life from interacting with and absorbing aspects of Timon’s subjectivity. I define human according to socio-biological conventions. As a human, Timon has independent agency, communicates intelligibly with other members of the human family, and has a body with all the trappings and organs of a human one. But again, the point is that Timon’s humanness is irrevocably affected by his non-humanness. In this thesis, I will attend to the ways in which non-human objects extend aspects of Timon’s humanness—specifically his agency and his ability to communicate—in ways that a human body could not and enable him to inhabit multiple and various spatial and temporal locations.

“Non/human” denotes clearly this integration of human and non-human entities. But the slash that separates the two parts of the term is a deliberate and important device that recognizes a porous border between the two parts. The editors of *Queering the Non/Human* recognize it as a marker that simultaneously signals “betweenness” and “in-betweeness.” The slash is literally between the two terms, just as something might be characterized as being between human and non-human—not completely one or the other. But the slash also signals in-betweenness because the term, itself, performs betweeness: to be non/human is to constantly be on the move between all categories, not necessarily moving toward a culminating humanness or non-humanness; a non/human need not ally herself to any one category. “Non/human” also attempts to accomplish de-anthropocentrism. This is not to say (nor with this be my only time making this assertion) that

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the non/human is synonymous with something like the nightmares of posthumanism, the robot with human consciousness. Instead, the non/human resembles Donna Haraway’s cyborg and Bruno Latour’s quasi-object.

Haraway defines cyborg as “a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction.” In terms of Timon, this hybrid emerges from the union of human and non-human objects. Specifically, I will read how Timon’s relationship with gold, his gravestone, and a wax impression of his epitaphs extends Timon’s capabilities beyond what is typically possible for a human in a human body. That is, the body is no longer the primary receptacle for humanness; rather, Timon lives in these objects, and each of them represents him in the world in a different way. Even more, these unions upset ideas of time and space as linear and progressive. Instead, as a consequence of Timon being fractured into and divided among organic and non-organic bodies, Timon lives in multiple times and spaces concurrently. Timon is also a creature of social reality and fiction because much of what motivates the conflict in the play are mischaracterizations of him by the Athenians and, in one particular case, an accusation by Apemantus, the play’s churlish philosopher, that Timon has composed himself entirely of fictions.

While cyborg is an anthropocentric term, calling Timon a “quasi-object” emphasizes that the objects are not mere accessories to his humanness, but that they are just as integral to him as his flesh-and-blood body. Latour defines quasi-objects as “much more social, much more fabricated, much more collective than the ‘hard’ parts of nature. . .they are much more real, nonhuman and objective than those shapeless screens on which society – for unknown reasons –

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Quasi-objects acquire dimensions of humanness; they are social, and they collect things just as humans collect experiences and histories to form their personalities. In this way, the gold, gravestone, and wax impression of the epitaphs become quasi-objects, as does Timon himself. There are two ways to think about Timon in terms of quasi-objectivity. The first is that the idea of Timon is a quasi-object: an amalgamation of human body, non-human parts, fabrications of who the Athenians want him to be, fabrications he believes about himself, and even what the audience thinks of him. Quasi-objectivity does not privilege one object over another. The second way to understand Timon as a quasi-object requires thinking of Timon as disparate parts that aren’t always necessarily connected or associated with one another. The gold, wax impression, gravestone, and even Timon’s body are each a quasi-object that independently reveals Timon; Timon is not just one quasi-object, but many.

In working through who, what, where and when is Timon as a non/human, I focus on the idea of confusion, which Timon himself invites to “live” in his first monologue after self-exiling from Athens. In the first chapter, I give a history of the term as it has been used primarily from epistemological philosophy. However, I recuperate “confusion” as a term that has ontological meaning as well. An unstable fusion of various material parts, the non/human is confused. In this chapter I explore how Timon is a citizen of both human and non-human worlds. In addition to describing the material conditions of Timon’s non/humanness, I also think about how non/humanness interrupts the idea of telos. As a subject that gets grafted on to objects with their own histories and functions in society, Timon no longer follows a linear progression of time. I coin the term “non/humaning” to emphasize that non/human doesn’t just function as a label but as a process that involves a constant transgression of boundaries between human and non-human.

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Timon consistently transitions from one kind of being to another, but to say that he “transforms” or “evolves” implies a kind of finality that cannot be said for a lord who is presumed dead but somehow is capable of affixing his tombstone on top of his grave. Rather, I argue that at no point is Timon complete or even completely one thing or another—human or non-human. “Non/humaning” recognizes the resistance against categorization; the non/human is always in-between and on the move.

If the first chapter is concerned with who or what, the second chapter tackles what and when is the non/human, engaging particularly with ecocriticism, Descartes’ struggles with the floating signifiers “here” and “I”, and Jonathan Gil Harris’ work on temporality. Apemantus’ insult to Timon, “Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself / A madman so long, now a fool” (4.3.219-20) organizes the concerns of this chapter. Picking up from the consequences of an ateleological non/human, I think about how the non/human upsets the rules of being. This is not a nihilistic tale of Timon not being. Rather, I investigate how Timon exists without being rooted in a particular (or even certain) time or place. I also point out how the inability to locate Timon in a fixed time or space forecloses the possibility of characterizing Timon as a “who” or “what.” Consequently, in the conclusion of this project, I offer a tentative reading that all we can truly say about Timon is that he is a social effect.

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Non/Human Materiality

Timon is Shakespeare’s most misanthropic protagonist. A victim of his naïveté and the greed of his fellow Athenians, Timon self-exiles after no one will help him repay his debts. However, just outside the Athenian walls, he continues to be visited by a diverse cast of characters, including former stewards, senators, a churlish philosopher, prostitutes, and thieves. By the beginning of act 5, thoroughly annoyed with these visitations and having no faith in mankind, Timon prepares himself for suicide. The next time Timon is sought, a soldier discovers a gravestone inscribed with a six-line epitaph. The soldier is able to read only the first two lines: “Timon is dead, who hath outstretched his span, / Some beast read this, there does not live a man” (5.4.3-4, original emphasis). The next four lines can be translated only by Alcibiades. They read:

Here lies a wretched corse, of wretched soul bereft;  
Seek not my name: a plague consume you, wicked caitiffs left!  
Here lie I, Timon, who, alive, all living men did hate;  
Pass by and curse thy fill, but pass and stay not here thy gait.  

(5.4.70-73)\(^{10}\)

Editors of both the Arden and Riverside editions of the play consider the contradiction between the command to “seek not my name” and, in the very next line, the pronouncement of his name as proof of the play’s incompleteness.\(^{11}\) These four lines are quoted nearly verbatim from Shakespeare’s primary source for the play, Sir Thomas North’s 1579 translation of Plutarch’s The Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans. According to Plutarch, the first couplet was

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written by Timon and the second by the Greek poet Callimachus.Both editions concur that, had he finished the play, Shakespeare would have removed one of the epitaphs. Indeed, the Arden editors remove one of the epitaphs from their edition, defending their emendation with, “we need first to make sense of the action itself before we can appreciate, or even see, what else is going on.” Unlike the Arden editors, I think the contradictory epitaphs are emblematic of the kind of “sense” with which the play experiments—one that does not rely on coherence or stability. In fact, I would offer that the sense these editors seek, which takes for granted that the play operates according to a coherent or predictable progression, is disturbed even before these troublesome epitaphs.

This disturbance becomes evident as Timon prepares for death by constructing his gravestone, a gravestone he speaks about as if it will extend his life. The last visitors Timon begrudgingly hosts at his cave are his loyal servant Flavius and two senators who have come to beg Timon’s help in fighting Alcibiades’ imminent invasion and destruction of Athens. After deceiving the senators into thinking that their pleas have restored his concern for Athens, Timon offers a gruesome resolution and invites his “friends” in Athens to come hang themselves on a tree in his close (5.2.90-7). He then departs, with his last lines in the play marking his liberation from his human body:

Come not to me again, but say to Athens

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12 Callimachus lived roughly two centuries after the historical Timon died. Besides the fact that Callimachus was a prolific writer of poems and epigrams and a teacher, it is unclear how or why Callimachus may have encountered Timon’s story, and why he would have composed an epitaph for him.

13 Dawson and Minton, 109. Twentieth-century scholarship circumvented this complaint about the play’s incoherence by speculating about Shakespeare’s difficulties, including his psychological condition, in writing the play. See my discussion of Soellner’s Timon of Athens in the introduction. Francelia Butler’s earlier monograph focuses more on structural peculiarities, like the hypothesis of dual authorship with Thomas Middleton, the play’s abrupt and extreme style, and that perhaps Shakespeare struggled to reconcile his source materials’ depiction of a beastly Timon with his noble protagonist. Both Butler and Soellner, like critics before them, subscribe to the theory that the play was unfinished. Yet it is surprising that neither book cites the most noticeable textual problem: Timon’s several and contradictory epitaphs. Soellner dismisses the epitaphs in a note: “Whatever the reason for this duplication is, it is doubtful evidence for the play’s incompleteness” (p.223n.)

14 Succeeding quotations are taken from the Arden edition unless otherwise noted.
Timon hath made his everlasting mansion
Upon the beached verge of the salt flood,
Who once a day with his embossed froth
The turbulent surge shall cover; thither come,
And let my gravestone be your oracle.
Lips, let sour words go by, and language end:
What is amiss, plague and infection mend;
Graves only be men’s works and death their gain,
Sun, hide thy beams, Timon hath done his reign. (5.2.99-108)

These lines upset the idea of the human body as the primary container of human life by acknowledging that Timon’s human condition involves fragmentation and material transformation into the “everlasting mansion” of his gravestone. James Kuzner concurs that Timon consciously acknowledges the next stage of his life: “On the verge between land and sea, Timon imagines himself as a human subject becoming non-human, indistinct from the world of natural objects.”¹⁵ Indeed, Timon ascribes humanness to his gravestone, characterizing it not just as prophetic but as a prophet itself. This confluence of human and non-human betrays the supposed absolute distinction between these two categories.

Though Timon sees himself becoming a non-human object, he is no less socially active post-mortem. The epitaphs invite (if sourly) others to interact with Timon, to actively remember Timon—“Pass by and curse thy fill”; “let my gravestone be your oracle”—suggesting that Timon lives beyond his human body in a discursive one. This discursiveness is manifested materially as the epitaphs are imprinted not only onto his gravestone but also into wax that the soldier brings to Alcibiades for translation. Timon, then, does not inhabit one body but rather is fractured and displaced, “outstretched,” (5.4.3) and “unlocatable”¹⁶ as he changes form and location. On a representational level, the gravestone and the wax impression replace the actor’s body as the symbol for Timon, the character Shakespeare has created. On an ontological level,

¹⁶ Kuzner, 364.
however, the audience cannot be sure that Timon has in fact died. How would he go about burying himself and then affixing a tombstone on top of his grave? Indeed, scholars hypothesize that Timon’s grave is actually a cenotaph, an empty tomb. The presence of these multiple material and social bodies means that Timon is both physically unlocatable and outstretched. This paradox calls into question the core constituency of the human body in the conception of “human.” Timon exceeds the capabilities of his human body.

As a discursive and material entity, made up of objects including a gravestone and epitaphs, he surpasses the temporal and spatial limitations of the human body. This diversity of form, which nevertheless includes a human body, challenges the reader and viewer of the play to attend more diligently to how Timon’s subjectivity is cultivated and revealed. In particular, we are called to consider the non-human objects in this play as more than static tools or props and as more than secondary accessories to Timon’s development. It is not simply that Timon’s humanness is composed of human and non-human elements, but that, at times, the non-human elements are the only material representations of Timon. What makes these non-human representations more than metonyms for Timon is the ways they continue to modify and adjust the reader’s idea of who or what Timon is. That is to say that the gravestone and epitaphs, in particular, have the potential to create a different subjectivity—certainly one that is more sour and misanthropic—than the one Timon had in his life as a human. Consequently, we are made to think beyond the stability of the mind-body partnership to conceive of the human as something that does not inhabit a stable form. We must ask, then, “As a body of diverse forms and fragmented identities, is he still a human? Or is he something else?”

18 I treat Descartes’ mind-body dualism, and what it contribute to the idea of Timon as “unlocatable,” more fully in the second chapter.
In this chapter, I will argue that Timon’s humanness is channeled through material objects, leading to a re-conception of his subjectivity as outside or beyond what could simply be called “human.” This outsourcing reveals Timon’s non/humanness. Giving attention to the oft-overlooked philosophical sophistication of one of Shakespeare’s “bad plays”, I am interested in how *Timon of Athens* reveals Shakespeare’s engagement with the idea that non-human objects can be more than mere accessories to the development of the human. Again, I see more than metonymy at work here, for it’s not just that the non-human objects symbolize Timon, but they perpetuate independent versions of Timon. Concerns about how intimately subjects and objects interact have been taken up recently by the prominent critic Timothy Morton, who combines ecocriticism and queer theory to assert, “queer ecological ethics might regard beings as people even when they aren’t people.”¹⁹ My thesis is very much in line with Morton’s suggestion: Timon’s peculiar relationship with the gravestone, gold, and wax impression of his epitaphs reveals that these objects sustain and develop his life in a way that asks us to re-think what kind of life is possible for a non-human, and what the life of a non/human is. Aside from the ethical complications that arise from this intimate relationship between humans and non-humans, ecocriticism, as well as posthumanism and queer theory, enable a discussion of life as “catastrophic, monstrous, nonholistic, and dislocated, not organic, coherent, or authoritative”²⁰—all adjectives I see reflected in Timon’s non/humanness. Neither does he have one stable or complete identity nor are his multiple identities related teleologically; as a non/human Timon is fractured, variable, and dispersed throughout Athens. Here, I explore how, rather than dehumanizing Timon or erasing his subjectivity or agency, Timon’s transgression of the

²⁰ Morton, “Guest Column,” 275.
boundary between human and non-human makes him a citizen of both the human and non-human worlds, makes him a non/human.

A Brief History of the Confused Corpus

While the Arden editors seem devoted to constructing a coherent logic for the play, I argue that Timon, himself, offers a specific methodology for reading. “Decline to your confounding contraries-- / And let confusion live!” he demands in his first soliloquy, also delivered as a prayer, after seeking refuge from Athens’ ungrateful citizens in the wilderness (4.1.20-1). According to the OED, “confusion” can mean “destruction” and “disorder,” yet it is also defined in ways that reflect its etymology, as the loss of distinction between or fusion of elements. Timon may pray for a kind of epistemological confusion—disorientation of the Athenians by the same abrupt change from flattery and friendship to excising and usurious demands that Timon experienced. However, I propose that the play also explores the question of what it means to be a human through ontological confusion. That is, reading Timon’s plea with the latter definitions of loss of distinction and fusion of elements in mind, we come to see how confusion lives throughout the play as Timon is fused—physically and metaphorically—with other humans, beasts, objects, and nature. With the confusion of human and non-human entities, I argue that we must reconsider allegiance to the idea that Timon’s human body is the primary bearer of his life.

Reading for confusion is not an anti-humanist method; it is a way of chronicling the relationship between the human and its environment to see how human subjectivity can transcend the confines of the perishable human body and live on. Nevertheless, my reading of
the play departs from previous versions of humanism that view the human as an independent, agential, and complete being. The Renaissance reinvigorated interest in antiquity, especially the teachings of classical Greek and Roman philosophers like Petrarch and Cicero. Modeled after their teachings, education in the Renaissance sought to teach students to make moral choices that would benefit the political and social needs of humanity. Scholars’ emphasis on introspection and personal improvement aimed to make citizens aware of themselves as independent beings and of how their actions impacted the world and their communities.21

One voice that sticks out of this chorus is Descartes’. Descartes took humanism in a different direction, choosing to focus instead on what composes the human. In his Meditations on First Philosophy, he famously asserts the distinction between the mind and body, and questions the reality of his body. In “How Can I Deny That These Hands And This Body Are Mine?”, an important piece of Descartes-inspired criticism, Judith Butler puts pressure on the relationship Descartes traces between the body and language, which establishes the boundaries of the body. She performs a rigorous deconstructive reading of Descartes’ Meditations, arguing that his attempts to locate and confirm the presence of his body are constantly undone by language. “Here,” for instance is a term “that could refer to any ‘here’ and so fails to anchor Descartes. . . .Thus the word, precisely because it can refer promiscuously, introduces an equivocalness and, indeed, dubitability that makes it quite impossible to say whether or not his being ‘here’ is a fact as he claims that it is.”22 Something similar is true of the Cartesian “I,” which, when written, “splits the narrator from the very self he seeks to know and not to doubt.”23

The split “I” and the problems it presents are taken up more fully in the second chapter of this

23 Butler, 8.
thesis. However, Butler’s argument elucidates that the idea of a contradictory and temporally, spatially, and ontologically split self has roots in early modern philosophy, thanks, in large part, to Descartes’ suspicion that the human body is just an illusion. While I don’t doubt the presence of Timon’s physical body and its contribution to the development of Timon’s subjectivity, I relish Descartes’ impulse to divorce subjectivity from the body, not only because it serves as a foundational piece for my own argument, but also because it could mean that Shakespeare, too, felt this impulse to explore ways in which human subjectivity is developed by the objects with which one interacts.

Not surprisingly, “confusion” has not been a popular topic in literary or philosophical scholarship. Nevertheless, it had an active life as an epistemological inquiry in the classical and early modern periods. Descartes described “confusion” as mistaking our sensory perception for the property itself; it is a problem of understanding and a misapplication of a personal perception for a universal quality.24 In the next generation, G.W. Leibniz defined a confused person as one who is able to recognize but not articulate the difference between one thing and another.25 After the seventeenth century, philosophers turned away from the topic of confusion, but it has resurfaced—though not by name—in ecocritical, posthuman, and queer discussions that think about the interactions between human and non-human entities.

In the twentieth century, ontologically confused entities were relabeled as “hybrids” in Bruno Latour’s actor-network theory and “cyborgs” in Donna Haraway’s work. Latour perceived the collaboration between humans and non-humans to be so important that he wrote, “So long as humanism is constructed through contrast with the object. . .neither the human nor the nonhuman

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25 Camp, 222-4n.
can be understood.”\textsuperscript{26} With Latour’s work laying the philosophical foundation for fields like animal (companion) studies, science studies, posthumanism, ecocriticism, and object oriented philosophy, scholars like Jeffrey Cohen, Jane Bennett, and Steve Mentz have provocatively expanded and explored the dimensions of the human’s relationship with its environment. Attempting, too, to think about objects from a non-anthropocentric position, these scholars theorize the vivacity of non-human objects in ways that don’t make the non-human object’s liveliness contingent on its relationship to or with humans. Nevertheless, I think these scholars would agree that non-human and human entities develop alongside one another.\textsuperscript{27}

One definition of confusion from the \textit{OED} suggests the loss of distinction, but we might more precisely characterize “confusion” as the constant redefinition of boundaries. Confusion doesn’t produce a muddled mess; rather it creates unexpected alliances that, in the case of \textit{Timon of Athens}, challenge not only the notion of coherent identity, but also the absolute difference between human and non-human entities. I’ve proposed that Timon is a non/human a term that designates the inseparability of the human from everything considered to be non-human. However, the non/human union is not without its conditions. The slash functions as an easily breachable border, meaning that though “non/human” certainly challenges binary logic, the two terms on either side are not to be conflated. In early modern studies, the authors of \textit{Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture} can be credited with resurrecting the tension between the subject and object and bringing the possibility of their mutual begetting to the critical foreground. Yet I depart from the book’s editors’ characterization that “[t]he subject passes into the object, the

\textsuperscript{26} Latour, 136.
\textsuperscript{27} This is the position of ecocritics. Object oriented philosophy is even more intensely interested in anti-anthropocentrism. Graham Harman’s \textit{Tool-Being: Heidegger and the Metaphysics of Objects} (Peru, IL: Open Court, 2002) is considered one of the foundational texts of object oriented philosophy. My own readings are more aligned with the former stance than the latter.
object slides into the subject, in the activity by which each becomes itself.” Non/human nuances this “sliding into” by expressing a similar sort of breach of boundary, but it maintains the tense, problematic, and non-collapsible relationship between the two parts of the term.

Noreen Giffney and Myra Hird write that Donna Haraway adds that the slash’s “positioning marks out the impossibility of applying a hermetic seal to the distinction between – however temporary and shifting – what gets to count as Human and nonhuman.” Thinkers like Haraway, Cary Wolfe, Margrit Shildrick, Wendy Beth Hyman, and Katherine Hayles, to name just a few, interrogate the ways in which the non-human contaminates the human. Part of my investigation here is to explore how this cooperation works the other way around. Can the non-human be conferred with human characteristics? How might this conferral enrich the idea of “human” as something that exhibits characteristics beyond those of what we have typically sanctioned in the natural or cultural definitions of “human”?

31 I am indebted to Latour’s We Have Never Been Modern for laying the groundwork that proves hybridization is alive and well. In acknowledging that there are “natural or cultural” definitions of “human,” I do not mean to violate his major premise that there is not absolute distinction between nature and culture. Rather, I use these adjectives as examples of the various—though by no means mutually exclusive—definitions of “human.”
Beyond thinking about how the severing and blending inherent in confusion challenges human or non-human purity, in this section I think about how bodily confusion of human and non-human entities impacts Timon’s subjectivity. In particular, I am interested in how Timon’s life is extended and altered when he is imprinted onto non-human objects. For instance, Timon’s human body is replaced at the end of the play by the epitaphs and gravestone that, more than memorializing him, bear instructions for how Timon will continue to exist in social interactions. When Timon directs those who visit his grave to “Pass by and curse thy fill, but pass and stay not here thy gait” (5.4.73, original emphasis), he underwrites an expectation that his subjectivity will be distributed throughout Athens in the exact way the wax impression of the epitaphs moves him from his grave back to the walls of Athens, and that his subjectivity will continue to affect his former friends and be affected by them. Indeed, after translating the epitaphs, Alcibiades eulogizes Timon, finishing with, “Dead / Is noble Timon, of whose memory / Hereafter more” (5.5.77-80). Alcibiades acknowledges that these epitaphs will set in motion unscripted perpetuation and characterization of Timon. The gravestone, wax impression, and epitaphs, then, become new representations of Timon that have the potential to afford him new life in his after-life.

Following Haraway’s observation about the slash, I argue that Timon demonstrates the de-emphasis of the human body as a defining characteristic of Timon. Indeed, Cary Wolfe encourages seeing the human as a prosthetic to its own humanness:

attend[ing] to the specificity of the human—its ways of being in the world, its ways of knowing, observing, and describing—[we are] acknowledging that it is fundamentally a prosthetic creature that has coevolved with various forms of technicity and materiality,

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32 *The Riverside Shakespeare.*
Building on Wolfe’s claim, I suggest that the human body, itself, is just another prosthetic to clarifying or modifying what the human is. The characters in Timon confirm this suggestion in the ways they talk about Timon; in describing Timon’s contribution to Athenian society, they ignore the limits of the human body. Instead, we are introduced to the possibility that Timon is a non-human in a human body. That is, on stage, Timon is represented by a human body, yet he surpasses temporal, spatial, and even bodily conditions that are ascribed to the human.

What makes bodily confusion possible in Timon of Athens is a neglect of the boundedness of material bodies. That Timon so easily mixes with non-human objects illustrates one of the most drastic departures from the complete, agential, and individual Renaissance Man. This disregard for the bounded human form is evident from the first moments of the play with the Poet and Painter’s casual resignation to the decay of the world:

POET.  
I have not seen you long – how goes the world?  
PAINTER.  
It wears, sir, as it grows.  
POET.  
Ay, that’s well known.  
But what particular rarity? What strange,  
Which manifold record not matches?  

Athens, however, is not the primary subject of this deterioration, for “the world” reveals itself as a metaphor for Lord Timon, a character who experiences the burden of increasing debt as he becomes more magnanimous. Curiously, the metaphor is not confirmed until line 10 when another artisan, the Merchant, describes Timon—though still not naming him—as “[a] most incomparable man, breathed as it were / To an untireable and continuate goodness—/ He passes” (1.1.10-12). The language of unchecked growth—“untireable,” “continuate,” “passes,”—
corroborates that, at least in the minds of these artisans, Timon shares characteristics (and indeed the fate of) this overtaxed world whose limit is unknown. An earlier description strengthens the metaphor but also overtly performs the bodily confusion of Timon and the world. Amplifying Timon’s grandeur and magnetism, the poet indicates that Timon’s bountiful generosity orders the world and gathers lords around him as if he were the sun: “See, / Magic of bounty, all these spirits thy power / Hath conjured to attend” (1.1.5-7). The Poet transitions seamlessly from acknowledging a condition of the world to describing Timon, masking the distinction between Timon and the world. The Athenians conceive of Timon as they conceive of the world: the world seems to be the agent of its own growth just as Timon seems to be self-sustaining, at least for now. But what’s more, this orientation around Timon does not appear to exemplify a “particular rarity” or change in the march toward decay. The wearing of Timon, like the wearing of the world, has no perceivable beginning or end.

The sustained, if at first covert, confusion of Timon and the world exemplifies the tension between Timon as a bounded human body and as an infinite generator of treasures. Perhaps inspired by the difficulty in characterizing Timon in a contained body, critic Anthony Dawson describes Timon as “somehow pre- or post-character, a figure on the outer edge of representation. . . .Timon remains somehow unintegrated, partly because of his social position—he is both central and peripheral, but always alien.” Dawson also describes Timon as an embodiment of a characteristic and as “a partial character.” While still saddling Timon with labels, if imprecise, Dawson’s pivoting from “extreme” to “partial” to “embodiment” in order to

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34 A nevertheless setting sun. In one of many premonitions of Timon’s fate, the churlish Apemantus warns, “I should fear those that dance before me now / Would one day stamp upon me. ’T has been done, / Men shut their doors against a setting sun” (1.2.142-4).
36 Dawson, 199.
37 Ibid., 207.
characterize Timon gestures toward the difficulty of finding a suitable and stable definition of who or what Timon is.

Moreover, the perpetual growing of the world is elaborated, but made no more precise, in the praise of Timon as “untireable and continuate goodness,” unstoppable and surpassing all others in generosity. Even more, as we find out shortly, Timon’s growth is as much a process of degeneration as the world’s wearing. The jollity of the first of two banquet scenes is consistently tempered by interruptions from the cynic philosopher Apemantus, who, amongst his insults and vitriolic asides, says he comes to warn Timon about the empty flattery of the Athenians (1.2.34). Apemantus provides a metanarrative—“O you gods, what a number of men eats Timon and he sees ’em not!” (1.2.39-40)—that signals the reader toward the parasitic behavior of the Athenians so that we read this scene with attention to Timon’s degeneration. When, near the end of the scene, Flavius, Timon’s most trusted servant, informs the audience that Timon “commands us to provide and give great gifts, / And all out of an empty coffer” (1.2.195-6), we know that we have witnessed the draining of Timon. Yet though Flavius exposes Timon’s unfortunate financial condition, the adjectives the artisans use to describe Timon suggest that there is something uncertain about Timon’s final condition; he seems to lack telos.

To imply that Timon lacks telos calls into question the linearity of his growth. Indeed, following Timon’s tragic impoverishment, he exiles himself from Athens only to unluckily happen upon a store of gold that reignites the Athenians’ appetites. Similarly, though Timon’s body perishes before the end of the play, he persists in the form of the gravestone and epitaphs and is even replicated by the soldier who takes the wax impression of his tombstone. Timon endures a cycle of shrinkage or impoverishment and expansion or distribution that cannot be contained by the idea that life progresses to a destined or logical end. Rather, Timon’s life
change as he interacts with different objects, particularly as these interactions with non-human objects enable him to transgress temporal and spatial boundaries. This transgression emphasizes Timon’s non/humanness: it makes legible how non-human objects can alter a fundamental characteristic of the human as being limited to one space or time. That is not to say that non/humans can time travel, but rather that Timon’s situation reveals just how tremendously a non-human can rearrange or perpetuate human life. One way to see the label “non/human,” then is not so much as an identity as a term that acts out the constant transgression between human and non-human forms: as Timon goes through these transformations, including the material ones, he is non/humaning. In that way, “non/human” is a behavior rather than a fixed or stable entity.

The idea of “non/humaning” is, in some ways, analogous to Deleuze and Guattari’s “becoming.” In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari describe becoming as “not a correspondence between relations” and “not an evolution.” “Becoming” describes the movement toward relation but not the relation itself; it describes a transformation without fully knowing what will occur in the transformation. In this way, it is rigidly ateleological; in fact, it refuses to acknowledge or imagine an end product but is instead only concerned with metamorphosis. In a similar way, there is no telling what kind of mix of human and non-human will result from the non/humaning adventure. However, non/humaning differs from becoming because knowing what is human and what is non-human is integral to identifying the transformation of forms. Again, it is not the case that Timon evolves from one form to the other but that at different times his subjectivity is revealed more through one form than another. It seems to me that Dawson’s inability to articulate Timon’s character might be a result of this situation: Timon is always in a state of flux that is difficult to characterize precisely because he is

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39 Deleuze and Guattari, 238.
constantly taking part in the making and re-making of what it means to be human and non-human.

I want to emphasize that the artisans’ seemingly hyperbolic statements are not meant to flatter Timon but rather to describe a lack of boundary. Throughout the play, we will see a number of instances in which the limits of Timon’s human body are violated or neglected. Both in discourse and in performance, his body is treated as a mere casing for an abundance that is always trying to push out. Take, for example, the Poet’s description of the Painter’s portrait of Timon, “What a mental power / This eye shoots forth! How big imagination / Moves in this lip” (1.1.32-4). In the first line, the placement of the predicate, “What a mental power,” before the subject, “This eye,” deemphasizes the subject, focusing the reader’s attention on a mental power that cannot be quantified let alone observed by merely looking at the eye; nothing about Timon’s physiognomy reveals his tremendous mental power. Similarly, the body part associated with Timon’s “imagination” is mentioned only at the end of the line. In both cases, the skill is separated from its corresponding body part by a line break, suggesting not only that the body cannot contain his talents, but also that the body somehow does not generate these capacities—that they are only housed within his body.

Confusing Timon’s body and the world puts pressure on the question of his humanness by treating the body as unbounded. G. Wilson Knight’s important essay, “The Pilgrimage of Hate,”40 is an early criticism of the play that, unlike more recent discussions that attempt to define or somehow sanitize Timon,41 grapples with the complexities of Timon’s composition. Working with a modern rather than early modern conception of the human, Knight attempts to

41 See Soellner, Anthony B. Dawson and Gretchen E. Minton, introduction to Timon of Athens, and Dawson, “Is Timon a Character?”
define Timon’s subjectivity, but encounters the very issues that I have been describing—wherein Timon exceeds what can be classified as “human.” Admitting in the first paragraph of the essay that his analysis may contradict the “logic of human life,” Knight argues that the play contrasts the “partial and imperfect nature of humanity” with an “aspiration toward infinity and perfection.”

Indeed, as the play progresses, the imperfectness of Timon’s humanity drops away as he morphs into various material forms, tending toward an infinite existence. Moreover, he not only throws off temporal constraints, but his death marks the beginning of Athens’ rebirth, a second try to perfect humanity. Knight sees Timon as transcendent—“at every step in Timon’s history we have been aware, not of a lessening, but of an increase of his grandeur.”

So, for Knight, there is a way in which Timon, who “has hungered for infinity and scorned all that is partial, ephemeral, limited in space, time, or any ethical code” is also the one who finally triumphs over the imperfection of human nature. What Knight describes is the expansion and distribution of Timon we observe at the end of the play, when we cannot be sure that Timon has died, and reminders of him in the wax impressions and gravestone locate Timon in a variety of places.

I’d like to offer, however, that perhaps the infinite perfection Knight describes—which seems to be akin to a kind of transcendent omnipresence—is not attained through a teleological process. Rather, as Knight suggests, paradise, the place of perfection, is the place of constant interplay—cycles of destruction and rebuilding, war and peace, rebirth from fragments of the old. From this conception of perfection we are not compelled to reduce or ignore complexity; perfection is not attaining homogeneity but rather allowing heterogeneity to flourish. In this

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42 Knight, 207.
43 Ibid., 233.
44 Ibid., 238-9.
45 Ibid., 239.
light, Timon appears as the embodiment of all things. Indeed, Knight observes an interdependence between Timon’s world and his soul\textsuperscript{46}--to the point that a “search for exact verisimilitude with the appearances of human life” is futile.\textsuperscript{47} One can sense Knight’s struggle to articulate Timon’s condition in his inconsistent vocabulary: Timon is inhuman, unnatural, infinite.\textsuperscript{48} Nevertheless, his point is evident: any term we attempt to attach to Timon insufficiently describes the construction of body and world that Timon represents and the power of that construction to disrupt logic and coherence.\textsuperscript{49}

**Following Orders: The Epitaphs Revisited**

In many ways, ontological confusion cannot be reconciled with its epistemological counterpart precisely because the kind of contradiction that ontological confusion recognizes causes epistemological confusion. How are we to understand a human becoming non-human or a non-human becoming human? Nevertheless, I’d like to think through how Descartes might be used to corroborate the ontological confusion and interrogation of what counts as human that I see at work in the play. Of Timon’s absent corpse, Robert Darcy writes, “The corpse is present during this final scene only as a written and spoken word, attached to a deictic of location, although the ‘here’ of Timon’s corpse has been further displaced by the soldier’s movement away from the site of the tomb.”\textsuperscript{50} While I disagree with Darcy that Timon is necessarily a

\textsuperscript{46} Knight, 210.  
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 220.  
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 222.  
\textsuperscript{49} It’s important to note—though it should not bias us against his analyses—that Knight believed strongly that Shakespeare’s plays formed a unified corpus (prefatory note to The Wheel of Fire, vii), with each play possessing an “enduring power of divine worth” (“On the Principles of Shakespeare Interpretation,” in The Wheel of Fire, 14). Given these tendencies, it is even more significant that he sees Timon as contradictory because it means that contradiction is not irreconcilable to the idea of perfection.  
\textsuperscript{50} Darcy, 169.
corpse at the end of the play, his analysis confirms the ongoing materiality—in the writing on the grave and the wax impression—and human presence of Timon. Importantly, Darcy signals not only that Timon inhabits multiple material bodies, but also, through the travelling “here,” he gestures toward one tremendous consequence of multiplicity: there can be no stable “here” for the non/human. Darcy argues that in the wax impression the soldier makes not just the words on Timon’s tomb travel but also Timon himself, as the tomb and its epitaphs are all the Athenians have left of him. “The question of Timon's actual location at the end of the play is absorbed into the rhetorically created space of the epitaph rather than being answered definitively by the material site of his tomb and an exhumation, if necessary, of his purportedly buried corpse.”

Darcy signals Timon’s fragmentation at the end of the play: the tomb is not the only place where Timon is located; wherever the words of the epitaph travel, there Timon is. However, I would push Darcy’s argument one step further in that if we acknowledge that Timon may still be lurking around Athens, at least three concrete and equally material representations of the misanthrope survive—his body, the tomb, and the epitaphs.

As I have been theorizing, the epitaphs take on particular human qualities, like drawing others into interaction, such that they take over Timon’s sociality. But is there something even more human about them? Descartes helps us answer this question. Darcy summarizes Descartes’ conception of subjectivity from *Meditations*: “If Cartesian subjectivity is accomplished by generating an ‘I’ which is a floating signifier that is ‘carefree’ in its reference to ‘no bodily element,’ then Cartesian subjectivity is approached whenever one writes in the first person and abandons all expectation of being named by the pronouns operating therein.”

That is, Cartesian subjectivity supports the notion of an “I” separate from a material human body. Indeed, why

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51 Darcy, 169.
52 Ibid., 170.
can’t this “I” live in another material *non-human* body? Descartes’ response to this question is that human subjectivity can only exist outside of the body in heaven. However, this is where I, and many posthumanists, depart from Descartes. While there exists an extreme movement, rooted primarily in robotics, which entertains the idea that human subjectivity could be transplanted into a robot or computer (and actively seeks the technology to make this accommodation possible), I believe the figure of the non/human represents a much more palatable possibility. Instead of complete a transference of consciousness or attempts to animate a non-human object with human consciousness, “non/human” designates a partnership in which “I” need not be partnered with a human body. Timon’s epitaphs exemplify this exchange wherein the non-human entity reflects Timon’s subjectivity. This does not mean that Timon has been downloaded onto the wax impression or gravestone, but rather that these objects fulfill a function of both Timon’s body and consciousness.

*Timon of Athens* challenges us to follow Jonathan Gil Harris’ proposition that materiality is process. Timon’s materiality is constantly being made and re-made as he goes from human to world to epitaphs. Even more, I suggest that the play theorizes subjectivity as an unending process, not a product. I have argued that Timon is a “non/human” precisely because Timon’s transformations result from contact with the other, and Timon exposes that these others should not be limited to other humans. Indeed, as we chart Timon through the play, we are made aware of how his humanness, itself, escapes definition and restriction.

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Affective Gold

While a thorough analysis of what the material history of epitaphs and gravestones brings to the conception of Timon’s non/humanness is outside the scope of this project, there is one non-human object that warrants particular attention for the way Timon grafts it onto his subjectivity, or, perhaps more accurately, grafts himself onto its objectivity, and how this grafting disrupts the object’s own life. Timon’s search for disgruntled isolation ends almost as soon as it begins when he unearths gold and, like vultures to a corpse, Timon’s erstwhile friends start circling. Perhaps this metaphor is a bit misguided, for they come not for Timon but for his gold. Timon, however, capitalizes on their greed to profess and disseminate his disdain for humankind—that is, he acknowledges the financial significance of the gold only in so far as he recognizes that bribing the Athenians is the best way to get what he wants. But for Timon the gold is not just monetarily significant. Timon’s gold acts as a quasi-object, a material object that is a collective: at once drawing people together because of their shared affinity for it and collecting a variety of significations. What I am suggesting is that in Timon’s gold, we see the confusion of economic and affective systems. The Athenians want the gold to serve their financial devices, whereas Timon uses the gold as a vehicle to announce and manifest his hatred for the Athenians.

Given that Timon’s fluctuations from person of interest to pariah are initiated by whether or not he possesses gold, it should not be surprising that scholarship on Timon tends towards

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57 Latour, 55.
economic readings of the play. Yet I would argue that Timon’s gold operates less as the
eembodiment of an exchange than it does as a token of Timon in the world. That is, in each
visitation by Timon’s former fair-weather friends, he dispenses gold that is imprinted with a
revolving set of desires and decrees, directives for how the gold should be used. While his
visitors see the gold for its exchange value, Timon cultivates the gold’s sentimental value; he
bestows upon it a kind of liveliness; it acts as a mobile prosthetic that represents his subjectivity
in the world. The Poet and Painter, the last to seek out Timon’s treasure, infer that in order to get
Timon’s gold—to “load [their] purposes with what they travail for” (5.1.15)—they must ignite
his emotions. While they incorrectly assume that his bankruptcy and exile have been a test
designed to single out his true friends (5.1.9-10), they correctly deduce that Timon’s nature has
become somewhat fused with the gold, that Timon’s subjectivity is transposed onto the gold,
making the gold not just a symbol of value, but a piece of Timon in the world.59

What is unexpected about Timon’s interactions with the Athenians is that his gold does
not function as money in the capitalist sense Marx develops in Capital. Rather, Timon’s gold
functions according to an earlier definition of “money” from The Economic Manuscripts of 1844.

In Capital, Marx defines money—and gold more specifically—as “[t]he commodity that

58 In addition to Marx’s own reading of the play, which I will engage with below, Coppélia Kahn’s “‘Magic of
combines psychoanalysis and new historicism to compare Timon’s gift-giving to Elizabeth I’s and James I’s. She
argues that Shakespeare’s play depicts the consequences of profligacy that stem from an absent or aberrant mother
figure. Similarly, Jody Greene’s “‘You Must Eat Men’: The Sodomitic Economy of Renaissance Patronage” reads
early modern patronage, like Timon’s, as a sodomitic relationship. In “Biological Finance in Shakespeare’s Timon of
Athens,” Michael Cohorst focuses on the economic and biological aspects of money, arguing that money destroys
both human relationships and the reproductive power of nature in the play. Both Greene and Cohorst move beyond
reiterating the alienating power of money; however, both authors—whether imagining the gift economy as a linear
or circular exchange—focus, as Timon does—“Ha, you gods, why this? What this, you gods?” (4.3.31)—on the
cruel irony that he cannot escape the economic system, even in his destitution. In my reading, I focus on the
economic value of the gold only in so far as it establishes relationality in a way that does not alienate Timon from
the Athenians but rather enriches his capabilities.

59 While the Marx of Capital emphasizes the dehumanizing power of money, in “Marx’s Coat,” Peter Stallybrass
traces the development of Marx’s theories about capitalism in conjunction with his financial hardship and American
culture in the 1850s. That is to say that, as we will see shortly, in Marx’s earlier writing money does not cause
alienation. Rather, money is the thing that allows Marx to re-establish relationships.
functions as a measure of value, and...as the medium of circulation.\textsuperscript{60} Money’s sole purpose is to represent an exchange value assigned to a good based on its valuation against other goods. By contrast, in \textit{The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts}, he explicitly praises \textit{Timon of Athens} for stressing two important qualities of money that are not predicated on exchange value. First, as Timon confirms in his litany of contradictions\textsuperscript{61}, Marx writes that money “transform[s]...all human and natural properties into their contraries.” It is “the universal confounding and distorting of things.”\textsuperscript{62} Second, “Money is the alienated \textit{ability of mankind}. That which I am unable to do as a \textit{man}...I am able to do by means of \textit{money}.”\textsuperscript{63} Curiously, these principles do not shut out money’s relationship to the human in the way that Marx would later illustrate. Even “alienated” is not used in the same way as he uses it when he asserts that “my work is an \textit{alienation of life}, [if] I work \textit{in order to live}, in order to obtain for myself the \textit{means} of my life.”\textsuperscript{64} Here, in \textit{Capital}, “alienation” is a negative quality that diminishes the enjoyment of work by making it a means for survival, whereas in the second principle of money, money enables Marx to reach something from which he is otherwise alienated. More than connecting him to another human or good, money functions as a prosthetic extension of the body that, in terms of Timon, enables him to be socialized in Athenian society in a way that he could not have accomplished on his own. In dispensing the gold, he is not just a misanthrope trying to get parasites to leave him alone, but he uses the gold to put himself out into the world, to make the Athenians remember him and his desires each time they use his gold.

Marx analyzes Timon’s gold-giving as transforming money into a “creative power”:

\textsuperscript{61} “Thus much of this [gold] will make / Black white, foul fair, wrong right, / Base noble, old young, coward valiant” (4.3.28-30).
\textsuperscript{63} Marx, \textit{Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts}, 61, original emphasis.
\textsuperscript{64} Jon Elster, \textit{Karl Marx: A Reader} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 35.
If I long for a particular dish or want to take the mail-coach because I am not strong enough to go by foot, money fetches me the dish and the mail-coach: that is, it converts my wishes from something in the realm of imagination, translates them from their meditated, imagined or desired existence into their sensuous, actual existence – from imagination to life, from imagined being into real being. In effecting this mediation, [money] is the truly creative power.\textsuperscript{65}

This creative power works on several levels in the play. First, Marx offers that money is not simply a static component of an exchange, but that it can be the agent of some kind of social change. Whether it contributes to social mobility, or, as in Timon’s case, carries the potential to execute his will, gold no longer alienates; it brings about a new network of social relations. Second, to speak about creation in a play in which the protagonist calls himself “Misanthropos” and spends half of the play yearning for the destruction of mankind may seem contradictory. Yet, as I will suggest below, Timon doesn’t absolutely forsake humanity. Finally, this excerpt gestures toward the kind of transformative channeling, bringing “imagined being into real being,” that I argue breaks down the barrier between “human” and “non-human.” As Timon ascribes his intentions onto the gold, we observe a kind of transference of power in which Timon uses the gold, much like a prosthetic, to manifest his desires. In this way, we can’t say for sure that the gold operates as a strictly non-human object, for it manifests Timon’s liveliness; indeed, Marx even describes money’s power as life-giving. Yet in this play it’s not so much that money reinvigorates Timon so much as it gives him an independent life, a life in potentia that will flourish as the Timon-imprinted gold is used to carry out his wishes.

The first party Timon unwillingly entertains is Alcibiades, himself exiled from Athens, and two prostitutes, Timandra and Phyrnia. Timon baits them with gold that brings with it directives for Alcibiades to “Make large confusion” (4.3.141) through war on Athens, and for the prostitutes to “Be whores still” (139) and to sow consumption (150). Rehearsing his familiar tune

\textsuperscript{65} Marx, \textit{Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts}, 35, original emphasis.
of destruction, Timon is particularly graphic in this exchange, encouraging Alcibiades to cut the throats of babes and “mince” them “sans remorse” (4.3.122); “With man’s blood paint the ground gules, gules” (4.3.60). This escalation in his desire not just to see confusion reign, but to bring torture commensurate with Dante’s Hell, suggests that Timon does not just yearn for undirected chaos; he craves revenge on their bodies—repayment for their betrayal in the same form he offered to square his own debts. Just as he offers his heart and blood to repay his debts—“Cut my heart in sums” (3.4.90); “Tell out my blood” (92); “Tear me, take me, and the gods fall upon you” (97)—he wants their bodies to suffer for their callousness.

When Timon offers his body to his creditors, he establishes an explicitly metonymic relationship between his body and blood and his gold in that he tries to substitute his body for gold in order to repay his debts. This substitution underscores the de-prioritizing of the human body as the primary bearer of Timon’s life. In fact, I would model the partnership between the gold and Timon’s body after the non/human label. Stylizing this relationship with the “/”, as “gold/body,” mirrors the kind of open and mutual transference of characteristics that we see in these gold episodes. The gold acquires the responsibilities of Timon’s human body, to carry his subjectivity throughout the world and to remind the Athenians of his presence. Likewise, this partnership makes us see Timon’s human body as just another vessel. Both vessels are equally important—if in different ways—in containing and sustaining Timon’s subjectivity and life. While the human body supports all of Timon’s organic operations and participates in Timon’s socialization in the world, the gold extends this sociality, allowing Timon to exist in a variety of spaces and times, distributed throughout Athens.

The gold can be read as a prop to distribute Timon throughout the world, and, importantly, back to Athens. Indeed, the gold Timon gives Alcibiades is the only gift we can be
sure is put to the purpose Timon ascribes to it. Having roused innumerable “powers” (SD 5.5), Alcibiades storms the walls of Athens demanding “[t]hose enemies of Timon’s and mine own / Whom you yourselves shall set out for reproof / Fall, and no more” (5.5.56-8). This episode makes an extraordinary statement about Timon’s non/human capacity. Through this confusion of affect and finance, which imbues the gold with Timon’s directions while at the same time making one of Timon’s bodies a piece of currency, Timon is represented by each of the soldiers and all of the support Alcibiades uses the gold to recruit. What this means is that more than fragmenting himself by instilling his desires into the gold, and more than living from his gravestone, Timon lives on through each one of the soldiers.

The success of Timon’s affective transference is manifested in the social upheaval after Alcibiades’ successful attack and in the social disruption that results from Timon’s interaction with three thieves. When three thieves come looking for Timon, Timon’s revelation that “Each thing’s a thief” (4.3.437) nearly persuades the thieves to give up their profession. What seems to trigger the monologue in which he lambasts humankind is a reminder of the usury that brought on his downfall. He criticizes the very notion that he was beholden to any man because “nothing can you steal / But thieves do lose it” (442-3); every man is a thief. Yet as he encourages the thieves to “[r]ob one another—there’s more gold (440), Timon’s words have the opposite effect on the thieves, as one remarks, “He’s almost charmed me from my profession by persuading me to it” (445-6). In thrusting gold at the thieves and goading them to continue stealing, he inadvertently begins to create an alternate economy that stops thievery. Even more significantly than manifesting his earlier prophecy of gold bringing everything to its contrary—making “Black white, foul fair, wrong right, / Base noble, old young, coward valiant” (29-30)—this meeting, ironically (especially for Timon’s audience), emphasizes the gold’s non-monetary value. Instead,
as in the preceding scene with Alcibiades, the gold is meant to motivate social disruption. Timon’s gold begins to create an alternate economy in which gold has a stronger social value than a monetary one.

Finally, Timon is visited by his loyal servant Flavius. To the same servant who warned Timon to curb his extravagance, Timon surrenders: “Here take; the gods out of my misery / Has sent thee treasure. Go, live rich and happy, / But thus conditioned: thou shalt build from men” (4.3.519-21). This is perhaps the only hopeful statement he utters, and it discloses that while rage, betrayal, and cynicism brought him to the forest outside of Athens, he has not completely forsaken man. He even finishes his list of demands that Flavius forsake beggars and prisoners with “And so farewell and thrive” (4.3.528, emphasis mine). Unlike “Let confusion live!,” which signals the proliferation of monstrous hybrids, Timon’s injunction to Flavius implies a perpetuation of the ordered world—a perpetuation that does not seek to make new, chaotic, and disruptive reassemblages but rather allows an already established order to continue. It is an uncharacteristic moment for the cynical Timon. Not only does this tender moment with Flavius support my claim that the gold provides these glimpses of the complicated and varying reactions Timon has to the Athenians’ betrayal, but “thrive” also harkens back to Marx’s idea of the creative power of gold. Whereas with Alcibiades and the thieves, he rehearses the same ire for the selfishness of mankind, with Flavius, some sense of future emerges, suggesting that total and final destruction is not Timon’s true aim. Rather, Timon seems like an Old Testament God who floods the world to destroy all of creation except for one chosen man whom he trusts to repopulate the earth with good.66

66 In a recent article, “Toward an Ethical Polity: Service and the Tragic Community in Timon of Athens,” Ellorashree Maitra examines how Timon’s servants’ overwhelming and surprising loyalty to their disgraced lord models the kind of response that could restore civic peace to Athens. What is particularly insightful about Maitra’s argument is that she argues that the servant mentality is influenced not just by other people but by exterior objects as well: “the
The Poet, Painter, and Apemantus are the only visitors not offered gold. Apemantus seems oblivious to Timon’s new wealth and instead comes to confront him about a matter of being. Yet Timon’s encounter with the Poet and Painter seems like a test in which he presents them with the same order to undo humanity that he gives Alcibiades while hoping for the kind of humility and virtue he finds in Flavius. He recognizes the Poet and Painter’s disingenuousness the moment he sets eyes on them. Spying them from his cave, he says, “Excellent workman, thou canst not paint a man so bad as is thyself” (5.1.29-30). He sets up the same bargain with them as he has with Alcibiades’ crew, the thieves, and Flavius:

Rid me these villains from your companies;
Hang them or stab them, drown them in a draught,
Confound them by some course and come to me,
I’ll give you gold enough. (5.1.99-102)

Though the artisans heartily accept this order, Timon quickly turns on them, pelting them with stones and driving them offstage in different directions: “You that way and you this, but two in company: / Each man apart, all single and alone, / Yet an arch-villain keeps him company” (104-6). Timon accuses the Poet and Painter of being naturally evil, greedy, and traitorous; the Poet and Painter don’t need one another because, like a shadow, each one’s villainy keeps him company. In contrast to the episode that directly precedes this one, in which Timon appears to be persuaded that mankind can be good again, here, Timon is suspicious of the Poet and Painter’s honor; he tests their moral fortitude by asking them to rid him of the villains by any means necessary. Though Timon has never shown the Poet and Painter any more favor than he did the other Athenian parasites, it’s possible that he has been reinvigorated by Flavius’ goodness, but as

servants’ subjectivity is…forged within and through rather than against the external world of objects” (179). Moreover, along the lines of the inversion I have been describing—wherein Timon uses the gold not for its monetary value but rather for affective purposes—she argues that when Flavius divides his remaining wealth among his fellow servants, with the promise that “Wherever we shall meet, for Timon’s sake, / Let’s yet be fellows” (4.2.24-5), he too underscores the affective power of the gold.

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he eavesdrops on the Poet and Painter’s conversation his hopes are dashed; no one but Flavius is worthy of Timon’s mercy. That is to say, either Timon’s vulnerability with Flavius is a singular occurrence, or perhaps, in this subsequent episode, he essays whether or not anyone else is as worthy as Flavius. His order, then, to the Poet and Painter can be seen as a test, and his outburst a response to yet another visitation—the last one before he is finally resolute on death—that validates Timon’s disappointment in man.

That Timon’s gold becomes an affective and social, more than monetary, tool reveals something about the challenge this play poses to a consistent or expected logic. Nevertheless, to ignore the integral role of gift-giving and commodity culture in the play would mean missing Timon’s motivation for self-exile. However, it is a testament to the fractured and dynamic nature of this play that the value of gold changes so drastically from a familiar marker of commodity culture to a token of Timon’s personality and a prosthetic that makes Timon a fixture in the Athenians’ social and financial economies. Read in the light of Timon’s injunction to “Let confusion live!” this resistance of gold to be relegated to a purely economic life seems perfectly in line with the way the play implores us to read it: with an openness that allows us to contemplate, rather than dismiss, contradiction, and to imagine how contradiction enables an authentic reading experience, one in which the reader is not obsessed with reconciling disparate episodes or behaviors but rather allows the text to make meaning for her.

**Conclusion: Confused Materiality**

Timon’s relationships with his gold, epitaphs, and gravestone extend his subjectivity and de-prioritize the human body as the primary bearer of life. These non-human objects are so
integral to Timon’s humanness that they fundamentally change it. Timon is neither exclusively human nor non-human but becomes an unpredictable and unstable mesh of both categories. I do not tout the idea that Timon’s gravestone, gold, epitaphs and their wax impression acquire the ability to sustain Timon’s organic functions and therefore replace the importance of his human body. Rather, I have been trying to emphasize the ways in which his human body is unseated as the primary bearer of his life and subjectivity because when he distributes the gold and when his human body finally perishes (or at least is no longer present to the Athenians), he doesn’t need his human body anymore to sustain his subjectivity or sociality. At the same time that non-human objects contaminate Timon’s pure humanness, he rubs off on the objects that come to represent him, infecting them with humanness, and, in the case of the gold, fundamentally altering its function in Athens.

Here I have explored who or what the non/human is and how it surpasses categorization as either “human” or “non-human.” In the next chapter, I will take up how the dynamism of the non/human makes us reconsider when and where the non/human can exist. By coining the term “non/humaning,” I recognized that the constant suturing and sundering of human and non-human entities is not just a way to arrive at characteristics of the non/human, but that this is an act that constantly rewrites Timon’s relationships to his surroundings and other characters in the play. Nevertheless, these transformations are never stable, and the uncertainty and multiplicity of where Timon is at the end of the play—buried, represented in the gravestone or the wax impression, an omnipresent spirit in Alcibiades’ crew of soldiers, and, my favorite, alive and liberated from disgraceful Athens—means that “non/humaning” has no telos or conclusion. In the next chapter, I examine how Timon’s confused materiality extends him in space and time, and I consider, “Was Timon ever present to begin with?”
From the play’s opening with the Poet and Painter’s association of Timon and the world, Timon’s perverse materiality resists being contained not only in a singular and stable (human) form but also in a consistent time and space. The dispersal of Timon throughout Athens on his gravestone, wax impressions of his epitaphs, and in gold creates a dissonance between his bodily forms such that we are called to question what it means to “be” Timon. Dawson’s struggle that Timon is “somehow pre- or post-character, a figure on the outer edge of representation” is newly energized when we begin to consider that Timon’s diverse material conditions are at odds with how the character is represented on stage in a human body. What is unusual about Timon is that when we speak of Timon’s “character,” we have to account not only for his behaviors but also for the physical forms which embody or enable these behaviors. To have competing material forms representing Timon means that the audience is forced to question the significance of Timon’s human body, to ask if it is in fact the most accurate representation of Timon.

Having meditated on the physical characteristics of the non/human in the first chapter, here I confront the problem, “When and where is the non/human?” Perhaps more unsettling than not being able to ascribe a permanent form to Timon, this question underscores for the audience the illusion inherent in performance: that the actor on stage is only ever an imitation of Timon. Though this is true for every performer, this revelation has particular weight in this play because this revelation increases the audience’s skepticism that they can ever know Timon. In this chapter, I explore how non-human objects facilitate Timon’s temporal and spatial extension. In addition to engaging with Descartes’ *Meditations on First Philosophy*, I draw on ecocriticism as a way of trying to work through how non/human confusion ameliorates the acute paranoia that

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67 Dawson, 204.
the body may not exist inspired by Descartes’ *cogito ergo sum* or Timon’s unlocatable existence by instead asking us to reconceptualize the idea of “being.” I mean something beyond recognizing that the “human” is really a “non/human,” an unpredictable confusion of human and non-human entities, all of which independently sustain Timon in various ways. I mean that embracing non/humanness means embracing moving in and out of joint with being “here”—in both the temporal and spatial senses of the word—and the thing that we own as our “our self.” The non/human paradoxically makes both “here” and “self” ideas that connote “distribution,” “instability,” “and “multiplicity.”

In his groundbreaking book *Ecology without Nature*, Timothy Morton teases out the relationship between the subject and its environment—a relationship that does not collapse the two terms, but one wherein there is no space between them either. Morton returns frequently to two ideas throughout the book: that the subject is unalterably immersed in its environment, and that subjectivity arises because of this immersion. Interestingly, despite Morton’s insistence on this immersion and the inseparability of subject and object, he doesn’t give as much critical attention to how the subject shapes its environment, even though he confirms that it is impossible to achieve ecology without a subject.68 At the beginning of the first chapter, Morton attempts to illustrate his scene of writing. But the more he attempts to evoke “where I am,” the more he has to “get in a process of writing, the very writing I am not describing when I evoke the environment in which writing is taking place.”69 That is, he cannot find a way to describe his surroundings without expressing what he is writing. The problem is that nature, “a surrounding medium that sustains our being,”70 has become overburdened with ideology and rhetoric such that nature and writing are inseparable: “The more the narrator evokes a surrounding world, the

69 Morton, *Ecology without Nature*, 30, original emphasis.  
70 Ibid., 4.
more the reader consumes a potentially interminable stream of opaque scribbles, figures, and
tropes.”\textsuperscript{71} He claims that what would detach nature from writing is a “rhetorical device [that]
serves the purpose of coming clean about something ‘really’ occurring, definitively ‘outside’ the
text, both authentic and authenticating.” He calls this device “ecomimesis.”\textsuperscript{72} Ecomimesis
emphasizes where the subject is situated—where she is, her environment—rather than who she
is.\textsuperscript{73} Through ecomimesis, environment is aligned with “ambience” and “atmosphere” and
separated from “nature” and, consequently, writing.\textsuperscript{74}

There are six main elements in ecomimesis, but the most important one in describing the
relationship between the subject and its environment is “rendering.” “Rendering attempts to
simulate reality itself: to tear to pieces the aesthetic screen that separates the perceiving subject
from the object.”\textsuperscript{75} He goes on to make an even stronger case for the union of subject and object
when he criticizes Jean-François Lyotard’s notion “[t]hat there is such a thing as \textit{nuance}, some
quality. . .that exists ‘in between’ inside and outside. I am claiming that you will never be able to
find some ‘thing’ in between.”\textsuperscript{76} Like rendering, the “/” in “non/human” ignores the rigid
boundary between the subject and the object by signaling symbiosis, betweeness and in-
betweeness; the “non” cannot be divorced from the “human.”

Morton gives us many things to consider in relation to the question of what it means to be
a subject incapable of being separated from objects. First, while he does not like the term

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., 31.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., 33.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., 34.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 35.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., 52, original emphasis. On 105-9 Morton acknowledges that, in fact, there is one thing that does not so much stand between the subject and the object as act as the ground for their interaction: the body. Yet trying to reconcile the body with the fusion of subject and object under the label of “intersubjectivity” poses significant challenges precisely because Descartes’ mind-body locates subjectivity in the mind not the body. Morton suggests one way to work around this Cartesian problem is to turn the body “into the environment itself” (108). This idea is a sort of reaction against Latour’s quasi-objects, which do lie between categories. The thought experiment to turn the body into environment eventually fails, however, because one cannot erase the materiality of the body; try as one might, the body can never be considered as ambient.
“intersubjectivity” because he sticks close to Descartes in locating the subject in the mind—meaning that to call something “intersubjective” would require observing the entanglement of two minds—he does think it is possible to observe interobjectivity. Indeed, the kinds of human-non-human relationships I have been describing tend toward interobjectivity not because Timon’s affect or subjectivity is an object but because (excepting the Timon and world association from the beginning of the play) the confusion of Timon and his material objects is always physically manifested through the writing on the gravestone, the wax impression, and the physically performed act of cursing the gold as it transfers hands. Again, this is not to say that Timon is an object, but that there is a physical manifestation that marks the union between subject and object. This reframing contributes to the reconceptualization of self not as a consistent idea or even something that is primarily constituted by a definable and individual subject, but rather the self is a bundle of quasi-objects.

Second, Morton’s concern for how ecomimesis elucidates a being’s situatedness brings up the complicated issue of being “here.” Morton struggles to locate “here”: “Place. . .is radically indeterminate—it is intrinsically in question, is a question,” and “We are so involved in here that it is constantly dissolving and disappearing.” Though he acknowledges the animosity most ecocritics and post-structuralists share towards Descartes, he also admits that it is Descartes’ skepticism that he is “here, sitting by the fire, wearing a dressing gown, holding this page in [his] hand” that motivates ecological philosophy; Descartes’ “very philosophy of the self depends upon his environment.” While I mostly agree with Morton’s reading (and readings by other critic/philosophers, like Judith Butler, who come to the same conclusion that Descartes breaks

open the problem of “here” as a floating signifier), I want to insist that the episode by the fire
does give rise to Descartes’ mind-body dualism and *cogito ergo sum*, but this does not mean that
Descartes concludes that the self depends upon its environment. In fact, the insistence that the
self depends on its environment is antithetical to Descartes’ conclusions: being depends on
thinking, not on place, and the reason why Descartes first develops skepticism that subjectivity is
completely constituted by the body is because he cannot prove that he is not actually sleeping
someplace else and dreaming of himself by the fire.\(^8^0\) Descartes distrusts context and
environment because he cannot confirm that his senses have not tricked him into imagining that
he even has a body.

**A Subject Adrift in Time and Space**

*Timon of Athens* presents a similar concern about what constitutes the subject and the
ability to locate it through Timon’s encounter with Apemantus in the woods. Timon’s meeting
with Apemantus is unlike any of the other visitations mostly because Apemantus completely
disregards Timon’s newly-found fortune and goes straight to undermining Timon’s individual
subjectivity. Apemantus enters after Alcibiades and the prostitutes’ departure and a brief
monologue in which Timon apostrophizes the earth as “Common mother” (4.3.176) and entreats
her to no longer let her womb “bring out ungrateful man” (187). Instead, he calls for animals to
overrun the earth: “Go great with tigers, dragons, wolves and bears, / Teem with new monsters”
(188-9). Timon’s desire for animals to replace humans is an appropriate prelude to this episode

\(^8^0\) Descartes, 12.
in which Timon and his Socrates obsess over the merits of being an animal. At various times each accuses the other of being “a rascal” (216), “a dog” (250), and, at their parting, “Beast!” “Slave!” “Toad” in quick succession (370).

Timon’s turn toward animals manifests psychological changes expected from a man who has been blindsided by the betrayal of man. On the one hand, just as Timon uses the gold to create an alternative affective economy and institute social disruption, in implo​ring the earth to give birth to a multitude of animals who will usurp man’s sovereignty, he looks for ways to accomplish a revolution that has more than just social consequences—one that creates a whole new world order. On the other hand, Timon recognizes the same tendency of viciousness and betrayal that he has experienced with mankind in the animal kingdom: the fox beguiles the lion, the fox eats the lamb, the wolf eats the ass, the wolf’s greediness causes his undoing, the horse kills the bear, and the leopard kills the horse (4.3.326-44). Wanting neither to identify with the beasts nor with man, Timon divorces himself both from the world of the human and from the world of the non-human. This refusal to identify himself with any group interrupts the cycles of confusion that have, up to this point, been responsible for endowing Timon with the characteristics and capabilities of both a human and a non-human. Consequently we have to hold contradictory ideas in our heads: Timon does not want us to consider the human form on stage as either a human or an animal.

Timon’s deliberate eschewing of both humanity and animals points to a larger development about authenticity which Apemantus accosts Timon with immediately: “Men report

81 Though I do not explore the potentially rich contributions this exchange could have on animal studies, there are many groundbreaking studies that attend to the political consequences of animal life. See Laurie Shannon’s *The Accommodated Animal* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013); Cary Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); and Donna Haraway’s, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2008) and *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003).
Thou dost affect my manners and dost use them” (4.3.197-8). Apemantus accuses Timon of putting on “a nature but affected” (201). What he means is that Timon does not deserve to be as churlish as he because Timon could easily return to Athens and be reintegrated into high society; Timon’s sourness is not as authentic as Apemantus’. However, as Timon removes himself from two categories of organic life, human and animal, Apemantus’ complaint that Timon’s nature is “affected” reveals an existential crisis that provokes such question as “Is this man on stage still Timon?” and “If Timon has ceased to exist, who is this being?”

Apemantus’ accusation, “Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself / A madman so long, now a fool” (4.3.219-20), drives these quandaries. A complicatedly Cartesian statement, Apemantus’ observation acknowledges the spatial and temporal fragmentation of Timon’s subjectivity. However, this spatial dispersal is much less physical or even locatable than Timon’s distribution of himself through the gold. Apemantus’ insult resembles Descartes’ concerns in the First Meditation, where he sets outs to demolish and rebuild all his opinions because he has come to believe they are based on falsehoods. He ponders that perhaps he is not “here, sitting by a fire, wearing a winter dressing-gown,” but rather in a dream. The operative and troublesome word for Descartes is “here” because it only describes where Descartes’ senses tell him his body is, but he considers that his mind may not be in the same place as his body. This suspicion gives rise to Descartes’ mind-body dualism, the idea that the mind and the body are not identical. Nevertheless, regardless of the body’s location, Descartes surmises that the presence of his thinking mind—his “I”—can only ever be confirmed in a present moment, in a “here.” Indeed, the grammar of Descartes’ most famous pronouncement, cogito ergo sum—I think therefore I am—reflects that “here” and “I” are connected such that “I,” the thinking mind, is always “here,”

82 Descartes, 12.
83 Ibid.
and “here” is only every confirmed by the presence of the “I.” However, Apemantus’ statement suggests that the “I” that has corresponded to Timon is no longer present: the subject we and he have come to know as Timon is no longer here but rather has been cast away and replaced by a fool.

It is precisely because Timon’s subject does not appear to be here that I am concerned with exploring where and when Timon seems to be. Timon is wherever the gold is, wherever the wax impression of the epitaphs is, wherever the gravestone is, and—most unlocatable of all at the end of the play—wherever his body is. The only identity Apemantus claims is “here” is a fool, a character he contrasts to the two selves that Timon cast away or that at least have been replaced. Even if Timon has been transformed into the fool—which is clearly Apemantus’ meaning—there remains this unsettling asymmetry between “thyself” and “fool” that indicates that in this transformation, the idea once known as “Timon” is lost. Place develops an unstable relationship to the idea of the self and subjectivity.

Inspired by Descartes’ concern about his temporal and spatial location, in this chapter, I work through the consequences of Apemantus’ loaded statement on Timon’s temporal and spatial existence. Questioning Timon’s location opens up the question of who or what Timon is such that it becomes not an issue of identification with a material entity—human, non-human, or non/human—but it has us confront the possibility that “Timon” the character on stage and the idea of Timon, the personality that has become known as “Timon,” are not identical. In a way this problem goes back to Anthony Dawson’s concerns about Timon as pre- or post-character, a figure on the margins and a partial character. While it is important that Apemantus cannot settle on one label for Timon—animal, fool or otherwise—it is more crucial here that the idea of Timon, an idea that has been propagated by the Poet, Painter, and all the Athenians who
consume Timon’s generosity, is apparently different from the man who now appears on stage. With this distinction made we wonder, “How long has this character been operating under the guise of Timon?” “Have we ever encountered the person the Athenians created?” What I mean is that Apemantus elevates the discussion about Timon’s subjectivity by suggesting that, in fact, the subject has left the building. Though initially Apemantus complains that Timon’s performance is a poor imitation of a cynic philosopher—“Men report / Thou dost affect my manners and dost use them” (4.3.197-8)—the powerful statement that Timon has cast off himself indicates an even more essential point. More than exposing Timon’s imitation, Apemantus makes us reexamine our own certainty about who we know Timon to be.

Apemantus’ insult deconstructs Timon’s subjectivity, describing it as a subject, or several subjects, that have been deferred in time and space. In “Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself / A madman so long, now a fool,” Apemantus tells the story of many different Timons. In one reading of the first line, the first and second “thyself” are two different iterations of Timon. The first, perhaps, being the unscrupulous lord, cast away by the second, the recently minted Misanthropos. Then the “madman” was the former lord and the “fool” is Misanthropos, the inadequate copy of Apemantus, the true cynic. Another reading of these lines describes precisely what Timon has been doing in dispensing his gold to his visitors. In this reading, “cast” works more than symbolically, for through his gold, Timon casts himself—his feelings, desires, and intentions—throughout the world. Yet if we read the gold as Timon does, with disdain for “[t]his yellow slave” (4.3.34), we can see Timon’s distribution as an act of ridding himself of Athens and its materialism. Whether the gold is the symbol of his feelings or the poisonous commodity he seeks to rid himself of, in dispensing it, Timon, literally, casts himself away—both the imitation-cynic and the former naïve lord. Indeed, Timon, himself, speaks to the truth of
Apemantus’ claim lines before the philosopher can insult him. In Timon’s first soliloquy in the woods, moments before he unearths the gold, he cries, “His semblable, yea himself, Timon disdains” (4.3.22). In suggesting that he has already cast himself off, Timon makes Apemantus’ later paradox not just an empty insult, but a complicatedly true statement that underscores Timon’s singularity as one that can be completely other from himself, perhaps the true Derridian subject. In a third possible reading, the two thyselfs refer to the same persona, perhaps the unscrupulous madman who, as he gave extravagantly, gave himself away. This reading underscores then, the metonymic relationship between Timon and the gold and gifts he gives away at the beginning of the play. Indeed, Apemantus is the first to describe the gift-giving culture in terms of consumption when he says, “what a number of men eats Timon and he sees ’em not! (1.2.39-40).

These claims of spatial dispersal are emphasized by the peculiar grammar of Apemantus’ insult. Using the present perfect, “hast cast,” Apemantus makes Timon’s shrugging off of himself an unlocatable occurrence in the past as well as a characteristic of his present condition. Similarly, situated between two thyselfs, the participle in “being like thyself” refers to both the thyself that Timon cast away and the thyself that did the casting, neither of which are guaranteed to describe the current Timon on stage. Moreover, “being like” creates even more problems than the multiple selves, for “like” refuses to confirm that one thyself did away with the other; Timon was apparently only being like himself. Differences in punctuation occlude the answer to the conundrum of thyselfs and current Timons. The Riverside Shakespeare places a comma at the

84 In “‘One Wish’ or the Possibility of the Impossible: Derrida, the Gift, and God in Timon of Athens,” Ken Jackson deploys Derrida’s idea of tout autre, the wholly other, to construct a motivation for Timon’s extravagant gift-giving. Jackson writes, “No other Shakespearean character gives himself up ‘to the other…and to the utterly other’ in the way Timon does” (37). I would argue that Apemantus offers us just such a reading of Timon himself: he is utterly other from himself. This realization takes split subjectivity, the idea that multiple Timons are floating throughout Athens, to a whole new level, one that can be articulated best by the idea of différance.
Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself, / A madman so long, now a fool.” (4.3.220-21). This emendation, on the one hand, conveys a parallelism between the first “thyself” and “madman” and the second “thyself” and “fool.” On the other hand, perhaps “madman” modifies the “thyself” which directly precedes it, so that “fool” is a completely new identity with no correspondence to any previous iteration of Timon. The Norton edition adds a much more final dash at the end of the first line: “Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself – / A madman so long, now a fool” (4.3.220-21). This most abrupt punctuation choice separates this condemnation into two claims in which neither “madman” nor “fool” necessarily describes either self. This painstaking exercise of dissecting all the possible combinations of punctuations and meanings of Apemantus’ insult reveals a conspicuous ambiguity of past and present selves. We are confronted not just with a blatant refusal to identify Timon in the present, but also with the suspicion that the idea known as “Timon” is not the figure on stage, and it is unclear where or when he was lost.

A Multitemporal Timon

Casting Timon’s self somewhere in the past, Apemantus’ condemnation divorces Timon’s physical body from his spiritual one by continually resisting that the body on stage has housed one essence known as “Timon.” While Timon’s body has been one vessel for his multiple and diverse selves, there is no indication that his body has curated or produced these selves. Moreover, especially since Timon enlists other material objects to represent his subjectivity Timon’s “matter tends to be out of time with itself”\(^85\)—each material extension

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carrying Timon on a different timeline. In his masterful study, *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare*, Jonathan Gil Harris distinguishes between two kinds of time that describe “the time of Shakespeare.” There is polychronic time, which Harris describes as the collation of objects, each with its own temporal lineage; Bruno Latour’s toolbox—in which he has an electric drill, invented less than half a century ago, and a hammer, hundreds of thousands of years old—is an example of polychronicity. Multitemporality describes the collision of past and present—past and present happening simultaneously. The work of new historicists might be described as “multitemporal,” in that it forms relationships between past objects through our reconstructions in the present of what a past time might have looked like. Even more, the interventions made alter our sense of the past often in order to discover a connection between the past and our present moment or in order to provide a possible explanation for how our culture developed.

What we see in Apemantus’ confusing vitriol and in Timon’s relationship with the matter around him is the emergence of multitemporality. “[T]emporality is not simply a property intrinsic to a material object,” writes Harris; “It is, more accurately, a polychronic network that collates various actors—human and inhuman, animate and inanimate, subject and object—from past and present.” From this perspective, the two Timons, the madman, and the fool, are the various actors brought together in a clumsy and unconvincing representation of who Timon is—clumsy and unconvincing because the more actors Apemantus combines, the more the reader becomes skeptical that any of these labels truly describes Timon, or at least is sufficient on its own. Indeed, as a non/human, Timon is precisely not one thing. According to Apemantus, the man in front of him is a compilation of actors from different times, yet these actors do not simply exist alongside one another. Rather Apemantus suggests that Timon’s multitemporality has

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86 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, 3.
87 Latour, 75.
88 Harris, *Untimely Matter*, 16.
pulled him apart, specifically that being both thyselfs simultaneously has caused him to lose himself. Harris confirms that “matter in general, is obstinately antisequential: superimposing past and present without insisting on any linear relation between them.”  

The problem of the two thyselfs reflects the demolition of linearity chiefly because it seems that the same Timon is represented in two times—one before the casting off and one after. Even more problematic, the abandoned “thyself” was cast off by a “thyself” Timon can only be identified as “being like.” In the moment of separation, Timon is nothing more than a simulacrum; he is neither “thyself” but rather a third, similar self—one that may not necessarily identify as “Timon.”

Timon’s gold, his gravestone, and the wax impression of his epitaphs become tokens of his multitemporality. Harris explains that temporality is not simply an intrinsic property to an object, but rather that “[i]t is also generated by the work we do with that object.” Consequently, an object, like Harris’ example of the Archimedes Palimpsest or Timon’s material extensions, registers multiple “material agents”—the writer and the writing surface in the case of the Palimpsest, the impression, and the gravestone. The Palimpsest, a record that contains histories layered on top of one another, is a perfect material manifestation of Harris’ point that an object gathers multiple temporalities as it is used for different purposes or as it records different information throughout time. For the wax impression and the gravestone, we have to think not in terms of the history of each object—what it has recorded before—but rather in terms of the work each is meant to do: to memorialize and instruct. What this means is that the temporalities that converge here are Timon’s past and an expected future. When the solider makes the impression and when Timon chisels his final directives onto the stone, they do so in preparation for a future. In helping Timon live on beyond his perishable body, the gravestone and wax impression open

89 Harris, Untimely Matter, 16.
90 Ibid.
91Ibid., 17.
up the possibility of Timon’s past converging with a future moment. Even more, while the gravestone and epitaphs project Timon into a future, we shouldn’t forget that we can never be sure that Timon has in fact died. The possibility that he continues to linger around Athens not only emphasizes Timon’s unlocatability, but it also reminds the reader that Timon, thanks to his human and non-human manifestations, has an uncertainly long future.

Timon’s intentions and the economic system of Athens are the multiple material agents that converge in the gold. Just as Timon’s multitemporality is registered in Apemantus’ observation about Timon’s transformed subjectivity, the financial and emotional economies represent two different time periods conflated in Timon’s gold. The exchange of gold, dating back millennia, is combined with Timon’s recently developed hatred for the Athenians. It’s interesting that Timon, himself, recognizes this duality when he apostrophizes the gold after deciding not to bury all of it: “Nay, stay thou out for earnest” (4.3.48). Timon recognizes that he can use the Athenians’ observance of the gold as money to further his emotional interests.

Inserting Timon’s desires into the timeline of gold’s financial function establishes Timon’s multitemporality. This idea is underscored by the metonymic relationship of Timon’s body and the gold. As an object that has an economic life of its own that has persisted and will persist in the foreseeable future of Athens, the gold extends Timon through past and future.

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92 Though the economic system of Athens is not a physical agent like the wax, stone, or surface of the palimpsest, this does not diminish its materiality. At bottom, an economic system is an exchange of goods or services; in a capitalist society, gold acts as a receipt for services rendered even if the services are not tangible, meaning that the economic system is always made material by the presence of gold.

93 I use this word “life” as a deliberate nod to Jeffrey Cohen who, arguing specifically about stones, writes, “The human and the nonhuman both possess a vibrancy that escapes category and constraint, possess what I am willing to call a life…inorganic life holds something that can never be ours: a temporality alien to us, an epochalness…but a temporality we cannot make our own. Stone demands the abandonment of human history, demands to be understood within an eoinc time frame” (“Queering the Inorganic” 160). I’m not sure the financial life of money is quite as grand as the stone’s, but I appreciate that Cohen imagines beyond the temporality of the human because this recognition allows the possibility that Timon can be, as I see him, hyper-extended in time through the gold and gravestone.

94 In all of these examples—gold, epitaphs, and gravestone—I add to Harris’ work by thinking about how multitemporality causes a kind of chemical reaction that changes both Timon and his material extensions.
In lambasting Timon’s poor performance as a cynic philosopher, Apemantus exposes that the only satisfactory answer to “Where or when is Timon?” is simply, “Not here.” It’s difficult to make sense of this answer, though, when we’re talking about the protagonist of a play who, though he turns misanthropic and seeks exile in a cave in the woods, will not be left alone. It is Apemantus’, Flavius’, the senators’, the thieves’, the Poet and Painter’s, and Alcibiades’ expressed intention to make Timon appear here so that they can get gold, offer their services, curse him, or enlist his help. Even more, they each expect Timon to perform a particular role—hero, master, benefactor. But Apemantus exposes Timon’s poor acting, reminding the viewer of the illusion of the theatre: that the man on stage is never really Timon, just an actor playing him. Considering that scholarship on Timon is almost as rare as performances of the play, this self-consciously theatrical episode complicates the question of Timon’s identity and temporality even more, for it is not just Timon who is exposed as an imposter—Apemantus and an imperfect version of himself, but the actor, too, is momentarily revealed. At the same time, he is another participant in Timon’s multitemporality.

Questions of identification—“What or who is Timon?”—illuminate an outdated anxiety that post-structuralism has steadily undermined by insisting on difference and on instability that prevents inter-personal (or inter-objective) categorization from being a reliable method of identification. But skepticism over Timon’s temporal and spatial locations induces concerns that are much more difficult to dismiss. For the problem is precisely that we are unable to locate Timon in a fixed time or space, thereby rendering stable identification with or resemblance to any other person or object difficult. Indeed, when we consider Apemantus’ reaction to this newly misanthropic caveman, Timon’s peculiar relationship with his gravestone, and the value of gold

Polychronicity describes a kind of static being together: Latour’s toolbox is polychronic simply because the hammer and drill are both in it. But multitemporality is a kind of confusion of times such that the independent pasts, presents, and futures of the material agents are affected by one another.
not as a commodity or a sign of economic exchange but as a prosthetic that channels Timon throughout Athens, “unlocatable” appears to be the most concrete thing we can say about Timon. Wading into the deep waters of Timon’s ontology, all we can hold on to are simulacra—suggestions that Timon has existed at one time or another or in one location or another, but his form is always changing, is always confused. We have moved, then, from considering the human subject as something that is complete, identifiable with and contained within a human body, and an inhabitant of one space or time to recognizing that the human can be described only as non/human—an amalgamation of different spaces, times, objects, and persons. Timon, the once favored now feral human, gold, gravestone, and world, exists at the breach between all these things.
Timon’s Life

I have amassed quite a collection of terms to describe Timon and his condition—non/human, non/humaning, cyborg, quasi-object, unlocatable, multitemporal. But, in the light of all of these terms, one question lingers: “What are the characteristics of the life that The Life of Timon of Athens describes?” Throughout this exploration I have applied pressure to the boundary that separates human and non-human life, asking, “What really distinguishes these two kinds of life, and it is possible that they share significant features?” These questions crystallized for me when I imagined that perhaps the human body is simply one in a series of vessels that sustains and perpetuates Timon’s life—a life that expands spatially and temporally beyond what the human body is capable of enabling, a life that is lived through and changed by non-human objects. But again we must ask: “What is Timon’s life?”

I’d like to conclude by proposing two responses to this question. One response involves a set of drawings by an early twentieth-century British artist, Wyndham Lewis, for an edition of Timon that was never published. These drawings blend Timon with his surroundings, producing a mechanic conglomeration that underscores Timon’s powerlessness and fragmentation. A set of images that emphatically exhibit the confusion of human and non-human, Lewis’ drawings reveal Timon’s life to be constructed and determined by a set of conditions over which he has little or no control. Similarly, the other response centers on a conversation between the Poet and Painter early in the play about the Poet’s next great work: a poem that allegorizes Timon’s ascendency and decline in terms of the rotation of Fortune’s wheel. This conversation establishes Timon as a social effect: as Apemantus reveals, Timon lacks individuality. Rather, his most prominent characteristic is that he is used and abused by the Athenians, manipulated to serve
their own needs. According to these two examples, Timon’s non/human life appears to be defined by the social functions he plays in their world.

As I outlined in the introduction, Timon has received, at best, uneven critical praise and attention. However, Wyndham Lewis, an early twentieth century British artist\(^\text{95}\) was perhaps the first critic of the play to consider its philosophical potential by visually representing Timon’s intimate relationship with his surroundings. During 1912 and 1913, Lewis created more than sixteen watercolor and ink drawings to be included in an edition of Timon. The edition never materialized, but the art survives in collections at the Folger Shakespeare Library and a museum in Spain called La Fundación Juan March. These images illustrate Lewis’ deep engagement with the play’s investigation of what it means to be human. Looking beyond Timon’s misanthropy, Lewis depicts what the play intimates about Timon’s capabilities and functions in his world. Lewis was especially influenced by Henri Bergson’s philosophy, but his art illustrates his disagreement with Bergson’s idea that the human could transcend its material existence.\(^\text{96}\) Instead, Lewis’ images display the “human animal irretrievably trapped in its material environment.”\(^\text{97}\) These images contain fragmented bodies that blend into the surroundings, making it impossible to separate subject from object. One scholar of Lewis’ work remarks that [t]he white paper he works on now becomes not a picture-plane but a field around which a limited range of pictorial elements can be distributed at will. Our perception of fragments of figures and lettering out of these blocks, arcs and lines tends to be provisional, as the design takes on different readings with shifts in the viewer’s attention. . . Typically, Lewis does not enclose the forms of his solids, and they become momentary configurations of the elements that compose them, inseparable from those elements and

\(^{95}\) Lewis was also a writer, and in his 1927 study, The Lion and the Fox: The Rôle of the Hero in the plays of Shakespeare, he attempts to fit Timon into the mold of tragic hero. Timon is like the noble lion, too good to live in a world full of foxes (188). Suffice it to say Lewis’ drawings illustrate a much more nuanced, valuable, and thought-provoking interpretation of the play.


the transient acts of perception through which they are constructed. The idea of an isolated or transcendent human identity is abandoned."  

These ideas are particularly evident in drawings like “Timon,” in which the body is not only a mechanical and angular compilation of straight lines, but the head of the figure is completely indistinguishable from the other geometric forms. Likewise, Timon’s legs, unnaturally splayed at right angles, exhibit this sense of shifting signification: it’s almost as if the longer you look at the legs, the more they seem to be features of Timon’s surroundings and not a part of his body.

Making the viewer work to figure out what she is looking at, Lewis invites the viewer to be a co-artist. The idea that the images can be read in multiple ways at once jibes with Timon’s sudden changes in social status; however, there is something even more significant about the angular non-humanity of these images. Paul Edwards interprets Lewis’ depictions of Timon’s body as “lumpish, devitalized, and barely risen above a vegetable or vermiform existence” and “a particular configuration brought about when [the mechanic forms of modernity] mesh in a

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certain way.”\textsuperscript{99} Edwards suggests not just that there is something non-human about these representations of Timon’s human body, but that Timon’s body is integrated into its non-human surroundings such that it becomes indistinguishable from them. That these images at once give the impression of Timon locked in by different geometric shapes and rely on the viewer to construct Timon’s body from these lines and shapes emphasizes the reality that Timon is constructed by social conditions.

“Act V” replicates the same integration of body and environment, but in this drawing we witness a profoundly suffering Timon who looks out onto the viewer, as if imploring her for deliverance as his arms are extended in supplication. One unique feature of this image is that it has a piece of a line from Timon’s last monologue in the bottom left corner. “TIMON HATH MADE HIS” is the beginning of an important line in the play that underscores the union of human and non-human that Lewis’ illustrations depict—a union which, I have argued is central to the way Timon of Athens asks the audience to re-conceive of the human. In this passage, Timon tells the unwelcome senators who have come to beg his help against the invading Alcibiades, “Timon hath made his everlasting mansion” (5.2.100). Referring to his gravestone as his “everlasting mansion,” Timon also calls this piece of stone the oracle for Athens, suggesting that part of his subjectivity is transferred onto the gravestone.

In these images and in the Poet and Painter’s conversation, Timon resembles a cyborg: he is a “creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction.”¹⁰⁰ I want to end by analyzing how the allegorical representation of Timon being spurned by Fortune confuses social reality and fiction in a way that resembles the confusion of the non-human and the human in the play. What is significant about the confusion of social reality and fiction is that, like non/humanness, it extends Timon; it gives him a new material body that allows him to live beyond his human one. Moreover, it makes Timon a fixture in Athenian society by making his story into an allegory which others should heed and learn from.

Before we even meet Timon, we know an awful lot about him, particularly about his unbounded generosity, thanks to the Poet and Painter. Their descriptions of Timon’s majesty also serve as advertisements for their own work, as each claims that he can represent Timon more

perfectly through poetry or painting. Having enthusiastically lauded the Painter’s work, the Poet sets out to describe his next poem:

POET.
Sir, I have upon a high and pleasant hill  
Feigned Fortune to be throned. The base o’th’ mount  
Is ranked with all deserts, all kind of natures  
That labour on the bosom of this sphere  
To propagate their states. Amongst them all  
Whose eyes are on this sovereign Lady fixed,  
One do I personate of Lord Timon’s frame,  
Whom Fortune with her ivory hand wafts to her,  
Whose present grace to present slaves and servants  
Translates his rivals.

PAINTER. ’Tis conceived to scope.  
This throne, this Fortune and this hill, methinks,  
With one man beckoned from the rest below  
Bowing his head against the steepy mount  
To climb his happiness, would be well expressed  
In our condition.

POET. Nay sir, but here me on:  
All those which were his fellows but of late –  
Some better than his value – on the moment  
Follow his strides, his lobbies fill with tendance,  
Rain sacrificial whisperings in his ear,  
Make sacred even his stirrup and through him  
Drink the free air.

PAINTER. Ay, marry, what of these?  

POET.  
When Fortune in her shift and change of mood  
Spurns down her late beloved, all his dependants,  
Which laboured after him to the mountain’s top  
Even on their knees and hands, let him slip down,  
Not one accompanying his declining foot.  

(1.1.65-90)

At first, the Poet deliberately separates reality and fiction, claiming that the figure in his poem is “one of Lord Timon’s frame” (71); he isn’t explicit that the character in his poem is Timon, but rather he gives the impression that the character is one like Timon. The reader, creating an image in her mind, is meant to think of a generic figure who resembles Timon in bodily stature but who may not, in fact, be the actual lord. But around line 80, the Poet begins to specifically describe
the ungrateful behavior of the “fellows but of late” who flatter and suck on this lord but then “let him slip” (89) when Fortune spurns him from her mountain. This detail precisely foreshadows the behavior of the Athenians in the next scene who come to Timon looking for favors and gifts but who are not willing to forgive or help Timon repay his debts. We get the sense, then, that the Poet has shifted from describing a man who might endure the same trials as Timon to allegorizing Timon’s situation as a consequence of Fortune’s cruelty.

Confusing social reality and fiction, this allegory creates a new tropological body for Timon, similar to the epitaphs or his gravestone; the poem acts as another representation of Timon in the world like his other material extensions. At the same time, he also gains a new physical body: the body of the Timon figured in the poem. It’s important to note, however, that the body in the poem is just a “frame” (71); it is something that exists in the poet’s and audience’s imaginations. It is not Lord Timon in the flesh. At the same time “frame” contributes to the Poet’s image of the Athenians “[d]rink[ing] the free air” through Timon (85). The Poet gives the sense of Timon being the open conduit through which the Athenians receive their sustenance and wealth.

If the poem, a confusion of social reality and fiction, turns Timon into an allegory, a moral for both the play’s audience, the Poet, Painter, and whomever else will read the work, what effect does Timon’s non/humanness have on the play’s audience? Recognizing the unpredictable and unstable confusions of human and non-human can have a profound consequence on the way we read. Here, I have made no pretense to try to reconcile one version of Timon to another, nor to construct a consistent or overarching subjectivity for the lord. He is consistent only in continually inhabiting new material forms. But he does not evolve from one form to another, nor does his confusion with the gravestone mean that he is no longer confused
with the gold. Timon is never only one thing. To acknowledge this multiplicity means embracing a reading of difference instead of trying to collapse Timon’s metonymic relationship with the gold with the persistence of his sociability in the gravestone. It means we must struggle with G. Wilson Knight and Anthony Dawson to try to articulate who or what a character is when that character cannot be located in space or time. Above all, reading for difference keeps us vigilant to allowing the text to speak for itself. As we humble ourselves to the text, we recognize the non/human in all of us: a human that cannot live without a text.
Appendix A

*Timon of Athens* is situated between the tragedies *Romeo and Juliet* and *Julius Caesar*. *Timon* ends on page 98 of the Tragedies section; then there is a list of actors for the play, and *Julius Caesar* begins on the recto side of the next page, which is labeled 109. One scholar has hypothesized that the printer, having already prepared *Julius Caesar*, estimated how many pages long *Troilus and Cressida* would be. So the substitution of *Timon* for *Troilus and Cressida* resulted in an eight-page discrepancy between *Timon* and *Julius Caesar*. The dispute resolved, *Troilus and Cressida* was inserted at the beginning of the Tragedies, but anomalous and incomplete pagination of the play supports the theory that it was a late addition. Moreover, there is no reason to suspect that the printers would have included *Timon* in the First Folio had it not been for this dispute. 101

Images of the Folio from The Folger Shakespeare Library’s Digital Image Collection, STC22273. Available at luna.folger.edu.
Works Cited


Folger Shakespeare Library. luna.folger.edu.


