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Emotion and the Work of Writing: The Making of Modern Literature in Media History

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by

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Abstract of the Dissertation

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This dissertation investigates a history of representation of emotions in the British long eighteenth century and in the context of a rising textual culture. I do so by tracing the trope of sympathy, which is pervasive in eighteenth-century writings such as aesthetic treatises, moral philosophy, and Romantic poetry. Sympathy builds sociality through the communication of feelings and is enacted in the practices of reading, writing and representation, all of which were changing drastically as everyday life was increasingly saturated with textual media. In the process, individual emotions have to be "flattened" (Adam Smith's word) so as to be communicable, while at the same time, literary culture constructs the deep interiority of an emotional self. These developments enable the rise of political economy and psychoanalysis in the nineteenth century.

As a historical project, the dissertation is largely organized chronologically. Chapter One examines Edmund Burke's aesthetic theory of the sublime. Burke emphasizes the acoustic dimension of words in communicating aesthetic feelings of sympathy. Chapter Two outlines a

brief etymological history of the inward turn of emotions and sentimentality in the eighteenth century Britain. Chapter Three analyzes David Hume's moral philosophy of passions. I argue that Hume, by establishing himself as a "man of feeling," attempts to domesticate as individualistic feelings that had been understood as impersonal and contagious. Chapter Four presents the phenomenon I call "poetic mediality" in the work of William Wordsworth. Here the oral and acoustic performance of feelings gendered as feminine is poeticized so that scopic desire is generated through the act of reading presented as anthropological speculation. Chapter Five explores Adam Smith's moral philosophy of sympathetic sentiment. Smith's definition of a theatrical impartial spectator in a representational economy (in his writings on moral sentiments) makes self analogous to an exchangeable commodity (in his political economy writing) and anticipates the deep (sub)consciousness of interiority in psychoanalytic writings of the late nineteenth century. As an extended comparison and contrast with this Western history, my final chapter turns to examine late imperial Chinese pictorial culture in its imbrication with a "print modern" Chinese Enlightenment discourse of the New Culture movement, where I argue that the representation of crowds' activities of absorption and theatricality present an emergent form of subjectivity.

By traversing divergent genres of writing and different cultural media, I delineate a genealogy of the emotional self shaped by the material practice of a rising textual culture. The project challenges existing versions of more abstract histories of emotion as well as sociological approaches to media studies, both of which present clear and clean histories at the expense of specific and concrete historical practices. Throughout, my project works (1) to explore the rise of visuality through a modern literary medium and how it co-evolves with orality and aurality in representing self; (2) to historicize and thus radicalize the work of writing in the fabrication of

interiority; (3) to contribute a comparative approach to historical studies of media and modern literatures.

Dedication

This Dissertation is dedicated to Wang, Jianhua (建华, meaning "Build China"), my uncle and a peasant worker. He died on his job in 2010 at Tsingtao, a city far from his home.

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Chapter I: Rhetoric and the Rise of Modern Aesthetics: A Case of Sympathy in Edmund Burke

No man, in his senses, ever thought of applying his eyes to discover what passes in his mind; far less of blaming his eyes for not seeing a thought or idea.

–*Elements of Criticism* (1762), Lord Kames[1]

It is, indeed, difficult to visualize thoughts or ideas through one's eyes, as suggested by the epigraph from *Elements of Criticism*, an influential eighteenth-century aesthetics text by Henry Home (1696-1769), who was also called Lord Kames. What remains significant, however, is the importance that Lord Kames places upon human "senses," in their possibility to realize and present interior activities, whether these senses are intellectual or not. This visualizing with eyes interweaves with the epistemological question of self-presence in the mind. Indeed, it is in a visual sense that the word "idea" has its Greek etymology[2]. The objective of this dissertation (except the last chapter) is to situate this visual approach to epistemological issues such as rhetoric, emotions, identity, and language in eighteenth-century British culture. It was a historical period that witnessed a proliferating print culture, which was a massive shift from the early modern scribal or chirographic culture to a modern typographic culture. The modern print culture is the first step of what made possible that which Walter Benjamin calls "technological reproducibility[3]." This project is to historicize the theatrical intermediate stage of the visual (in

[1] *Elements of Criticism*, Vol. 1, p. 343.

[2] Voltaire, in his *Philosophical Dictionary*, also wrote: "What is an idea? It is an image that paints itself in my brain.... The most abstract ideas are the consequences of all the objects I've perceived.... I've ideas only because I've images in my head" (Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary*, p. 236). The Enlightenment's debt to Descartes's ocular-centric theory of knowledge and its distance from it is readily apparent here, as Martin Jay points out. See Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, p. 83-4.

[3] See McLuhan's argument on "the make of typographic man" in his *The Gutenberg Galaxy*. Also see Christopher

between the mind and the thing perceived), so as to see how a perceptual change of selfhood has been initiated through the formation of a modern printed textual culture. It is concerned with outlining a history of self–or other presence through vision, and how a modern textual media has made it possible.

Lord Kames addresses the commentary quoted above as a critique towards act 2, scene 8 of William Congreve's 1697 tragedy play *The Mourning Bride*:

> --Yet I behold her—yet—and now no more.
>
> Turn your lights inward, Eyes, and view my thought.
>
> So shall you still behold her—'twill not be.
>
> O impotence of sight! mechanic sense
>
> Which to exterior objects ow'st thy faculty,
>
> Not seeing of election, but necessity.
>
> Thus do our eyes, as do all common mirrors,
>
> Successively reflect succeeding images.
>
> Nor what they would, but must; a star or toad;
>
> Just as the hand of chance administers! [4]

This is Osmyn's reflection upon the mental faculty (its impotence in this instance) of visualizing the presence of either an other or an image after Osmyn's temporary departure from Almeria, the speaker's beloved. It is a grandiose emotional moment from the male character, where a yearning to domesticate a female presence of his beloved is expressed. Visuality, containment, and emotionality all percolate with a discursive trope of sympathy with the eyes and with the

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Bush, *Ideographic Modernism*, p. 67.

[4] Quoted in Henry Home, p. 343.

audience[5]. This probably explains why the successive images of mental faculty reflected in this passage from Congreve's play interest Henry Home. Lord Kames was an active founding member of the Edinburgh Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Sciences, Manufactures, and Agriculture, and the Society for Promoting the Reading and Speaking of the English Language in Scotland, two of the offshoots from the Select Society, to which both David Hume and Adam Smith belonged. As a matter of fact, David Hume was a distant cousin of Home's[6]. The writing of the *Elements of Criticism* was made possible partially because of Hume's suggestion to Lord Kames that criticism could be reduced to a science. During the years 1748-50, Adam Smith delivered a series of public lectures in Edinburgh, and it was funded by Henry Home. Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) and *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) were both based on these lectures[7]. Henry Home was conversing with both Smith and Hume. For instance, in *Elements of Criticism*, he writes on the "ideal presence" achieved from spectating "as distinguished from real presence on the one side, and from reflective remembrance on the other" (68), an obsession that both Hume and Smith express through their written work. He also writes on "sympathy," without which no person could fully understand another, and thus no bonds of society could be secured[8], which is assigned a central role in the theories of both Hume and Smith. The point of interest is that this impossibility of a visual inward turn towards one's own presence is extenuated around the middle of the eighteenth century, around which various authors—Home, Hume and Smith included—could be read in the light of a media history of textual culture. In this historical process, I argue that the rising of a literary modernity occupies a

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[5] Sympathy, indeed, is an endemic trope in the eighteenth century, which will be elaborated more in details below. See, for instance, Marshall, *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy*. For an analysis of Congreve's, also see Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion*, pp. 5-6.
[6] At least before he changed the spelling of his family name from "Home" into "Hume." See chapter III of this dissertation.
[7] See "Introduction" by D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie, pp.1-3.
[8] Henry Home, pp. 307-08.

primary role as part of the consequence of a saturating textual culture. I take the concept of "literary modernity" from Paul de Man[9]. Through his reading of Nietzsche's "Of the Use and Misuse of History for Life," de Man writes: "Modernity exists in the form of a desire to wipe out whatever came earlier in the hope of reaching at last a point that could be called a true present, a point of origin that marks a new departure" (388-89). This denial of history, paradoxically, "discovers itself to be a generative power that not only engenders history, but is part of a generative scheme that extends far back into the past" (390), which is implied in the rise of western modernity. The activity of modern literature offers a manifest instance of this very contradiction that Nietzsche discovered at the endpoint of his rebellion against a historically minded culture. It is a culture with, on one hand, its "constitutive affinity with action, with the unmediated, free act that knows no past" (392). On the other hand, it is "not as a single moment of self-denial, but as a plurality of moments that can ... be represented ... as a succession of moments or duration" (398). I situate the ways of representing presence and emotions in a history of this culture, when the modern concept of "literature" as part of modern textual culture was establishing itself by creating a sense of history through the eighteenth century. In this way, I try to radicalize the work of writing in its historical sense as well as its pertinence to our understanding of modern self.

This history of emotions and representation takes its methodology and terminology from media studies in its critical sense. For instance, the vocabulary of "human sensorium" is from media theorists Marshall McLuhan and Walter J. Ong. It describes the effects of media and kinds of mediation upon the ratio of human senses and perceptual proclivities[10]. McLuhan once

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[9] Paul de Man, "Literary History and Literary Modernity."

[10] See for instance, McLuhan "Visual and Acoustic Space" in *The Global Village: Transformations in World Life and Media in the 21st Century*, pp. 35-47, and Ong "The Shifting Sensorium," in *The Varieties of Sensory Experience: A Sourcebook in the Anthropology of the Senses*, pp. 25-30.

wrote on the psychological function of the western alphabet: "The translating of auditory into visual terms set up an inner life in man which separated himself from the exterior world and, in part, from his own senses, as we know from the study of pre-literate societies" (McLuhan 284). Alphabetic literacy is instrumental in constructing an interiority as a neutral and abstract space: "The interiorization of the technology of the phonetic alphabet translates man from the magical world of the ear to the neutral visual world" (McLuhan, 1962 18). This separation of senses brought by the technology of writing promotes the visual over the audile, which is part of the reason, for McLuhan, why a progressive history of western civilization becomes possible, along with the rise of western possessive individualism: "Only the phonetic alphabet makes a break between eye and ear, between semantic meaning and visual mode; and thus only phonetic writing has the power to translate man from the tribal to the civilized sphere, to give him an eye for an ear" (McLuhan, 1962 27). Orality, literacy, and visuality are taken in the current writing as they relate to ways of organizing human sensoria and perceptions in media history. In this way, they are what Martin Heidegger calls *techne,* which shares an etymology with "technology," from the Greek root *technikon*. It concerns the work of *enframing* with which Heidegger developed his phenomenological approach: "What is decisive in *techne* does not lie at all in making and manipulating nor in the using of means, but rather in ... revealing[11]." For Heidegger, "the essence of technology lies not in instrumental productions or manipulation of material, but in the process of a special kind of knowing through the *techne*" (Liu 28), as pointed out by Lydia H. Liu. Epistemological aspiration of knowledge is not a cause or origin of technology as usually presumed. Instead, new technologies present spaces for revealing and clearing, which enframes the perceptual economy of representation and emotion. The print media, in the current case,

[11] *The Question Concerning Technology*, p. 58. See also Lydia H. Liu, *The Freudian Robot: Digital Media and the Future of the Unconscious*, p. 28.

realizes and disciplines an organizational ratio of orality, aurality, literacy and visuality that affects modern selfhood. It is through this perspective that we can delineate a history of textual culture, with an emphasis upon Paul de Man's "literary modernity," through a study of representations, emotions, and the work of writing.

I.i Sympathy, description, and its sounding economy

This dissertation starts with Edmund Burke's aesthetics of the sublime in the middle of the eighteenth century. I situate his theory at the threshold of the emergence of modern textual mediation or perception; its maturity and permeation is well reflected in Adam Smith's textual construction of sympathy. Smith's theory of moral sentiments dovetails with a sense of transparent exchangeability regarding personhood, human nature, and commodity explicated in the modern political economy of his later writings. That pre-mediates a potential development of psychoanalysis that appears out of historical necessity in the late nineteenth century, so as to deal with the existence of the unconscious beyond the exchangeable transparency of selfhood in the political economy writings. Thus, textual culture has obtained a social life of its own, in the history of which there seems to exist a genealogy of genres from aesthetics (Edmund Burke), modern literature (William Wordsworth), moral philosophy (David Hume and Adam Smith), and psychoanalysis in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I take these authors as snapshots of a media history of modern textual culture. All of them participate in this history of modern writing and become parts of the institution of the work of writing. It is of historical contingency that each of them is in a significant position in this social life of the textual culture. I historicize Burke's attitudes toward the function of language in communicating emotions in a tradition of

early modern rhetoric, when a proliferating textual cultural media was about to take its place. Thus it is an attempt to revalorize aesthetics as figuring a problem of textual mediation and its affective economy[12]. Through this I argue that theatricality, as the emergence of a new type of aesthetic "interface," provides a site of cultural labor and a body of textual formation during the transition from "the age of flesh[13]" to the age of paper, or to what Samuel Johnson calls an "age of authors[14]". Textual media thus helps manufacture the modern perception and emotion with regard to figured conditions of communications made possible through a proliferation of words. Through a critical investigation of sentiment and its relation to language as they are reflected in these authors, I demonstrate how the construct of a specific regime of theatrical selfhood becomes contingent upon the emergent forms of abstraction and exchangeability in a history of textual media. Or, to put it differently, this is a transition from what is formularized by Henry Home as impossible (as quoted in the epigraph) into a phase of applying eyes to psychology—or, psychology as visual, as everyday happening. This change of cultural disposition affects the dimensions of different perceptions involved in representation of feelings, and formation of the modern individual in general.

Indeed, sympathy, as one technique of stimulating bodily sentiment and sensation, was a significant element of middle-eighteenth century aesthetics. It involves corporeal engagements and mediation. As practice of sociality, it is registered in the aesthetics theory of the sublime and the beautiful by Edmund Burke, who writes: "We yield to sympathy, what we refuse to description" (Burke 160). Burke juxtaposes embodied sympathy and disembodied description as complementing each other. Sympathy, however, comes to the fore when "we" cease using the

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[12] For a theological genealogy of "economy" and how it evolves into Hegelian "positivity" and Foucauldian "apparatus," see "What is an Apparatus?" by Giorgio Agamben.
[13] This phrase is appropriated from the book title of *Flesh in the Age of Reason* (Penguin, 2005) by Roy Porter, the historian of medicine.
[14] W. J. Bate, J. M. Bullitt, and L. F. Powell (eds.), *Samuel Johnson: The Idler and Adventurer*, p. 457.

visual "description," as it occupies a higher position of preference in the system of human sensorium. Feelings are not approachable through visual display or representation of words. Their economy is spiritual, personal, immediate, and less adaptable to communicative mediation. For Burke, the function of language is to communicate and persuade, but on a more local scale: "words" produce "three effects … in the mind of the hearer. The first is, the *sound*; the second, the *picture*, or representation of the thing signified by the sound; the third is, the *affection* of the soul produced by one or by both of the foregoing" (Burke 166). The affective dimension of the mediation is auditory and visual. In this scheme of words, the auditory effects come to be of primary significance, the visual as secondary. As a matter of fact, the pictorial meaning of communication is achieved through the signification from the acoustic. The priority that Burke puts upon the aural-oral aspects of words probably suggests a historical episteme of a scribal or manuscript culture. Indeed, when Burke published his *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beauty* in 1757, Europe was changing from an oral-scribal to a print society[15]. The two means of cultural media (the acoustic and the visual) involve different forms or *techne* of consciousness and organization of human sensorium, which have been studied in various disciplines through decades[16]. For instance, the media theorist McLuhan writes: "Manuscripts were meant to be read aloud. Church chantry schools were set up to ensure oral fidelity" (46). This acoustic regime is an episteme of the pulpit, and it "had … been coupled with news about local and foreign affairs, real estate transactions, and other mundane matters" (131)[17], as Elizabeth L. Eisenstein argues in her history of the printing press. Burke's aesthetics

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15 See Alvin Kernan, *Samuel Johnson and the Impact of Print*, p. 4.

[16] For instance, see the works by Water J. Ong, Marshall McLuhan, Jack Goody, Eric A. Havelock, Régis Debray, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, Benedict Anderson and Erich Neumann. The most recent critical essay on this topic with a historical emphasis is "Genesis of the Media Concept" by John Guillory.

[17] For how the periodical newspaper press replaced the pulpit in early modern society as a medium for disseminating news and information, as well as providing psychological reinforcement, see also Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, page 553-4.

can be identified more in an episteme[18] of the traditional rhetoric. It remains analogous to the "morning prayer" and the pulpit, which is to be substituted by what Hegel perceives in newspaper reading in the early nineteenth century[19]. The Burkean theory of the sublime and beautiful came into its shape between 1747 and 1756[20], years of changing values and new points of view. His philosophical enquiry was published on 21 April 1757, and the second edition came in 1759, when Adam Smith's theory of moral sentiment was materialized[21]. Following what Foucault elsewhere calls "genealogical[22]," this writing offers an analysis of the bodily economy of sentiments in Burke's aesthetics and a glance into various discourses of sentiments as they remain particularly pertinent to a history of modern textual culture. Through critical inquiries upon the constitution of knowledge, discourses, domains of objects—such as aesthetics, exchangeability, communication—this dissertation traces a genealogical outline of sentiments from perspectives of different textual mediations of perceptions and sentiments.

For Burke, sympathy, as one kind of human "*affections*" (sic), can be accomplished through aesthetic labor, which is reflected through description with words. However, in Burke's theory,

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[18] Here I follow Foucault's definition of *episteme* as "a specifically *discursive* apparatus" or "the strategic apparatus which permits of separating out from among all the statements which are possible those that will be acceptable within" (Foucault, 1980 197). As to "apparatus," the definition closest to completion Foucault gives is in an interview from 1977: "What I'm trying to single out with this term is, first and foremost, a thoroughly heterogeneous set consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the network that can be established between these elements… I understand by the term 'apparatus' a sort of—shall we say—formation which has as its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an *urgent need*" (Foucault 1980, 194-95, emphasis original). Also see Giorgio Agamben, "What Is an Apparatus?."

[19] See Susan Buck-Morss, "Hegel and Haiti" in *Critical Inquiry*, p. 844. Also see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, p. 35.

[20] See Samuel H. Monk (1960), p. 87.

[21] See J. T. Boulton's "Introduction" to *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, pp. xv-xvi.

[22] As Foucault writes: "I don't believe the problem can be solved by historicizing the subject as posited by the phenomenologists, fabricating a subject that evolves through the course of history. One has to dispense with the constituent subject, to get rid of the subject itself, that's to say, to arrive at an analysis which can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework. And this is what I would call genealogy, that is, a form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledge, discourses, domains of objects, etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to a field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history" (Foucault 1980, 117).

work through words does not necessarily breed "sympathy." Concerning the affective function of language as a mimetic medium through description, he remains significantly suspicious, which is partially the source of his political conservatism. As he writes: "It may be observed that very polished language, and such as are praised for their superior clearness and perspicuity, are generally deficient in strength" (Burke 125). The more detailed linguistic descriptions are, the less sufficiently they would be able to appeal to emotions. This is well observed by J. T. Boulton, who wrote the famous editorial preface to Burke's philosophical enquiry in the 1950s. About Burke's system of language as a technical instrument in social venues of communication, Boulton writes, "the emotive power of language is not proportionate to its image-raising capacity" (Boulton lxxvii). Indeed, for Burke, the images once attached to words may fade out, but a residue of the original emotion may become part of the ecology of the words, which is charged with an acoustic economy:

> Such words are in reality but mere sounds; but they are sounds, which, being used on particular occasions, wherein we receive some good, or suffer some evil, or see others affected with good or evil; or which we hear applied to other interesting things and events; and being applied in such a variety of cases that we know readily by habit to what things they belong, they produce in the mind, whenever they are afterwards mentioned; effects similar to those of their occasions. The sounds being often used without reference to any particular occasion, and carrying still their first impressions, they at last utterly lose their connection with the particular occasions that gave rise to them; yet the sound, without any annexed notion, continues to operate as before. (Burke 165)

Sound as a medium and oral-aural apparatus, in the process of de-contexutalization, seems to obtain a communicative valence, equivalent to that of floating signifiers in postmodern culture;

what Jean Baudrillard defines as "a hyperreal" in simulation, or "the generation by models of a real without origin or reality" (Baudrillard 1). It could leave its original territory and still maintain an operative mechanism. What is of more significance for Burke is that sound serves as the instrument of rhetorical suasion:

> Now, as there is a moving tone of voice, an impassioned countenance, an agitated gesture, which affect independently of the things about which they are exerted, so there are words, and certain dispositions of words, which … touch and move us more than those which far more clearly and distinctly express the subject matter. (Burke 175)

The "moving tone of voice," "impassioned countenance," and "agitated gesture" of enunciating words are acts more embodied and local, thus the acoustic dimension of words seems to have a life more social than when the postmodern de-territorialized signifiers. Burke's aesthetics theory on the fierce, noble, and almost supra-sensuous appeal of the sublime is more of the acoustic type, though he devotes a good deal of space to his naïve theory of retinal fatigue in producing the visual sublime, as Dixon Wecter observes[23]. This acoustic quality is suggested in his extreme sensitivity to sounds—to thunder, roaring cataracts, the crises of wild beasts, artillery, shouting multitudes, drums, tolling bells, and even "low, confused, uncertain sounds" (Burke 83). What matters is not whether Burke had little or no education in music[24], nor is it about the peculiarities of Burke's own sensory equipment[25]. Rather, the economy of sound in his aesthetics as the celebrated sublime suggests a sense of im-mediation and corporeality paradigmatic of some

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[23] Dixon Wecter, p. 179.

[24] His early mentor W. G. Hamilton once remarked, "Burke understands everything but gaming and music," as mentioned by Dixon Wecter, p. 179, note 43.

[25] Dixon Wecter argues that "Burke's stress upon the sublime arising from the sonority of poetry and rhetoric, as well as his theory which disparages clear visualization as an aid to aesthetic emotion, sprang in part from the peculiarities of his own sensory equipment" (180). And at the end of the essay, Wecter quotes observation from Tom Paine: "Mr. Burke has two or three times, in his parliamentary speeches, and in his publications, made use of a jingle of words that convey no ideas" (qtd. in Wecter 181).

period in the eighteenth century West. It is reminiscent of what Foucault defines in his theory of language as its break from the classical episteme:

> … in the Classical period the expressive function of language was required only at its point of origin, and in order to explain how a sound could represent a thing, [whereas] language in the nineteenth century, throughout its development and even in its most complex forms, was to have an irreducible expressive value, for, if language expresses, it does so not in so far as it is an imitation and duplication of things, but in so far as it manifests and translates the fundamental will of those who speak it. (Foucault 1970, 290)

This shift of the function of language, from that of revealing and disclosing the origin—"its old kinship with *divinatio*" (Foucault 1970, 59) —into that of representation and communication, is historically situated in this dissertation as imbricate with a rising print culture. The deluge of writing brings forth proliferation of signs, establishes a world more into its visually neutralized form, and creates an aesthetic experience for a new audience and a society of readers and writers. The saturating verbal signs in British culture through the long eighteenth century would demand a revaluation of a whole *episteme*, which affects not merely the way objective knowledge is organized and accessed, but also the way how affective knowledge works upon the somatic body. In this way, the "print turn" co-evolves with the "affective turn[26]." The transmission of feelings is made possible by the *techne* of a print culture, which enhances the division between the private/domestic and public[27] as reflected in activities of reading and writing. Edmund Burke's aesthetic theory offers a point of departure in this discussion of the role of the perceptual in this affective turn—how and through what means one feels and communicates.

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[26] Here I refer to the mode of "sentimentalization" as that of melodramatic excess, which is the theme of Peter Brooks' *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess*.

[27] It becomes critical cliché that this process comes along with a rising bourgeoisie. As Louis Althusser writes in 1969: "It could not be more bluntly put that it was the bourgeoisie itself that invented for the people the popular myth of the melodrama ... serials in the popular press, cheap 'novels'" (*For Marx,* 1969. p.139).

Burke's aesthetic economy of sound and hearing as a mediating sensorium bears relevance to discussions from his contemporaries. For instance, the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) once delivered a speech "On the Education of Students in Language and Speech" in the context of his secondary school reform, which describes of the subject of *Bildung* as organized through the spoken and heard word. His theory reads similarly to that of Burke's: Youths who have acquired ... unpleasant dialect of merely animal sounds, whether they come from the cities or the country, should make every effort in school to acquire a human, natural speech possessed of character and soul and to rid themselves of their peasant or shrieking back-alley dialects. They should leave off the barking and yelping, the clucking and cawing, the swallowing and dragging together of words and syllables and speak human rather than animal language. Happy is the child, the boy, who from his first years, onward hears understandable, human, lovely sounds that unnoticeably mold his tongue and the sound of his speech.[28] Constantly hailed as "the founding document of German as a school subject" (Kittler, 1990 37), this shows the self-identified cultural mission for Herder as a German Enlightenment philosopher: the pedagogical function of bildungsroman. If *Bildung* means "the auto-production of a subject that produces or forms itself in the very act of coming to consciousness of itself[29]," this process of phenomenal realization in aesthetics of body comes through purging acoustic signs of contaminating noises or animalistic sounds. Dorothea von Mücke comments that for Herder, "[s]ounds and the sense of hearing provide the ideal means for negotiating and organizing the soul's interior space and its exterior sphere. Sounds are external givens that function as a minimal difference or mark, and they can resonate in the internal space" (von Mücke 170)[30],

[28] Quoted in Friedrich A. Kittler, *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*, pp. 37-8.
[29] Marc Redfield, *Phantom Formations: Aesthetic Ideology and the* Bildungsroman, p. 63.
[30] For an investigation of Herder's establishment of a hierarchy of sensorial perceptions (the hearing, the senses of touch and sight, that is), see Dorothea von Mücke, p. 173.

Thus, the acoustic dimension of the aesthetic perception is not peculiar in Burke's philosophical inquiry; it is a prevalent discussion. Burke's aesthetic theory of language suggests this through a strong emotional appeal, which is corporeally embedded rather than mentally represented or visualized. For him, "passion," "emotion," and "affection" are a cluster of lax and apparently interchangeable terms[31], and are more oratorical effects than linguistic representations made at a distance. The influence of words through representation upon passions, he claims, "should be but light; yet it is quite otherwise; for we find by experience that eloquence and poetry are as capable, nay indeed much more capable of making deep and lively impressions than other arts, and even than nature itself in very many cases" (Burke 173). The acoustic eloquence and poetry as locally experienced by an "us" are more communicative. Hence Burke's fascination with the power of rhetoric, which is "an instrument of emotional transport … dominant among the ancients, and the grand style, the purpose of which was to move, …an integral part of their rhetoric" (Monk 1960, 11). Indeed, Burke writes on the sublime in the tradition of critics and theorists preceding him, such as John Dennis, Hildebrand Jacob, and Robert Lowth, whose work "bears witness to the continuation of the rhetorical tradition," and "they would, perhaps, never have studied the question had not the rhetoricians of antiquity and of their own age based much of the persuasive power of their art on the emotions which the great style evokes" (Monk 1960, 84), as Samuel H. Monk's classical study suggests. In a sense, this rhetoric tradition even included David Hume[32]. John Ward, a contemporary of Burke's, writes in his *A System of Oratory* that rhetoric

> not only directs to those arguments, which are proper to convince the mind; but also

[31] See Dixon Wecter, p. 167, note 2.
[32] See Daniel M. Gross's discussion in *The Secret History of Emotion: From Aristotle's Rhetoric to Modern Brain Science*, pp. 113-56. See chapter III of the dissertation for a discussion of Hume's economy of emotions through print media.

> considers the various passions and interests of mankind, with the bias they receive from temper, education, converse, and other circumstances of life; and teaches how to fetch such reasons from each of these, as are of the greatest force in persuasion." (qtd. in Howell 74)

Rhetoric, in the eighteenth century, "was a history of the voice, taught through speech and authenticated by phonocentric values" (Fielding 11)[33]. For Hugh Blair, who was the occupant of the specially created chair of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres at Edinburgh University from 1762 to 1783, language is "the expression of our ideas by certain sounds, which are used as the signs of those ideas," and is communicated by means of the warmth and feeling of the speaker's expression[34]. Burke's appeal to an emotional rhetoric over logic accords well with such a definition and function of rhetoric in its classical tradition[35]. His aesthetics deals with "bodies acting *mechanically* (sic.) upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses"(Burke 112), rather than "the languid and precarious operation of our reason" (Burke 107). He considers the emotional effect of words "put together without any rational view," such as *wise, valiant, generous, good,* and *great*, which belong to what he calls "compounded abstract words" (164) when spoken apart from local contexts without "a warm and affecting tone of voice" (Burke 166).

I.ii. Rhetoric, History and French Revolution

It is helpful to recall that rhetoric in antiquity assumed the primacy of speech as the substance with which this art was first and longest practiced. Similar to what Josiah Royce calls Lessing's

[33] Penny Fielding, *Writing and Orality*.
[34] Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, p. 98.
[35] For an intellectual-history view of how it was through Addison the essayist that the sublime became an important idea in the philosophy of taste and in an investigation of the pleasures of imagination, not of rhetoric, see Samuel H. Monk (1960), pp. 58-60.

praise of dynamic poetry as "the verbal motor type[36]," Burke's aesthetic theory is an oral-auditory apparatus of communication. In his historiography of the genesis of the modern concept of media, John Guillory argues that "even though rhetoric early on incorporated writing into its practice, the concept of speech retained preeminence in the definition of the art until the demise of formal rhetoric in the curricular reformations of the later nineteenth century" (Guillory 326). However, Burke's emphasis upon sentiment and emotion makes his theory different from the guidelines given in the rhetorical and belletristic handbooks of the period. For instance, in his notion of clarity, it is a stylistic norm applicable equally to speech and writing that language should always be transparent in meaning, and this is a very important Lockean version of words as medium of thought[37]. In this tradition, language is taken as a transparent and neutral instrument to communicate. George Campbell writes in his *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* published in 1776:

Perspicuity originally and properly implies *transparency* (sic), such as may be ascribed to air, glass, water, or any other medium, through which material objects are viewed. From this original and proper sense it hath been metaphorically applied to language, this being,as it were, the medium, through which we perceive the notions and sentiments of a speaker. (qtd. in Guillory, 339)

This is a claim to "establish a post-Lockean stylistic norm" (Guillory 339). Francis Bacon also captures the psychodynamics of objectivity, clarity, and democracy in print in his *The New Organon* published in the previous century. Bacon states, "[T]here is surely nothing in the craft of printing that is not open and almost obvious… which does so much to propagate learning" (114-5). Print, indeed, promotes a rising culture of abstraction with its regulated forum and

[36] See Josiah Royce, "Psychological Reasons for Lessing's Attitude toward Descriptive Poetry."
[37] See John Guillory, p. 338-39.

sentences. It co-exists with the post-Baconian writers' desire to evolve a language in which words would simply be marks of things[38]. What remains at stake for this dissertation is Burke's strong sense of emotionalism as a reaction against the technological globalizing tendency in which emotional and historical associations would become non-existent. This tendency is a tradition extending from Bacon to Locke, and it posits "an essential equivalence between linguistic and philosophical standards of clarity, precision, and transparency of thought as the basis of a new empiricist epistemology"(Porter 17). Robert Stillman has persuasively argued that the rationalist regimes imposed on language within this tradition reflect not only the new ordering of experimental knowledge promoted by the Royal Society, but also a fundamental commitment from its adherents to reinforcing and legitimizing the authority of the state. The universal language schemes of Bacon, Wilkins, and others "emerged as rival authority structures designed, in great measure, to contain and control the disorders of words because such disorders threatened chaos in the historical world of things" (Stillman 10). In the aesthetic theory under discussion here, Burke strategically associates these practices of clarity, precision, and transparency of thought through linguistics with the idea of the feminine beautiful. Meanwhile, the objects that impress us with their power, obscurity, vastness or infinity, succession, uniformity, or their effect of "painful delight" upon the senses can be associated with the masculine sublime[39]. Acquainted with this rhetorical tradition of language[40], Burke develops a rather different theory about the relationship of sense-impressions with words and ideas. In his

[38] See R. Jones, "Science and Language in England of the Mid-Seventeenth Century." Francis Bacon once pointed out that Chinese has "direct correspondence between things and words" (Porter 2001: 43). Umberto Eco's *The Search for the Perfect Language* also remains relevant.
[39] For a more elaborate gender reading of Burke's aesthetic division, see W. J. T. Mitchell's "Eye and Ear: Edmund Burke and the Politics of Sensibility" in his *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*, pp.116-50.
[40] He makes four direct references to Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*. See Dixon Wecter, p. 170.

scenario, clarity and perspicuity correlate with the finite, and they are less capable of psychological stimulation upon the body:

> But let it be considered that hardly any thing can strike the mind with its greatness which does not make some sort of approach toward infinity; which nothing can do while we are able to perceive its bounds; but to see an object distinctly, and to perceive its bounds, are one and the same thing. A clear idea is, therefore, another name for a little idea. (63)

For the Irish Burke, it is the French who embrace "polished languages" with their "superior clearness and perspicuity," which leads to ruptures rather than continuity, and thus "deficien[cy] in strength" (Burke 176).

With historical hindsight, we may be able to recognize in Burke's criticism of the French revolution in the 1790s a historical precursor to the contemporary revolt against theory in the Anglo-American academy. It is not exaggerating to say that when Burke was developing his aesthetic theory in the middle of the eighteenth century, it already anticipated his attitudes toward French revolution that he later elaborated on in the 1790s. David Simpson defines this mythic English Franco-phobia "as a central motif in the definition of a nationalism," the pattern of which is

> based on [English] common sense, on a resistance to generalized thought, and on a declared immersion in the minute complexities of a 'human' nature whose essence is usually identified in an accumulation of mutually incommensurable details rather than in a single, systematized personality. (Simpson 4)

What remains pertinent to the argument is that the British national character's propensity—as reflected in Burke's case for the power of English habit and custom—to keep the French contamination away dovetails with a transformation of consciousness and perception brought

upon by a diffusion of print technology. In Burke's aesthetic theory, the French pollution is metonymically transferred as an intrusion of the visual and verbal upon the acoustic and interior. The Burkean aesthetic embraces the empathic involvement natural to the oral society and the audile-tactile man, whereas the phonetic alphabet media promotes the rise of the visual component as ways of abstraction and systemization[41]. This visual perception and abstraction is long existent in the historical process of what Martin Heidegger categorizes as "the world grasped as picture" that started in the Renaissance, a process of objectification:

> This objectification of beings is accomplished in a setting-before, a representing [*Vor-stellen*], aimed at bringing each being before it in such a way that the man who calculates can be sure—and that means certain—of the being. Science as research first arrives when, and only when, truth has transformed itself into the certainty of representation[42].

In this dissertation, this eventually manifests itself in the formalized methods of representation and exchangeability of self in everyday life in Adam Smith's political economy of moral sentiments[43]. Strategically, Burke represents the French revolution as a visual spectacle, which produces a "bewildered English audience." For him, the revolutionary spectacle negates "the laws of Aristotelian dramatic law by failing to resolve the violent struggles in any satisfying symbolic way" (Klancher 103), as pointed out by Jon P. Klancher[44]. He writes in his reflections upon the French revolution as follows:

> ...[W]hen kings are hurl'd from their thrones by the Supreme Director of this great drama,

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[41] For the correlation between the visual and the phonetic alphabet, see Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 39.

[42] Martin Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, pp. 66-7.

[43] J. F-. Suter points out that Burke's critique of Rousseau is situated "in the spirit of the British moral tradition, in particular of Shaftesbury and Adam Smith," and Burke "believes that passions can be useful to society if they are suitably educated and tempered by laws and manners" (Suter 52). Indeed, Burke might be arguing in this British tradition of moral philosophy, but there surely exists a large difference between the way passions should be "suitably educated and tempered by laws and manners" in Burke and Smith, the latter of whom profers more of a commodity culture, as will be suggested in the Adam Smith chapter of this writing.

[44] Jon P. Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832*, p. 103

> and become the objects of insult to the base, and of pity to the good, we behold such disasters in the moral, as we should behold a miracle in the physical order of things. We are alarmed into reflexion; our minds (as it has long since been observed) are purified by terror and pity; our weak unthinking pride is humbled, under the dispensations of a mysterious wisdom.—Some tears might be drawn from me, if such a spectacle were exhibited on the stage. I should be truly ashamed of finding in myself that superficial, theatrical sense of painted distress, whilst I could exult over it in real life. With such a perverted mind, I could never venture to shew my face at a tragedy[45].

In other words, the *Reflections* are initiated as a claim to a dramaturgic performance not visualized, not on display, or even not written. The reflexive form as a text is made possible by what must remain invisible and unwritten as manifested by the English Constitution that requires a committed silent reading[46]. Thus Burke establishes himself as a writer of Englishness, whose work of writing appears as the incarnation of precedents, customs, institutions, and habits:

> Society is indeed a contract... a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born. Each contract of each particular state is but a clause in the great primeval contract of eternal society, linking the lower with the higher natures, connecting the visible and invisible world, according to a fixed compact sanctioned by the inviolable oath which holds all physical and all moral natures, each in their appointed place.[47]

The English "great chain of beings" (to use a phrase from Arthur O. Lovejoy[48]), along with all its physical and moral manifestations, is made possible through the primeval oral moment of "the

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[45] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, p. 175. More on Burke's revolutionary theatre, see Ronald Paulson, *Representations of Revolution* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1983), chapter. 2.
[46] This point is suggested by Jon P. Klancher in his *The Making of English Reading Audiences*, pp. 103-08.
[47] *Reflections*, p. 194-95.

inviolable oath." Natural sympathy to good moral action is prompted in individuals through this moment. An immobile universe of value as inscribed through this apotheosis of the oral moment enables a historical rhetoric[49]. For Burke, there exists a fundamental tendency to preserve the heritage of the past in the history of English law and constitution: "All the reformations we have hitherto made, have proceeded upon the principle of reference to antiquity," and even the Glorious Revolution was "a revolution, not made, but prevented" (qtd. in Suter 68). By insisting that the English constitution is a work of continuity and is justified by its long duration, Burke, indeed, is "attacking the *primacy of the present*, which is characteristic of the philosophy of the Enlightenment" (Suter 58)[50]. It is a writing strategy of calculated historical determinacy and an appeal to temporality as the source of its authority[51] that Burke makes to "outauthor" the French revolutionaries as well as the work of writing from French *philosophes*. His written text, as a medium of print, is mediated by this revolutionary moment, which can be represented only *reflectively*[52]. The enlightening rays of light from the French revolutionary philosophical writings are described by Burke as a "conquering empire of light and reason" and "a speculative benevolence" (qtd. in Suter 53). The power of intellection and the actions it embodies must be refracted back to a non-visual moment of phonocentrism[53] in Burke's theories and reflections. It cannot be a visual origin of blankness, for he writes: "I cannot conceive how any man can have brought himself to that pitch of presumption, to consider his country as nothing but *carte blanche*, upon which he may scribble whatever he pleases" (qtd. in Suter 53). In this way, the oral and

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[48] This, of course, alludes to his masterpiece work *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea*. Nevertheless, here it is more than an intellectual history of an idea.
[49] For an excellent rhetoric analysis of this passage, see Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences*, p.105.
[50] In this sense, Burke is even different from other significant English authors around that historical period, including Hobbes, Locke. See J. F-. Suter, p. 58, note 52.
[51] See Jon P. Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832*, pp. 107-08.
[52] See Jon P. Klancher, p. 105.
[53] Burke remarks that the best of the French National Assembly were merely "men of theory" (qtd. in Suter 62). For a similar attitude regarding the sense politics in Hegel's response to the French Revolution, see J. F-. Suter, "Burke, Hegel, and the French Revolution," in *Hegel's Political Philosophy—Problems and Perspectives*.

Burke's empirical truth parallel the association of anti-French sentiment and fundamental states of human nature[54]. This economy of sound enacts a superior act of overwriting upon the revolutionary act. To address this conservative strategy, Thomas Paine's reply does not only "simplify Burke's terms by inventing an 'intellectual vernacular,' but will wound radical discourse upon a radical critique of such authorship itself" (Klancher 105)[55]: "A constitution is not a thing in name only, but in fact. It has not an ideal but a real existence; and wherever it cannot be produced in a visible form, there is none[56]". Orality that is equated with an instinctive and primeval recognition of natural rights in Burke's argument has to be exposed as metaphysical and ideal, and thus historically impossible.

"Clearness," "perspicuity," and "clarity," which Burke holds suspicious in his aesthetic theory, are all visual terms. Burke's attitude towards this visual mediation of ideas and history is suggestive of an antagonism against the objectifying property of language promoted through a proliferating textual culture. Dixon Wecter argues that Burke borrows from Locke's "elaborate system for classifying ideas" in devising his three classes of words, which are taken as "those symbols which have only an arbitrary connection with real objects and which affect us in a different way" (Wecter 170). Burke defines his *aggregate words* as "simple ideas united by nature to form some one determinate composition." *Simple abstracts* are "they that stand for one simple idea of such compositions and no more," and *compounded abstracts* are "the *arbitrary* union of both the others, and of various relations between them, in greater or less degrees of

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[54] Walter Scott, in a sense, embraces this gesture. In the poem "The Bard's Incantation (Written under the threat of invasion in the autumn of 1804), a response to British fears of post-Revolutionary France, "Minstrels and bards of other days" are invited to defend Albion from a Revolutionary "Spectre with his Bloody Hand"—The Bard's voice is, "almost literally, the voice of nature as it mingles with the groaning oak, the stormy breeze, and the waves on the lake to proclaim 'the joys of Liberty.' The purity of the voice from an oral past promises concomitant freedom in the form of anti-Jacobin politics" (46), as Penny Fielding points out. See Fielding, *Writing and Orality*.

[55] Also see Olivia Smith, *Politics of Language, 1790-1819*, chapter. 3. Also see Hazlitt's report of the difference on how Burke and Thomas Paine writes, in "On the Difference between Writing and Speaking," in *Collected Works of William Hazlitt*, 12:275.

[56] *Rights of Man*, p. 71.

complexity" (Burke 163-64). These words are able to stir emotion merely by "the sound, without any annexed notion" (Burke 165), and their effects "arise in the mind of the hearer" (Burke 166). That is how "the power of poetry and eloquence" works, through "raising in it ideas of those things for which custom has appointed them to stand" (Burke 163). In places, Burke concedes that words may evoke the full cycle from sound to image-forming and, thence, to emotion although here an ellipsis is likely[57]:

> But I am of opinion, that the most general effect even of these words, does not arise from their forming pictures of the several things they would represent in the imagination; because on a very diligent examination of my own mind, and getting others to consider theirs, I do not find that once in twenty times any such picture is formed, and when it is, there is most commonly a particular effort of the imagination for that purpose. (Burke 167)

This antagonism against the visualizing and imaging property of words implies a distrust of an abstract and transparent medium of writing and representation, which, through abstracting and de-territorializing, pulls the mediated communication away from its affective and immediate environment[58]. Burke explains this through a comparison:

> In reality poetry and rhetoric do not succeed in exact description as well as painting does; their business is to affect rather by sympathy than imitation; to display rather the effect of things on the mind of the speaker, or of others, than to present a clear idea of the things themselves. (Burke 172)

This conclusion agrees with the traditional distinction, often discussed in the eighteenth century, between spoken words that are conventional signs and painting, which uses natural signs to

[57] See Dixon Wecter, p. 172.
[58] This antagonism, as a matter of fact, is also recognizable in Henry Home's theory of criticism quoted in the epigraph of this chapter.

imitate reality. It even could be dated back to what Aristotle defines as *energeia*[59]: the "actualization of potency, the realization of capacity or capability, the achievement in art and rhetoric of the dynamic and purposive life of nature," and not to "the achievement in verbal discourse of a natural quality or of a pictorial quality that is highly natural [*enargeia*]" (qtd. in Bender, 1972 9). Eric Havelock, in his convincing argument about how the beginnings of Greek philosophy are tied in with the restricting of thought brought about by writing (1963), shows the correlation between writing (verbal discourse) and the visual (as perceptual apparatus) has existed since antiquity. The term *idea,* meaning "form," is visually based and comes from the same root as the Latin *video*, to see. Havelock argues that Plato's entire epistemology is unwittingly a programmed endorsement of writing, which Plato conceives through analogies with a visible form. It is voiceless, immobile, devoid of all warmth, not interactive but isolated and abstracted out of the human life-world. Plato does this through rejecting the old oral, mobile, warm, personally interactive life-world of the oral culture, which is represented by the poets that he would not allow in his Republic[60]. The oral culture and its properties could easily be associated with the rhetoric and poetic style in Burke's aesthetic theory. The exploitation of fear and ignorance of rhetoric, and thus its "power to seduce"—if we use a phrase from Burke's French contemporary Condorcet (100)[61]–is an art of communication based on face-to-face exchange. Rhetorical power assuming the primacy of speech is prevalent in Burke's emotionally persuasive writing. Both Condorcet and Burke are witnesses of the decline of formal rhetoric and the triumph of print although Condorcet remains more of a prophet, for whom the medium of print, in part, creates a new public sphere for its productions, ensuring that "all proofs are developed and all doubts discussed" (100). Thus, no tyrannical cause prevails as it did through

[59] See *Rhetoric*, 14106-1412a.
[60] Also see Water J. Ong (1982), pp.27-8, and 79.
[61] Also see John Guillory, p. 325.

the old techniques of verbal seduction. Burke, however, appeals to the power of English habit and custom with an emotional rhetoric of persuasion through an acoustic economy of the language.

I.iii. Body Economy of Sentiment and Somatic Aesthetics of Theatricality

In Burke's view of language, clarity is an impediment to communicating the sublime emotionalism not merely in the *visual* and *written*, an essentially ideographic medium, but also in painting, a largely iconological medium[62]:

> … and even in painting a judicious obscurity in some things contributes to the effect of the picture; because the images in painting are exactly similar to those in nature; and in nature dark, confused, uncertain images have a greater power on the fancy to form the grander passions than those have which are more clear and determinate. (Burke 62)

Obscurity, uncertainty, simplicity, and infinity are celebrated over clarity and definiteness, the latter of which could be achieved through detailed mimetic descriptions. That "power on the fancy" from "nature dark," a sort of sensation or effect of an object upon the faculty of sensibility is, of course, Burke's violently emotional sublime, an example of which is the phonocentric moment of "the inviolable oath." It provides an instance of "the sublime that helped to release this flood of emotionalism into the aesthetic theory of the period" (Monk 1960, 61). Immanuel Kant, a contemporary of Burke's, terms that as "matter," and invests it with substance, or the permanent in experience, whereas the *formal* and *material* are considered as

[62] I am aware the use of such terms as "medium" and "technology" might create anachronistic mistakes. Nevertheless, on the other hand, we are all already always anachronistic, since history is a lost myth and historicism is a modern mistake we should all avoid. For a historical investigation upon the emergence of the media concept in the later nineteenth century as a response to the proliferation of new technical media, such as the telegraph and phonograph, see John Guillory's essay "Genesis of the Media Concept."

"secondary" or "superficial" (Caygill 288-89). This theory of a preexistent, virtually unmediated, mystical sense of oneness, of being within a universal continuum and the hierarchical position that it has over others—such as "means," "form," "media," "technique"—has been a recognizable pattern in the political economy of western perceptions. Burke's ideas in his writings on the aesthetic and politics of revolution typify these logocentric metaphysics, and they take the physiological form of *patho-centrism*, as explicitly stated in another passage:

> The truth is all verbal description, merely as naked description, though never so exact, conveys so poor and insufficient an idea of the thing described, that it could scarcely have the smallest effect, if the speaker did not call in to his aid those modes of speech that mark a strong and lively feeling in himself. Then, by the contagion of our passions, we catch a fire already kindled in another, which probably might never have been struck out by the object described. (Burke 175-6)

This Burkean model of communication requires that the body of both the speaker and the audience be involved with sentimental investments. "[N[aked description[s]" do not convey emotional messages, whether they are "the contagion of our passions" or that "fire." Objects make sense in relation to feeling subjects. The body, and all its sensations, takes on communicative implications, which appear to correlate with orality. This somatic involvement in sign production in conjunction with a theory of media is similar to what Condillac proposes in his *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines* (1746). For Condillac, an infant who, in the language originating in speech, lacks full control over his bodily motor functions, has to have recourse to the tongue. This most flexible organ complements the language of action: "[T]wo codes develop, supplementing each other and referring to each other at the intersection of the two media, body and voice"(von Mücke 36). To him, it is a theological act to turn this primeval

signifying practice into a gestural language so that the social meaning of the human sound can be realized. Condillac produces a moment of tracing a scene of imaginary plenitude in this history of language. He situates a passage in the Old Testament, where the direct force of the spoken word works its tactile, spectacular, and theatrical significance upon the body:

> It seems that this mode of speaking was preserved chiefly to instruct the people in regard to matters in which they were most deeply concerned; such as government and religion. Because as it acted upon the imagination with greater force, the impression was more durable. Its expression contained even something elevated and noble, which the language of articulated sounds, as yet poor and barren, could not come up to. This mode of speaking the ancients called by the name of *dance*; which is the reason of its being said that David danced before the ark. (qtd. from von Mücke, 36)

This *dancing* moment in the history of human perceptual signification, as contextualized in an oral tradition and a culture of spectacle, nevertheless experiences a division of labor brought about by the advent of the new medium of writing. The new medium separates poetry from music, and thus word from sound. In this way, the modern world is marked by "a language that has come to follow the rules of logic and ... has a full repertoire of artificial signs and thereby the perfect means for analysis" (von Mücke 37). The progress of analytical knowledge and the development of a scientific methodology injects a history into the modern media of language, and Edmund Burke is concerned with the loss of "graphicity[63]" and "tactility" as presented in the primeval moment of this history, both in his writing on aesthetics and reflection on the French revolution.

Terry Eagleton declares modern aesthetics were "born as a discourse of the body" in the mid-eighteenth century (Eagleton, 1990 13), and Samuel H. Monk argues that the chief fault of

[63] See von Mücke, p. 37.

writers on the sublime during the first half of the eighteenth century is "their habit of over-simplifying the aesthetic experience, of attempting to find the *one* sublime emotion or quality" (Monk 1960, 76). For Burke, this is an aesthetic theory mediated through his medium of writing to advocate a conservative form of politics of culture and empire. It is emotionally charged with sublime experience that affects the body, and he positions that feeling in a rhetoric of history. This theorization accords with materialists in ancient times, for whom matter is a "lyric substance" more akin to comets, meteors, and electrical storms than to some hard, uniform mass.[64] In his *Aesthetica* (1750), Alexander Baumgarten, the German philosopher, formulates "aesthetics" as the "whole region of human perception and sensation, in contrast to the more rarefied domain of conceptual thought." Such a definition predominates before it turns into a discourse about individualized "taste" at the end of the eighteenth century. This historical change of the aesthetic discourse is taken on by cultural conservatives like Burke, and it co-evolves with an inward turn of interiority. In Burke's aesthetic formula—as in Condillac's first part of the *Essai*—the body and its aesthetic sentiments are not *separated* but are in a sensual and synesthetic moment of *dancing*, which is more an invention of the primeval out of a writing economy. Writing is usually taken as a means of a transmission of meaning that is designated as particular, secondary, inscribed, and supplementary, the existence of which pre-mediates the primeval moment, either dancing or the Burkean inviolable oath. In other words, the Enlightenment thinkers take a defensive and conservative strategy through making the birth of aesthetics into a body economy with a character of divinity. It is a strategy more indicative of their confrontation with the coming of modern writing[65], which, in a history of modernity,

[64] See Daniel Tiffany, *Toy Medium: Materialism and Modern Lyric* for a detailed exploration of "poetic substances" and iconologies of matter.

[65] For a case study of Denis Diderot, on how he assumes the role of the universal philosopher and participates in the *Encyclopedié* with a contemplative attitude—a noble defender of humanity, truth, equality, and reason—and how he

"conform[s] to a law of mechanical economy[66]." If "abstraction" involves "withdrawing," "separation," or "removal," and can be defined in a specifically philosophical sense as "the act or process of separating in thought, of considering a thing independently of its associations[67][68]," Burke's aesthetic theory embraces the totality and immediacy of experience and feeling before being displaced by writing. His French contemporary Diderot centers on the achievements of the blind mathematician Nicholas Saunderson in *Lettre sur les aveugles* (1749), and he uses this instance to illustrate the knowledge attainable by the sense of touch alone. Diderot gives a more contemporary definition of "abstraction" with regard to sense of embodiment:

> [A]bstraction merely amounts to the ability to separate in our thoughts the sensible qualities of bodies either from each other or from the body itself, which serves as their material support; error arises if this separation is badly executed or applied; it can be badly executed in metaphysical questions, and it can be badly applied in questions concerned with physics and mathematics. (qtd. in von Mücke, 44-5)[69]

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holds hostility to the partiality of the journalists and the printed media in general (newspapers, periodicals, and newsletters), see Anne Fastrup, "Mediating *le philosophe*: Diderot's Strategic Self-Representations," in *This Is Enlightenment* (Ed. by Clifford Siskin and William Warner), pp. 265-83.

[66] Jacques Derrida, "Signature Event Context," in *Limited INC*, p. 4.

[67] See *OED* "abstraction" online. Accessed August 10, 2011.

[68] In a way, the history of language and writing outlined by the Enlightenment thinkers is that of separation and gradation, the kind of theoretical foundation for the German comparatist philological studies in the nineteenth century—as identified by Derrida in "Signature Event Context:" "Describing the history of the types of writing, their continuous derivation from a common root that is never displaced and which establishes a sort of community of analogical participation among all the species of writing, Condillac concludes (in what is virtually a citation of Warburton, as is most of this chapter):'Thus, the general history of writing proceeds by simple gradation from the state of painting to that of the letter; for letters are the final steps that are left to be taken after the Chinese marks which, on the one hand, participate in that of letters just as the hieroglyphs participate both in Mexican paintings and Chinese characters. These characters are so close to our writing that an alphabet simply diminishes the inconvenience of their great number and is their succinct abbreviation'" (Derrida, 1988 5).

[69] The great medieval thinker William of Ockham articulated the problem also with considerable sensory acuity: "To abstract is to understand one thing without understanding another at the same time even though in reality the one is not separated from the other, e. g., sometimes the intellect understands the whiteness which is in milk and does not understand the sweetness of milk. Abstraction in this sense can belong even to a sense, for a sense can apprehend one sensible without apprehending another" (qtd. in Jones, 93). Caroline Jones, "Senses," in *Critical Terms for Media Studies*, pp. 88-100.

Indeed, the sensory path to knowledge emerged as a problem for the newly reconfigured field of aesthetics. Another example comes from Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781), who formulates the media of painting, poetry, and theater by adjudicating just how appropriately a given art form targets its particular sense ,whether it is eyesight, hearing or feeling[70][71]. Negating a possible "abstraction" in the distribution of the sensory qualities of bodies at the first place, Burke maintains that the affective serves as the message and the channel of subjective and saturating communication or continuum. Ruptures between the body, its thoughts, sensations and ideas are politically not justifiable. This address of sensations is, from its physiological embryology, part of the science of man starting from Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, as G.S. Rousseau's classical essay argues[72]. If mediation is the manner in which, according to Raymond Williams, the producer becomes alienated from his product[73], the immediacy is an absolute state in which the producer and production become unified into one seamless organic unity. It is a myth of an experiential totality for Burke, the loss of which could be attributed to the institution of the artificial signs of a print culture.

Burke's French contemporary Denis Diderot, in his *Lettre sur les sourds et muets* (1751), puts this in a slightly different way:

> Thus, poetic discourse is touched by some spirit that moves and vivifies all of its syllables. What is spirit? Only a few times have I felt its presence, but all I know of it is that it is due to this spirit that things are said and represented simultaneously, that at the same time

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[70] See Caroline Jones, p. 93.

[71] "The first person to compare painting with poetry was a man of fine feeling who observed that both arts produced a similar effect upon him.... A second observer, in attempting to get at the nature of this pleasure, discovered that both proceed from the same source. Beauty.... A third, who examined the value and distribution of these general rules, observed that some of them are more predominant in painting, others in poetry.... The first was the amateur, the second the philosopher, and the third the critic" (Lessing [*Laocoön: an Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry*, 1766], 1962, p.3).

72 See G.S. Rousseau, pp. 139-40.

73 See Raymond Williams, "From Medium to Social Practice," in his *Marxism and Literature*, pp. 158-64.

> they are grasped by the understanding, the soul is moved by them, the imagination sees them, and the ears understand them. And this discourse is not merely a concatenation of energetic terms, which expose the thought with force and nobility; it is also a tissue of hieroglyphs piled upon each other, that paint the thought. In this sense I could say that all poetry is emblematic. (qtd. in von Mücke 46)

For Diderot, what poeticizes the primeval moment of spirit and origin is all at once oral (said) , visual (seen), and acoustic (heard). More significantly, this associated concatenation of perceptions combines with a palimpsest of pictorial writing and representation to communicate this spirit, which is identified as an emblematic property of poetry. Thus, Diderot "gives primacy to the simultaneity of a multiplicity of perceptions that constitute the totality of the soul as a 'moving picture'" (von Mücke 46). Addressing what is defined by Baumgarten as the crucial issue for the new mid-eighteenth-century discipline of aesthetics that engages all the driving springs and motives of the soul[74], Diderot turns his and the painter's gaze inwardly to a "*tableau mouvant*" instead of the exterior material details traced by the painter's brush:

> The paintbrush merely executes over time what the eye of the painter embraces in an instant. Linguistic formulations required decomposition; but to see an object, to find it beautiful, to experience an agreeable sensation, to want to possess it, all this is the state of the soul in one single instant (qtd. in von Mücke, 46) .

Dorothea E. von Mücke points out that this is the same projection of "establishing and maintaining the soul's unity and the unity of perception" for a "totality of the operations of the soul[75]," whether the objects of their critical negation are linguistic decomposition or imitative description. The overall effect of an aesthetic object and its correlation with the multiple

[74] See von Mücke, p. 46, note 25.
[75] See von Mücke, p. 46.

sensorial perceptions it evokes is distinctly and clearly elaborated by one of Burke's contemporaries:

The state of our soul is one thing, the account we give of it to ourselves or others is another thing. On the one hand, there is the total and instantaneous sensation of this state; on the other hand, there is the successive and detailed attention we must give to this state in order to analyze it, to express it, and to understand it. Our soul is a moving picture after which we continuously paint: it takes us quite some time to render it with some degree of fidelity, but it exists in its entirety and all at once: the mind does not proceed step by step like verbal expression. (qtd. in von Mücke, 46)

The totality and directness of an immediate perception of the world is privileged over the figured actions of communication, either verbal expression or imagistic imitation, both of which set up conditions for "objectivity" and "abstraction" in the sense of personal disengagement or distancing. Actions of communication through writing coordinate with the modern consciousness deeply conditioned by literacy and print, and they are entirely different from what Jack Goody and Ian Watt call "direct semantic ratification" (1968, 29) by the real-life situations in which the word is used here and now[76]. Terry Eagleton argues that the distinction that the term "aesthetics" initially enforces in the mid-eighteenth century "between the material and the immaterial: between things and thoughts, sensations and ideas" remains "that which is bound up with our creaturely life as opposed to that which conducts some shadowy existence in the recesses of the mind" (Eagleton, 1990 13). Here in the Burkean scenario, the distinction seems to be a rehearsal of the romantic division between the physical as the organic, living, and feeling substance, and the material as the inert, dead, or mechanical[77]. Immanuel Kant, the German

[76] Also see Water J. Ong (1982), p. 46.
[77] See Arthur O. Lovejoy's classic essay, "On the Discrimination of Romanticisms."

philosopher contemporary with Burke, defines this point more explicitly in Part I, Book II of the *Critique of Judgment*: "Beauty is concerned with limited objects, with forms; the sublime is to be found in objects that are limitless, that have no form, though they are always accompanied with a 'super-thought' of totality" (qtd. in Monk, 6). Thus, aesthetics could be taken as an instance of the body economy of presence, or what Giorgio Agamben calls "apparatus," a concept with its evolution from the Greek *oikonomia* that Agamben extends from that of Michel Foucault:

> [L]iterally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings. Not only, therefore, prisons, madhouses, the panopticon, schools, confession, factories, disciplines, juridical measures, and so forth (whose connection with power is in a certain sense evident), but also the pen, writing, literature, philosophy, agriculture, cigarettes, navigation, computers, cellular telephones and –why not—language itself, which is perhaps the most ancient of apparatuses—one in which thousands and thousands of years ago a primate inadvertently let himself be captured, probably without realizing the consequences that he was about to face. (Agamben, 2009 14)

This celebrated somatic aesthetic, as an apparatus of the body and feeling, could be spectacular or theatrical, but its aesthetic preference is primarily that of "immediacy" and "authenticity" in the primeval moment of communicating sentiments before the coming of the modern textual culture.

1. iv. Sentiment, Immediacy, and *Ekphrasis*

Burke assigns this reliance on feeling—"the contagion of our passions," as a means of somatic communication—is as the "business" of poetry and rhetoric, which is "to affect rather by sympathy than imitation; to display rather the effect of things on the mind of the *speaker* [*emphasis mine*], or of others, than to present a clear idea of the things themselves" (Burke 172). This preoccupation with emotions as an aesthetic and epistemological question was widely addressed by theorists in the mid-eighteenth century[78]. For instance, Lord Kames states that "by a good tragedy, all the social passions are excited," and passions arise "from that eminent principle of sympathy, which is the cement of human society[79]." What is specific in Burke's aesthetics is an emphasis upon an auditory and tactile immediacy, suggested by "a fire kindled" "by the contagion of our passions." This somatic presence of bodily sentiment as a medium of communication remains antagonistic to visual mimesis and its consequences in sensorial formation, the latter of which, as argued through this dissertation, dovetails with a rising modern textual culture and deserves a very significant position in discussions of western perceptual modernity[80]. For Burke, poetry and rhetoric are superior to painting, which, as a very *visual* medium, can "succeed in exact description" (Burke 172) and "imitation" through presenting "a clear idea of the things themselves" to its visual spectators. Poetry and rhetoric are more oral and acoustic media, and invoke more of a sense of immediacy and presence. They address an English audience before the coming of ideas, signs, and styles which establish and cross new cultural and social boundaries. This suggests a cultural moment in the mid-eighteenth-century

[78] See Samuel H. Monk, p. 28. See also Adela Pinch, pp. 1-16.
[79] Lord Kames, *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*, pp. 12, 16. Quoted from James Averill, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, p. 134.
[80] For a genealogical history of the rise of visuality in the West, see Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the 19th Century*.

Britain when a "reading public" in the modern sense is not formed yet. It is not until the late eighteenth century that a confusing, unsettled world of reading and writing is ushered in[81].

David Wellbery elaborates very well the difference between painting and poetry as two different media in his investigation upon Lessing's *Laocoön* (1766):

The signs of painting are motivated both materially and formally. Their spatial structure corresponds to the spatial structure of the corporeal object represented and the individual signs duplicate the material nature of that object insofar as they are solid, colored and fully determined as material things. The motivation of poetic signs, however, is only formal. The sign vehicles bear no similarity to the action-referent except as regards their successivity. The poem replicates only the form of perception, not its content. Poetry is a natural sign only because its signs present themselves to the reader in the same successive form as would the action itself. Poetry, therefore, maintains the advantages provided by its more advanced stage of semiosis; its individual signs remain arbitrary. The distinguishing feature of poetry is that it recovers for language the form of intuitive presence because the poem as a whole attains to the status of a natural sign. (Wellbery, 1984 236-37)

The difference between these two generic conventions is that between a natural sign and an arbitrary sign. It is distinguished by "the manner in which signifier and signified are related" (von Mücke 14). Dorothea von Mücke suggests as follows: "Whereas for the arbitrary sign the two are merely yoked together by convention, the signifier of a natural sign is informed by the signified" (von Mücke 14). The notion of "the poem as a whole" and poetry as a natural sign immediately raises the issue of textual mediation of perception. It suggests that through poetry, an immediate presence would be presented, and a quasi-immediate access to the "natural" world would be established. It is in the same way exactly that Burke organizes the socializing function

[81] See Jon P. Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832.*

of aesthetics into an *immediate* and *affective* economy. This could be labeled as an "anti-theatrical transparency or immediacy," a pattern of perception not irrelevant to Burke's puritanical background[82].

A historical investigation into the political connotation of the word "immediacy" and the historical world in which it once worked would suggest an interesting understanding of further layers of power and control in the history of mediation. In this conception, "immediacy" describes the condition of the relationship of a person who is subject to a power superior to her. Existing primarily in the feudal context of medieval Europe, "immediacy" describes the essentially binding relationship of the tenant to the landlord, or the vassal to the sovereign: "In *Feudal* language, said of the relation between two persons one of whom holds of the other directly, as in *immediate lord, tenant, tenure*"[83]. The understanding of "immediacy" in such a manner fades out of the lexicon in direct correlation to the political diminishment of the feudal "holding" of a person within one's power. Yet this leads to a political economy reading of the human sensorial orientation in general. J. F. Suter argues that Burke

> develops an interesting dialectic between talent and property, between those who have nothing apart from their native gifts and natural ability (lawyers, doctors, traders, writers) and those whose influence in the sate comes from inherited wealth (aristocrats, squires, clergymen). (Suter 63)

For Burke, property is a "sluggish, inert, and timid" principle. It must predominate in the state, and it must be protected from the "invasions" of that "vigorous and active" principle of ability. Burke thinks that the "solid substance of land" (qtd. in Suter 63) must "counterpoise the superior skill and vigour of the burghers" (Suter 63). Suter argues that "Burke's idea of 'a natural and

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[82] For a puritanical tradition of the anti-theatrical prejudice, see Jonas Barish's *The Antitheatrical Prejudice*, especially chapters IV, V and VI.
[83] *OED*, "Intermediate, " Definition A1b. Accessed on August 10th, 2011.

just order' maintained by a 'chain of subordination' between the landlord, the farmer and the laborer is still that of a predominantly feudal society, based on the 'natural' production of the land" (Suter 71). For Baumgarten, aesthetics is the sister of logic, a kind of *ratio inferior* or feminine analogue of reason at the lower level of sensational life. Burke takes this feminine analogue of the sublime as constitutive of the autonomy of culture and society as an expressive or organic totality. In his aesthetic theory, the intuitive dogmatism of imagination, the priority of local affections and unarguable allegiances, and the incontrovertible character of "immediate" experience all work for a discourse in which history is a spontaneous growth impervious to rational analysis[84]. Then, the questions become: What kind of politics of psycho-physiology does this imply? How to reorient this aesthetic and critical speculation on the sublime in eighteenth century Britain in relation to a history of feelings in mediation? What is its significance to an (anti-)theatrical construct of selfhood that has been distributed and disseminated in western affective modernity? These are the questions that I try to address through setting up a triptych of aesthetics (as a psycho-physiology of the intelligible and the sensible), politics (in its relation to aesthetics), and a historical development of the print as a media or *techne* (or more or less, as a technology of self in the Foucauldian sense)[85].

The very possibility of affective dispersal has indeed become a significant aesthetic concern of Burke's. The attitudes of suspicion and hostility he holds toward "verbal description" or "naked description" in a rhetoric of affective communications is a reaction against the very notion of *ut pictura poesis* ("as a painting, so also a poem"), the practice of which by the mid-

[84] These are the forms, identified by Terry Eagleton, in which the aesthetic becomes a weapon in the hands of political reactionaries, a pattern recognizable through Burke and Coleridge to Matthew Arnold and T. S. Eliot, see Terry Eagleton (1990), pp. 16, and 60.
[85] This follows a methodology of recent media studies, as outlined by W. J. T. Mitchell and Mark Hansen in their "Introduction" to *Critical Terms for Media Studies* (2010).

eighteenth century had been established for more than a hundred years as a dogma of criticism[86]. This sentiment holds a relation to what W. J. T. Mitchell defines as "institutions of the visible" (visual arts, visual media, practices of display and spectation) and "institutions of the verbal" (literature, language, discourse, practices of speech and writing, audition and reading)[87]. A contemporary of Burke's, Lessing shares this sentiment in his *Laocoön* (1766). It is a sentiment against *ekphrasis*, which is the verbal representation of visual representation[88]. In Lessing's aesthetic polemic, it is "prescribed as a law to all poets" that "they should not regard the limitations of painting as beauties in their own art." For poets, to "employ the same artistic machinery" as the painter does would be to "convert a superior being into a doll." It would make as much sense, argues Lessing, "as if a man, with the power and privilege of speech, were to employ the signs which the mutes in a Turkish seraglio had invented to supply the want of a voice" (qtd. in Mitchell, 1994 154-55). W. J. T. Mitchell takes this phobia of Lessing's regarding literary emulation of the visual arts as "not only of muteness or loss of eloquence, but of castration, a threat which is re-echoed in the transformation from 'superior being' to 'doll,' a mere feminine plaything" (Mitchell 1994, 155). Mitchell elaborates this ekphrastic fear of free exchange, transference, and reciprocity between visual and verbal art as a phobia of "a dangerous promiscuity" and an attempt to "regulate the borders with firm distinctions between the senses, modes of representation, and the objects proper to each" (Mitchell 1994, 155). For Burke, it is a defensive stance taken to maintain the pure English sense of custom, manners, tradition and sensibility through the technique of *immediacy* of feelings.

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[86] See Roy Park, p. 155.
[87] See W. J. T. Mitchell, "Word and Image," pp.49
[88] See W. J. T. Mitchell, "Ekphrasis and the Other." Also see James Heffernan's article, "Ekphrasis and Representation," and Heffernan's *The Museum of Words: The Poetics of Ekphrasis from Homer to Ashbery*.

I. v. Print, communication of feelings, and reformulation of sympathy

If print in Burke and Condorcet's time was still an art, "in the special sense of being a highly skilled craft or what was called a mechanical art" (Guillory 325), the Burkean reign of rhetoric or oratory may be situated in a historical context in which speech and rhetoric still dominated the most important social venues of communication. It remains arguable whether rhetorical hermeneutics are adequate to support a history of communication, and whether a communication concept as an explicit challenge to the system of rhetoric emerged in early modernity[89]. Discontent with rhetoric became discernible in the seventeenth century, nevertheless. John Guillory argues in his seminal essay that such a discontent "produced the first attempts to advance a different concept for the goal of speech, a concept we now know as communication"[90]. The way Burke configures aesthetics is in the middle of this reorientation of language toward the goal of communication as a pressure of the print medium on the conceptualization of writing. It suggests a changing figuration of what Foucault reformulates notions of state and power as– "governmentality"– in early western modernity as well. Significant to governmentality is the operation of "biopower," or "a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, or destroying them" (Foucault 1990, 136). Amit S. Rai explains that it is a new permutation of modalities of practices, discourses, sentiments, and disciplines, which is much more than "policing"—"that far-flung apparatus of normalization which tied together as widely disparate phenomena as hygiene boards, and evangelical missions" (Rai 62). This Foucauldian conceptualization of the

[89] See John Guillory, pp 327; also see Alan G. Gross and William M. Keith, *Rhetorical Hermeneutics: Invention and Interpretation in the Age of Science*; and Wilbur Samuel Howell, *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric*.
[90] Also see Walter J. Ong's book *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason*.

modern technology of self seems significant when understanding the Burkean aesthetics in relation to "persuasion, communication, means, medium, media, mediation, representation," which is a linked set of evolving terms that John Guillory uses to chart the reorientation of language toward the goal of communication in the early modern genesis of the media concept (Guillory 326). Its historical predecessors include aesthetics the way Terry Eagleton declares "born as a discourse of the body" in the eighteenth century, or as "the distribution of the sensible," the way Jacques Rancière puts it[91]. In *The Order of Things*, Foucault outlines the paradigmatic shift from resemblance to representation in the knowledge of Western culture from the end of the sixteenth century. He puts forward such a shift as significant to and simultaneous to the rise of modern western governmentality, in which sympathy is taken as one of the four essential "forms of resemblance" at the moment when "resemblance was about to relinquish its relation with knowledge and disappear, in part at least, from the sphere of cognition" (Foucault 1970, 17). For Foucault, sympathy

> excites the things of the world to movement and can draw even the most distant of them together. It is a principle of mobility: it attracts what is heavy to the heaviness of the earth, what is light up towards the weightless ether; it drives the root towards the water, and it makes the great yellow disk of the sunflower turn to follow the curving path of the sun. Moreover, by drawing things towards one another in an exterior and visible movement, it also gives rise to a hidden interior movement—a displacement of qualities that take over from one another in a series of relays… Sympathy is an instance of the *Same* so strong and so insistent that it will not rest content to be merely one of the forms of likeness; it has the dangerous power of *assimilating*, of rendering things identical to one another, of mingling them, of causing their individuality to disappear—and thus of rendering them foreign to

[91] See Jacques Rancière *The Politics of Aesthetic: The Distribution of the Sensible*.

> what they were before. Sympathy transforms. It alters, but in the direction of identity, so that if its power were not counter-balanced it would reduce the world to a point, to a homogeneous mass, to the featureless form of the Same: all its parts would hold together and communicate with one another without a break, with no distance between them, like those metal chains held suspended by sympathy to the attraction of a single magnet. (Foucault 1970, 23-4)

Foucault defines this form of resemblance in early modern Europe not through chemistry, nor biology, but through physics: to excite, to mobilize, to assimilate, and to homogenize. Foucault illustrates it is a form of knowledge from a science of mechanics and thermodynamics:

> [F]ire, because it is warm and light, rises up into the air, towards which its flames untiringly strive; but in doing so it loses its dryness (which made it akin to the earth) and so acquires humidity (which links it to water and air); it disappears therefore into light vapour, into blue smoke, into clouds: it become air. (Foucault 1970, 23)

It is descriptive of the classical world, where the world is linked together like a chain where figures of knowledge are organized by articulations of the semantic web of resemblance like *convenientia, aemulatio, analog* and *sympathies*[92]. Their primary concern is similar to "the two principal cases of attractions" covered in Book I of Newton's *Principia*, namely, the question of action at a distance. R. W. Home puts it in this way: "[O]scillatory motions brought about by forces varying directly as the distance between two bodies, and motions in conical orbits brought about by forces varying inversely as the square of the distance" (Home 360). It is more of the nonhuman realm of what Wordsworth called "rocks, and stones, and trees"[93], and all the rest—the earth, the oceans, the atmosphere, the planets, and stars in their courses. In the British

[92] See Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp. 17-44.
[93] See Wordsworth's "A slumber did my spirit seal," in *Romanticism: An Anthology* (Ed. by Duncan Wu), p. 478.

context, the science of man—the human realm—"may not have had an influence on the manifold aspects of routine daily life until the mid eighteenth century" (Rousseau 145), which began to be dealt with in John Locke's *Essay* published in 1690. Decades ago, Northrop Frye[94] famously defined the mid and late eighteenth century as an "Age of Sensibility." Extravagant feelings, emotions, sentiments and epistemologies of them were proliferated by the production of various "sets of physiological texts" (Rousseau 143). It includes the eighteenth-century schools of Scottish morality, English empirical philosophy, and even French ethical thought. Out of such a historical context, Burke's aesthetics of the sublime and the beautiful proposes an approach to the study of man by means of a theory of sensory perception and a theory of knowledge, which directly form his understanding of the physiology and psychology of perception. Instead of taking "beauty, sublimity, taste, imagination, and the picturesque" merely as "the most important ideas" in eighteenth-century England, as Samuel H. Monk's classic study on the sublime did, this dissertation outlines a genealogy of the politics of the body in mediation.

It is, therefore, not fortuitous, nor anomalous that sympathy and liberal sentiment emerged in the eighteenth century at precisely the moment that Foucault locates the rise of governmentality. As Amit S. Rai writes:

> [I]ndeed, discipline was enabled by, and security legitimized through sympathy for the other—the poor, the heathen, criminals, delinquents, deviants, prostitutes, slaves, colonial subjects, and the insane were to be sympathized with, and their condition ameliorated. In other words, sympathy was central in making the other proper to the self, and so a way of habituating the self to propriety. (Rai 62)

94 See Northrop Frye "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility." Also see R. F. Brissenden, *Virtue in Distress: Studies in the Novel of Sentiment from Richardson to Sade*.

Mobility of affinity between things is transferred upon that of sensibility, cognate with the proliferation of feelings. It seems that, in the eighteenth century, sympathy, a European concept primarily about "(real or supposed) affinity between certain things, by virtue of which they are similarly or correspondingly affected by the same influence, affect or influence each other (esp. in some occult way), or attract or tend toward each other", becomes more on "relation between two bodily organs or parts such that disorder, or any condition, of the one induces a corresponding condition in the other"[95]. For Burke, it

> must be considered as a sort of substitution, by which we are put into the place of another man, and affected in my respects as he is affected; so that this passion may either partake of the nature of those which regard self-preservation, and turning upon pain may be a source of the sublime; or it may turn upon ideas of pleasure; and then, whatever has been said of the social affections, whether they regard society in general, or only some particular modes of it, may be applicable here. (Burke 44)

The physical becomes the social. Affinity changes to substitution. This means of affective mediation, one of the three principal links in "the great chain of society" (Burke 44), is taken as having the nature of self-preservation. It invokes in the mind pain, sickness, death, and strong emotions of horror. This source of the sublime is an aesthetics of feelings deployed by Burke to establish some specific form of emotional sociality. Through "this principle chiefly that poetry, painting, and other affecting arts, transfuse their passions from one breast to another" (Burke 44), physical objects are connected to mental and psychological states. In one place, he quotes this "curious story of the celebrated physiognomist Campanella" from a "Mr. Spon, in his *Récherches d' Antiquité*":

[95] See *OED* "sympathy" online. Accessed on August 10th, 2011.

> This man, it seems, had not only made very accurate observations on human faces, but was very expert in mimicking such as were any way remarkable. When he had a mind to penetrate into the inclinations of those he had to deal with, he composed his face, his gesture, and his whole body, as nearly as he could into the exact similitude of the person he intended to examine; and then carefully observed what turn of mind he seemed to acquire by this change. So that, says my author, he was able to enter into the dispositions and thoughts of people as effectually as if he had been changed into the very men…Our minds and bodies are so closely and intimately connected, that one is incapable of pain or pleasure without the other. Campanella, of whom we have been speaking, could so abstract his attention from any sufferings of his body, that he was able to endure the rack itself without much pain; and in lesser pains everybody must have observed, that, when we can employ our attention on anything else, the pain has been for a time suspended: on the other hand, if by any means the body is indisposed to perform such gestures, or to be stimulated into such emotions, as any passion usually produces in it, that passion itself never can arise, though its cause should be never so strongly in action; though it should be merely mental, and immediately affecting none of the senses. (Burke 133)[96]

Contrary to the expressive mode of emotions that internalizes feelings[97] and emphasizes inner feelings as the ultimate motivation for external expressive behavior[98], the dissemination of the

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[96] For a brief cultural history of English, and an account of Campanella's discoveries and their relation to Bacon, Hobbes, John Bulwer and the arch-enemy of the English stage, William Prynne, see Jean-Christophe Agnew, *Worlds Apart*, pp. 95-6.

[97] And "this process of internalization *fabricates the distinction between interior and exterior life*, offering us a distinction between the psychic and the social that differs significantly from an account of the psychic internalization of norms" (Butler 19), as Judith Butler suggests in *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*.

[98] Which was popular in nineteenth-century psychology (as adopted by Stanislavski's dramaturgical theory)—part of what the writing presented as work, as institution and practice, pre-mediates through the long eighteenth century, as I argue through the current writing. In the 1920s Soviet Union, the popularity of the Stanislavski system was

Campanella case in that historical period[99] suggests the popularity of the circumstantial mode of emotions: human feelings and emotions[100] not internalized yet. The physiological and psychological inward turn of interiority was not in its place until the saturation of textual signs and the literary culture it produced were simultaneous. This passage on an economy of the exteriority of emotions, and how Campanella takes it as a theatrical performance, again confirms that Burke's episteme of writing is situated more in an early modern rhetoric. It is also important to bear in mind that Burke prescribes an ordering of these "affecting arts."

I.vi. Tradition, Class, and Sympathy for the Other

Here is another example of ways Burke prescribes for the ordering of these "affecting arts." This is from a section entitled "Examples that WORDS may affect without raising IMAGES:"

> Here is not one word said of the particulars of her beauty; no thing which can in the least help us to any precise idea of her person; but yet we are much more touched by this manner of mentioning her than by these long and labored descriptions of Helen, whether handed down by tradition, or formed by fancy, which are to be met with in some authors. (Burke 172)

The parsimony in verbal descriptions is counterbalanced through the dismissive mentioning of Homer. "Tradition" or "fancy" are obtainable through access to the classical "long and labored

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challenged by Vsevolod Meyerhold, who developed biomechanical acting as an actor's training techniques by synthesizing behaviorist psychology, Taylorist motion economy, and Soviet theories of kinetics to treat the external gestures, movements, and expressions as stimuli to induce certain feelings and emotions—thus emotion is an effect of physical actions to be experienced externally. See Alma Law and Mel Gordon, *Meyerhold, Eisenstein and Biomechanics: Actor Training in Revolutionary Russia*, pp. 33-43. This came to me through an excellent study by Bao Weihong on the application of Meyerhold's theory by Tsai Ming-liang in his films, see Bao Weihong, "Biomechanics of Love: Reinventing the Avant-garde in Tsai Ming-liang's Wayward 'Pornographic Musical.'"

[99] See also Jean-Christophe Agnew, *Worlds Apart*, pp. 94-5.

[100] I don't invoke a strict distinction between words like *emotion, feeling, passion*, a thorough discussion of which can be found in Thomas Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category*.

descriptions of Helen," the study of which is open only to "such people rather than 'proletarians' who spoke and write a type of educated language," as art historian Ernest Gombrich observes (Gombrich 10). Or like Burke himself, who had chances to adore the queen *in person*:

> It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in, --glittering like the morning-star, full of life, and splendor, and joy. (Burke 1890, 84)

This explains why the "contagion of passions," the transfusion of "passions from one breast to another" "often capable of grafting a delight on wretchedness, misery, and death itself"—which are the sources of the sublime—are either classical or empirical. The beggars in the eighteenth century London streets, whose activity remained illegal and subject to a wide range of punishments[101], probably would not have an affective and epistemological existence. It is similar to the relational economy of shame in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, in which a slave is merely a vehicle of emotion, but not an origin or end[102]. They may be among those subjects sympathized with, through whose distresses one obtains a sense of delight:

> [T]here is no spectacle we so eagerly pursue, as that of the uncommon and grievous calamity. The delight we have in such things, hinders us from shunning scenes of misery; and the pain we feel, prompts us to relieve ourselves in relieving those who suffer. (Burke 46)

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101 See Nicholas Rogers, "Policing the Poor in Eighteenth-Century London: The Vagrancy Laws and Their Administration."

[102] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1384a22-36. See Daniel M. Gross, *The Secret History of Emotion*, pp. 39-43.

This touches upon an important trope in eighteenth century aesthetics, which is the relation of the sublime to the pathetic[103]. It is also significantly reflected in the relation Burke establishes between self-preservation, pain, and the sublime:

> Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling…. When danger or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful, as we every day experience. (Burke 39-40)

For Burke, pain and danger, sickness and death are ideas that give rise to the strongest passions—of which we are capable—and can be a source of pleasure leading to the sublime. If the keystone of Burke's aesthetic is emotion, terror would be the foundation of his theory of the sublime. It is significant to observe that it was Burke

> who converted the early taste for terror into an aesthetic system and who passed it on with great emphasis to the last decades of the century, during which it was used and enjoyed in literature, painting, and the appreciation of natural scenery. (Monk 1960, 87)[104]

This aesthetic theory is not upon complete sympathetic *substitution*. Instead, distance is necessary to ensure an imaginative bridging of it through a sympathetic positioning—the

[103] See Monk's *The Sublime*, pp. 43-83.
[104] For instance, see *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom* by Tobias George Smollett, part 1.

double movement of the gaze of sympathetic power—that repeats and adapts the effective paradox of a sympathetic relation[105]. As Steven Bruhm argues:

> The history of pain… is in many ways a history of looking; it is a narrative of watching a pained object while occupying a contradictory space both within and outside the object. And within that narrative is a multitude of discourses that mediate the way a culture, or indeed an individual, experiences pain at any given time or place. (Bruhm xx)

It is in this way that Burke, in an instance that has achieved a certain currency lately, exemplifies a morbid celebration of England and Englishness:

> Perhpaps it may appear on inquiry that blackness and darkness are in some degree painful by their natural operation, independent of any associations whatsoever. I must observe, that the ideas of darkness and blackness are much the same; and they differ only in this, that blackness is a more confined idea. Mr. Cheselden has given us a very curious story of a boy, who had been born blind, and continued so until he was thirteen or fourteen years old; he was then couched for a cataract, by which operation he received his sight. Among many remarkable particulars that attended his first perceptions and judgments on visual objects, it gave him great uneasiness; and that some time after, upon accidentally seeing a negro woman, he was struck with great horror at the sight. The horror, in this case, can scarcely be supposed to arise from any association. The boy appears by the account to have been particularly observing and sensible for one of his age; and therefore it is probable, if the great uneasiness he felt at the first sight of black had arisen from its connexion with any other disagreeable ideas, he would have observed and mentioned it. (Burke 144)

[105] Also see Amit S. Rai, p. 73.

Blackness is associated with darkness, which creates an "independent" occasion of distancing and experiencing gothic horror[106]. E. J. Clery finds an interesting instance of the later eighteenth century gothic horror, which is Horace Walpole's enormous armored hand blocking the passage up the staircase. In that scene, the "dead hand of the past weighing on the present" would be "embodied" in the figures of spirits and supernatural forces, which haunt the living[107]. A parallel case in Burke is this cataract example which offers a relation to aesthetic distance and spectacle through a racially and gendered "other" which haunts English perceptions and judgments of visual objects. It is a figurative expression of an English sense of power in (im)possibility of sympathy.

I.vii. Empiricism, Physiological Effect of Sensibility, and Anti-pictorial Narration

In the Preface to the first edition of the *Enquiry*, Burke writes that the confusion in aesthetic ideas could be remedied only by

> a diligent examination of our passions in our own breasts; from a careful survey of the properties of things which we find by experience to influence those passions; and from a sober and attentive investigation of the laws of nature, by which those properties are capable of affecting the body, and thus of exciting our passions. (Burke 1)

Aesthetics is, rather, an economy of psychological affect and physiological effect with which Burke can correct the confusion and ambiguity of discussions of beauty and sublimity, which is the primary reason why the young Burke undertook his investigation of the subject[108]. It is also empirically based, as J. T. Boulton observes in the stylistic symptoms of Burke's general

[106] Also see Paul Gilroy, "Cultural Studies and Ethnic Absolutism."
[107] E. J. Clery, Introduction, in Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto, A Gothic Story*, pp. xxxi-xxxii.
[108] See Samuel H. Monk, p. 85.

approach: “I have more than once observed… From hence I conclude”; “This I know only by conjecture … but I have since experienced it”; “I have heard some ladies remark” (Boulton xvii). At another place Burke states: “When we go but one step beyond the immediate sensible qualities of things, we go out of our depth” (Burke 129-30). No wonder Samuel H. Monk would attribute an immense amount of speculation on aesthetic questions in the eighteenth century throughout Europe to “the emphasis which empiricism had placed on sensation” (Monk 1), which is significant as Burke’s *Enquiry* remains as an eighteenth century archive. David Wellbery argues that by the 1730s the new discipline of aesthetics began to displace the traditional discipline of rhetoric:

> In one and the same movement, art becomes the subject matter of theory and aesthetic experience is transformed into something that takes place between subjects and their representations, without the mediation of inherited bodies of erudition and independently of a locally defined cultural site. (Wellbery 232)

If we follow this historical argument, Burke’s (and general British) empirical inclination for the “the inherited bodies of erudition” and “locally defined cultural site” requisite for the traditional discipline of rhetoric were to be replaced by a new paradigm of relations between subjects and their representations. That is manifest through the emergence of modern aesthetics. Nevertheless, claimed as “a distinct knowledge of our passions”(Burke 129), such an esoteric and “classy” communication of affective message is inclined to keep its organization away from exchangeability, suggestive of an obdurate inclination of Burke’s conservatism that may possibly lead to a solipsist, private, and absorbed myth of aesthetics. This emphasis of Burke’s upon the local and personal, and his having a stake in “our passions in our own breasts” in an argument on

the aesthetics of sympathy, reminds that its etymology and predominant meaning is about to change mid century.

In the eighteenth century, this empirical reformulation of passions, specifically sympathy, was part of the medicine discourse on "sensibility" in a physiological sense. Physicians began to have concepts of "sensibility" as "the coordinating principle of bodily integrity, providing the basis for the overall integration of the body function" (Ellis 19). Christopher Lawrence argues that, from this framework, sympathy "was no more than the communication of feeling between different bodily organs, manifested by functional disturbance of one organ when another was stimulated" (qtd. in Ellis 19). Steven Bruhm, another critic, draws a similar argument:

> What comes to be valorized by late eighteenth-century moralists as 'sympathy,' then, is physiologically based. Galenic medicine had discussed sympathy, but only as the product of moving humours throughout the body. (12)[109]

The Scottish physician Robert Whytt wrote in his *Essay on the Vital and Other Voluntary Motions of Animals* (1751) that nerves "are endued with feeling, and … there is a general *sympathy* which prevails through the whole system; so there is a particular and very remarkable *consent* between various parts of the body" (italicized sic.). For him, "there is a still more wonderful sympathy between the nervous systems of different persons, when various motions and morbid symptoms are often transferred from one to another, without any corporeal contact" (qtd. in Bruhm 11, 14). This is in accordance with what Terry Eagleton declares the birth of modern aesthetic "as a discourse of the body" (13) during the eighteenth century. The early formulation of the concept in the work of the German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten (in his *Aesthetica* [1750]) referred primarily not to art, but "to the whole region of human perception and sensation, in contrast to the more rarefied domain of conceptual thought" (Eagleton, 1990

[109] Also see John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century*.

13). In other words, what aesthetics initially enforces is not between art and life, but "the material and the immaterial," "things and thoughts, sensations and ideas" (Burke 13). The phrasing Burke uses to address this "remarkable *consent* between various parts of the body" is a "general agreement" or "clear concurrence of all" (Burke 123) the senses. In a section on the beautiful in feeling, Burke writes: "There is a chain in all our sensations; they are all but different sorts of feeling, calculated to be affected by various sorts of objections, but all to be affected after the same manner" (Burke 120). In the same section, this sympathy between different bodily organs and senses is called "a similitude in the pleasures of these senses," which exists "if it were possible that one might discern colour by feeling, (as it is said some blind men have done) that the same colours, and the same disposition of colouring, which are found beautiful to the sight, would be found likewise most grateful to the touch" (Burke 121).

Nevertheless, Burke's formula of the unity of perception could not be more different than that sense of "tactile, synaesthetic quality" (Mitchell 1978, 59) that the quaint romantic William Blake restores to pictorial form. W. J. T. Mitchell argues that in a history between oral, illustration, and writing, Blake's significance is his emphasis of "the nonvisual sensations of heat, cold, wetness, dryness, hardness, and softness rather than the sensory alienation of visual distance" (Mitchell 1978, 60)[110]. This remains almost completely contrary to the classical definition of senses, which remains closer to an Aristotelian view of perception. For such a view, each of the five senses—sight, sound, hearing, taste, and touch—has a distinct and proper sphere of activity[111]. It is anything but the production of an associated mental image of a sense impression of one kind from a sense impression of another. Burke follows a separation of senses so as to make sympathy in between them work:

[110] Also see Marshall McLuhan in his *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, pp. 265-66.
[111] See John Gage, "Synaesthesia."

> The touch takes in the pleasure of softness, which is not primarily an object of sight; the sight on the other hand comprehends colour, which can hardly be made perceptible to the touch; the touch again has the advantage in a new idea of pleasure resulting from a moderate degree of warmth; but the eye triumphs in the infinite extent and multiplicity of its objects. (Burke 121)

This separated economy of senses is one means by which Burke makes a hierarchical ordering of perceptions and feelings, including the inter-subjective fellow feeling of sympathy. No wonder William Blake, who consistently associates his art of writing with a synesthetic spectacle that "the eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report" (qtd. in Mitchell, 1978 149) in the "age of paper[112]," was to feel "Contempt and Abhorrence" (qtd. in Monk 96) for Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry*. What is at stake for Burke seems to be the production of "experience, custom, tradition, and habit" (Mitchell, 1986 136) through a physiological ecology of sound:

> When the ear receives any simple sound, it is struck by a single pulse of the air, which makes the ear-drum and the other membranous parts vibrate according to the nature and species of the stroke. If the stroke be strong, the organ of hearing suffers a considerable degree of tension… The tension of the part thus increasing at every blow, by the united forces of the stroke itself, the expectation, and the surprise; it is worked up to such a pitch as to be capable of the sublime; it is brought just to the verge of pain. (Burke 140)

This economy of sound regarding aesthetics of the body runs against that of the proliferation of words in the "age of paper," which, with its graphic form of mechanical print, increases the rupturing between different sensory structures.

Regarding our contemporary media paradigm shift, Jacque Derrida writes:

[112] See W. J. T. Mitchell, "Visible Language: Blake's Art of Writing," in his *Picture Theory*, pp.111-50.

> What is happening to paper at present, namely what we perceive at least as a sort of ongoing decline or withdrawal, an ebb or rhythm as yet unforeseeable… remind[s] us that paper has a history that is brief but complex, a technological or material history, a symbol history of projections and interpretations, a history tangled up with the invention of the human body and of hominization. (Derrida 2005, 43)

This chapter focuses on the origin of modern aesthetic and its sentimental economy upon the body. It is an attempt to outline a genealogy of the historical tangle by working with what G. S. Rousseau calls "physiological texts" and with some texts "*physiologically*". Regarding the poetic economy or the mentality of the West, Water J. Ong observes acutely:

> By removing words from the world of sound where they had first had their origin in active human interchange and relegating them definitively to visual surface, and by otherwise exploiting visual space for the management of knowledge, print encouraged human beings to think of their own interior conscious and unconscious resources as more and more think-like, impersonal and religiously neutral. Print encouraged the mind to sense that its possessions were held in some sort of inert mental space. (Ong 1982, 129)

Burke devises an acoustic affective dimension of communication to run against this *visualizing* property of words that appears as an emergent form of mediation relevant to an increasing consumption of textuality[113]. This is especially the case when words are deployed to verbalize images, to create exact descriptions and imitations, and thus to increase means of communicating human sensorium. Description may be thought of as the moment in narration when the technology of memory—and what is to be memorized: "experience, custom, tradition, and habit"— threatens to collapse into the materiality of its means. Description typically "stops" or

[113] See Walter J. Ong, 1982, pp. 120. This is something impossible to realize for Henry Home as suggested in the epigraph of this chapter.

arrests the temporal movement through narrative. It "spreads out the narrative in space," according to narratologist Gerard Genette[114]. W. J. T. Mitchell observes that in Burke's "antipictorial account of language," Burke embraces its effects as that being the product of "custom, habit, and acculturation" (Mitchell, 1986 138). Language, for Burke, is "primarily an oral, not a written, medium" (Mitchell, 1986 140). Verbal description, with its unbounded cornucopia of rich details, often figured as the textual site of greatest wealth, has not come to what Foucault would call a "threshold of epistemologization[115]" yet in the writings of Burke. Instead, in his scenario, language still "operates… by means of sounds which by custom have the effect of realities" (Burke 173). The ear wins over the eye in the transmission between a speaker and an audience. French narrative theorist Gerald Genette admits that the narration and description "frontier" may be nothing but a late development in the history of narrative structure. Indeed, it is a modern formation connected with *techne* of narrative in which subjectivity and privacy "establish their 'classic' relation to the public sphere" (Mitchell 1994, 204) as W. J. T. Mitchell describes it while following this argument in another context. For Burke, narration predominates over description. The "classic" extension of the private and subjective to the public and social, as suggested in histories of the rise of bourgeois social structure in the eighteenth century, has not reached its threshold of visibility yet. An amplification of the structural difference between narration and description by Genette would bring to light the political significance of Burke's aesthetics:

> Narration is concerned with actions or events considered as pure processes, and by that very fact it stresses the temporal, dramatic aspect of the narrative; description, on the other

[114] Gerard Genette, "The Frontiers of Narrative."
[115] See Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, in particular Ch. 6, "Science and Knowledge," with its elucidation of several thresholds of emergence of a "discursive formation": the thresholds of positivity, epistemologization, scientificity, and formalization (186-7). For Foucault, these are events whose dispersion is anything but evolutive, which is where his archaeological spirit lies.

> hand, because it lingers on objects and beings considered in their simultaneity, and because it considers the processes themselves as spectacles, seems to suspend the course of time and to contribute to spreading the narrative in space… narration restores, in the temporal succession of its discourse, the equally temporal succession of events, whereas description must modulate, in discursive succession, the representation of objects that are simultaneous and juxtaposed in space. (Genette 136)

Thus, the Burkean temporal continuity is over spatial simultaneity, and the narrative restoration remains above discursive modulation. Against all historical accounting, Thomas Paine is no doubt right in suggesting that

> Hard as Mr. Burke laboured the Regency Bill and hereditary succession two years ago, and much as he dived for precedents, he still had not boldness enough to bring up William Normandy, and say, *There is the head of the list, there is the fountain of honour*; the son of a prostitute and the plunderer of the English nation[116][117].

It is primarily the aural aspect of language that operates at both the individual and collective levels of realities in Burke's epistemic schema. The English "experience, custom, tradition, and habit" that Burke advocates through his politics of aesthetic is regulated by the means of narration as a speaking inscriptive mechanism. This is aesthetics of physiological embodiment to be replaced by that of abstraction regarding the way selfhood is *staged*. The theatricalized abstraction of selfhood is comparable to a reduction of human sensorium and perception to commodity and object of symbolic exchange in Adam Smith's political economy. It is

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[116] Different from Burke, Paine, in a very straightforward way, transforms America into an observable beginning for all governments: "The case and circumstances of America present themselves as in the beginning of a world; and our enquiry into the origin of government is shortened, by referring to the facts that have arisen in our own day. We have no occasion to roam for information into the obscure field of antiquity, nor hazard ourselves unto conjecture. We are brought at once to the point of seeing government begin, as if we had lived in the beginning of time. The real volume, not of history, but of facts, is directly before us, unmutilated by contrivance, or the errors of tradition" (*Rights of Man*, p. 185).

[117] Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man*, pp. 103-04.

analogous to what Hegel, a philosopher notorious for his system of abstractions, attributes to "morning prayer" in a comparison with reading:

> Reading the newspaper in early morning is a kind of realistic morning prayer. One orients one's attitude against the world and toward God [in one case], or toward that which the world is [in the other]. The former gives the same security as the latter, in that one knows where one stands. (qtd. in Buck-Morss 844)

If one takes Marshall McLuhan's definition of communication by whatever media as "participation in common situations[118]," the predominant means of participation for Burke probably still remains more that of "morning prayer" than of reading a modern newspaper. The latter of which, with its fictive and arbitrary nature, especially its "calendrical coincidence[119]," imposes the rituals of anonymous simultaneity on individuals, and thus creates collective, homogeneous identity among the larger group of numerous and scattered citizens of modern states. This is part of the theoretical arguments well developed by Benedict Anderson and Jürgen Habermas.

I. vii. Emotional immediacy: Its Fate

There is no significant critical attention from Burke on the necessity for a well-informed active citizen to retreat to internalized and solitary reading of the newspaper in order to participate in the larger, public group political process of modern society, nevertheless. It is not that modern newspapers did not appear during Burke's time. As a matter of fact, two decades

[118] McLuhan, "Notes on the Media as Art Forms" (1954), quoted in Paul Barker, "Medium Rare: With Big Brother Bestriding the Global Village, a Chance to Read What McLuhan Really Wrote," *Times Literary Supplement,* March 17, 2006, 3.
[119] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp 25, 34, 36, 39.

before Edmund Burke went to London, *The Daily Advertiser*, as the "first modern newspaper"[120], had already begun publication. It included the following notice about its contents:

> This paper will consist wholly of Advertisements, together with the Prices of Stocks, Course of Exchange, and Names and Descriptions of Persons becoming Bankrupts; as also in Alphabetical Manner a Daily Account of the Several Species and Quantities of Goods Imported into the Port of London … (qtd. in Stephens 160)[121]

Its success inspired all of London's growing number of morning dailies in the 1740s to feature such "commercial intelligence"[122]. Newspapers are believed to have encouraged the rise of public opinion and spheres of publicity in the modern sense. The public sphere this modern media helps form makes the channeling of sympathy more conveniently transferable. An extreme case exists in an investigation of reports of suicide in *Sleepless Souls* (1990), in which Michael MacDonald and Terence Murphy argue that "the style and tone of newspaper stories about suicides promoted an increasingly secular and sympathetic attitude towards self-killing" (qtd. in Briggs and Burke, 72) in eighteenth-century England. The impression was created through the frequency of the reports that suicide was a commonplace event. On the other hand, coffeehouses and clubs offer an immediate space of local conversations[123]. Conversation is a crucial term in the eighteenth century for illustrating "the flow *across* those newly reconstituted fields" of the private individual exchanges and the public ones, as Graham Burchell points out in the case of David Hume. It is "to describe the form ideally taken by the 'commerce' of … [the political culture] of opinion, the appropriate cultural form of exchanges between individuals of

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[120] See Stanley Morison, *The English Newspaper, 1622-1932*, pp. 123-51.
[121] *Daily Advertiser*, Feb. 26, 1730.
[122] Again see Stanley Morison, *The English Newspaper, 1622-1932*, pp. 123-51.
[123] The coffee houses were in their golden age between 1680 and 1730. Not only coffee, but also tea and chocolate became the common beverages of at least the well-to-do strata of the population around the middle of the seventeenth century. Specifically, by the first decade of the eighteenth century London had already 3, 000 coffee houses, each with a core group of regulars. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, p. 32.

the 'middling rank' immersed in 'common life'" (Burchell 1991, 129), and "'opinion' became emancipated from the bonds of economic dependence" (Habermas 33-34). Thus, there exists a heterogeneous system of media, which fosters different perceptual proclivities and spatialities. For instance, the dialogue form of the moral weeklies and essays published in such periodicals as *Tatler* and *Spectator*, "attested to their proximity to the spoken word" (Habermas 34). Burke, with his emphasis on the oral aspect and affective message of the language, belongs to that category of the local, immediate, personal, the coffeehouse.

What Burke's invocation of orality and affection through his local empiricism achieves is what Niklas Luhmann describes as "the impression of … immediacy" (Luhmann 8), which runs throughout Romantic poetry[124]. The human sensorium of sound is taken as means to maintain presence and immanence. During the process, for Burke, sympathy registers and communicates "realities." It is also used to identify with a sense of nationhood. At the end of his philosophical enquiry, Burke writes: "It may be observed that very polished languages, and such as are praised for their superior clearness and perspicuity, are generally deficient in strength. The French language has that perfection, and that defect" (Burke 176). Transparent mediation is taken as a polluting other–the French, who, by executing the queen, caused the collapse of "the unbought grace of life … the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise … that sensibility of principle, that charity of honor" (Burke 86). The era of sympathy, honor and chivalry is being succeeded by "that of sophisters, economists, and calculators," and "the glory of Europe is extinguished forever" (Burke 86). It is no more that of an age when "ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult" (Burke 86). "A look" at "her" would incorporate "ten thousand swords," establishing a "close-knit group" of sentiment, similar to that of the spoken word, as Walter J. Ong writes: "in its physical constitution as sound,

[124] See Celeste Langan and Maureen N. McLane, pp. 244-45.

the spoken word proceeds from the human interior and manifests human beings to one another as conscious interiors, as persons" (1982 73). Burke's aesthetic theory is an elegy of the oral rhetoric at the emergent stage of textuality. Sympathy from English, and thereby "good" Europeans, produces immediate personal tactility, the possibility of which is canceled by abstractions from "sophisters, economists, and calculators[125]"—the kind of proliferation of signs included in what Coleridge denounces as merely the "verbal truth[126]." More significantly, abstraction, as mediated through words and numbers, is aligned with the venomous sight of the revolutionary spectacle. A relation, in which face-to-face contact and immediate somatic feedback are the conditions of knightly performance, is taken away through artifactualization of words and numbers. The previous (and bygone) helps stage his feelings as immediate, natural, human and of course English[127]. "Oh! what a revolution! and what a heart must I have to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall!" (Burke 85-6), as Burke imitates an oral act of shouting with onomatopoeic exclamations, not to mention the processing consciousness of "I thought." In this act of creating an "illusion of oral mimesis"[128], im-mediation is already embedded in mediation. No wonder Mary Wollstonecraft, in her *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*, finds Burke's own feelings false when referring ironically to

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[125] Interestingly, Thomas Paine seizes upon a metaphor of Burke's—the nation as organic body—and superimposes upon it a characteristic geometric figure: "A Nation is not a body, the figure of which is to be represented by the human body, but is like a body contained within a circle, having a common centre in which every radius meets; and that centre is formed by representation. To connect representation with what is called Monarchy is eccentric Government" (*The Rights of Man*, p. 178).

[126] Coleridge makes a distinction between "verbal truth" and "moral truth:" "By *verbal* truth we mean no more than the correspondence of a given fact to given words. In *moral* truth, we moreover involve the intention of the speaker, that his words should correspond to this thought in the sense in which he expects them to be understood by others. " Coleridge, *The Friend* (1809), ed. Barbara E. Rooke, 2: 42. On the relations between Burke's historicism and Coleridge's, see James K. Chandler, *Wordsworth's Second Nature*, pp. 237-38.

[127] It is also worthy to note that Thomas Paine appeals to the same economy of sympathy in his political language, as Jon Klancher points out: "Absorbing Burke's language of 'veils,' 'mystery,' or 'pantomimical contrivance' into the symbolic surplus of monarchy, the radical writer [Thomas Paine, that is] claims for his own language a firm representative order that 'exists not by fraud and mystery; it deals not in cant and sophistry; but in spires a language that, passing from heart to heart, is felt and understood" (Klancher 110).

[128] A phrase used by Maureen N. McLane in her discussion on how James Beattie's The Minstrel published in 1771 offers a case of "print culture's solicitation and transmediation of oral materials" (McLane, 2008 32).

the "compassionate tears" he "elaborately laboured to excite." She denounces his "sentimental exclamations," his "pampered sensibility," and the sentimental nostalgia of his political vision. His feelings are not only false and regressive, they also fail where real feeling is due: "Your tears," Wollstonecraft admonishes, "are reserved … for the declamation of the theatre, or for the downfall of queens… whilst the distress of many… were vulgar sorrows that could not move your commiseration" (Wollstonecraft 2, 5, 6, 10, 27)[129].

The myth of vocal and auditory immediacy conceals the materiality of communication, such as the drop of ink, the line, the page, the brush for painting, the book, the print shop, or the cognitive activities of the brain. Voice, as the vehicle of communication and expression, is

> a medium which both preserves the *presence of the object* before intuition and *self-presence*, the absolute proximity of the [subjective] acts to themselves… The subject can hear or speak to himself and be affected by the signifier he produces, without passing through an external detour. (Derrida 75)

Derrida's argument in his *Speech and Phenomena* belongs to what he names as a "white mythology[130]." It is a fiction of transparency and presence, and it covers up an ideology of auto-affection that "has had a long, strange career in [western] philosophy" (Terada 25). Its appearance of immediacy promises self-sufficiency and self–immediacy instead of self-difference and mediation. When "consciousness processes perception under the impression of their immediacy," Niklas Luhmann writes, "… the brain is actually executing operations that are highly selective, quantitatively calculating, recursively operative" (Luhmann 8). In Burke's scenario of mediated sentiment of "immediacy," sympathy functions with technologies of orality and aurality in communication, which itself is "nothing primordial, but an impression resulting

[129] See Adela Pinch, pp. 111-12.
[130] See Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy."

from the differentiation of autopoietic systems of the brain and consciousness" (Luhmann 8). Burke's aesthetics thus covers up the processing of materiality and labor by achieving the effects of tactile presence and somatic immanence in realities. It is part and parcel of Burke's suspicion upon "the whole pictorial mode of mind that dominated the empirical tradition" (Mitchell 166), which comes to occupy a significant place in the political economy of sympathy in the philosophy of moral sentiments developed by Adam Smith, who differs from many British Romanticists[131]. It seems that from Burke's disavowal and vituperation of mediation to Smith's welcoming embrace of it into one visual and theatrical mode there exists a transitional history of mediation. What secret history of sentiment would this transition unfold? How do the moral sentiments taking on a putative life of their own help approach the so-called "Adam Smith problem," an alleged biographical rupture from a moral philosopher to a political economist? How is it metonymical of emergent distinctions of class, culture, social status, and divisions of labor, which cohabit with the collapse of the classical mode of vision and the occurrence of a specific mode of theatricality? What does it mean to our[132] everyday mode of being? These are the questions I try to address throughout this dissertation, with detours and mediations.

[131] For the antipictorial and antivisual attitudes as characteristic of Romantic criticism, see a brilliant study by Roy Park. Also see W. J. T. Mitchell, *Blake's Composite Art*, pp. 14-39. For a critique of the phonocentric tendency from a deconstructionist stance, see Jacques *Derrida's Of Grammatology* (1976) and *Writing and Difference* (1978). For the function of the pictorial mode of mind and how the British Romanticists treat it as a national difference between the English and the French, see W. J. T. Mitchell (1986), pp. 131-49, and 164-67. We will return to this topic.

[132] Not only Asian, but also Western...

Chapter II: Sentiment and Its Inward Turn: A Historical Picture

II.i. Terminology of Emotion, and Writing as Medium in the Formation of a Metaphysical Selfhood

This dissertation takes words like "emotion," "passion," "feeling," "affect," "sensibility," "sympathy," and "sentiment" as interchangeable with each other. This is done intentionally. Historically speaking, "the many names for emotion travel as freely as the emotions themselves" (Pinch 16), and these terms are almost interchangeable in eighteenth and nineteenth-century writing. For a perceptual history of the modern selfhood, which is the purpose of this writing, what these terms have in common is much more significant than what differentiates them from each other. Rei Terada in *Feeling in Theory* writes:

> Emotion... is entangled in the mysteries of consciousness, its history locked inside the classical histories of mind and will ... [and] appears inseparable from expression and subjectivity in the first place, however, its capacity to criticize subjectivity is highly revealing. (6)[133]

This subtle distinction of "emotion" from other words is significant for this writing, in which emotion and sentiment are more about the configuration of subjectivity in the history of writing as a technology. What remains at stake in this project is more the configuring sensibility in relation to a new mode of inwardness than the difference between different sentiments themselves. In other words, it is about a political economy of emotions in what Clifford Siskin and William Warner recently captured as "a history of mediation" (Siskin and Warner 5) in the

[133] For a useful brief discussion on the distinction between "emotion," "feeling," "passion," and "pathos," see Rei Terada, pp. 4-5.

western Enlightenment, specifically in the eighteenth century's investment in paper as the medium of circulation and sociality. Marshall McLuhan defines media as "extensions of man" and mediation as "the historically changing sensory and perceptual 'ratios' of human experience" (qtd. in Mitchell and Hansen xii). Following this metaphysical approach to studies of media and mediation, W. J. T. Mitchell and Mark B. N. Hansen recently named a "technoanthropological universal sense of media that allow us to range across divides (characteristically triangulated) that are normally left unbroached in media studies: society-technology-aesthetics, empirical-formal-constitutive, social-historical-experiential" (Mitchell and Hansen ix). The contribution of this dissertation is to make an investigation upon the inward creation of sentimental selfhood in the emergence of textual culture. Issues of sensibility, sentiment, emotion, feeling, and affect are examined in their specific relations to a modern print media—what Raymond Williams shorthands as "writing," which, as one form of the technological media, is "an ontological condition of humanization—the constitutive operation of exteriorization and invention" (Mitchell and Hansen, xiii). It is in this historical and theoretical sense that this dissertation takes notices of the differences between these terms but does not emphasize them unless it comes under necessary conditions[134].

In what Michel Foucault calls the "Classical age," he defines "natural history" as "nothing more than the nomination of the visible," and, during that historical period,

> what came surreptitiously into being between the age of the theatre [of the Renaissance] and that of the catalogue [of the nineteenth century] was not the desire for knowledge, but a new way of connecting things both to the eye and to discourse.
> (Foucault 1970, 132, 131)

[134] This is a stance similar to that of Rei Terada: "I try to steer a middle course between imposing a single vocabulary on all discussions of texts and giving up on terminological distinctions altogether" (Terada 4).

The eighteenth century begins to have a specifically emergent modality of the human body, which "serves as a sort of reservoir for models of visibility, and acts as a spontaneous link between what one can see and what one can say" (Foucault 1970, 135). The knowledge of the human body and psyche is composed in a whole domain of empiricity, at the same time describable and orderable in a totality of representations. In such a historical period, the naturalist Linnaeus defines natural plants as being "a product of number, of form, of proportion, of situation" (qtd. in Foucault 1970, 134). Naming and categorization of natural plants in this way is analogous to the abstract, serialized subject of the market place. In the same epistemological vein, human being also begins to assume a dimension of what Ted Cohen and Paul Guyer calls "impersonal personal" in Kant's aesthetics[135], which is emotively and performatively articulated. This current writing identifies an inward, sensualized, individuated subjectivity coming to a kind of *sensus communis* in the emergence of modern aesthetics[136]. This historical process could be examined in the theoretical light of what Samuel Weber sees in the theatrical "double, or dual, movement" in Martin Heidegger's seminal essay "The Age of the World Picture:" "[T]hat of setting things *out in front of* oneself and at the same time bringing things *toward oneself*" (Weber 1996, 78). For Heidegger, "what distinguishes the essence of modernity" (Heidegger 68) is not merely a priority given to the sense of vision. Instead, it is an "interweaving" of two processes: "[T]hat the world becomes picture and man the subject—which is decisive for the essence of modernity" and that "illuminates the founding process of modern history, a process that, at first sight, seems almost nonsensical" (Heidegger 70). It is a process as follows:

> whereby the more completely and comprehensively the world, as conquered, stands at

[135] Ted Cohen and Paul Guyer, Introduction to Cohen and Guyer (eds.), *Essays in Kant's Aesthetics*, p. 12.
[136] Indeed, this is very Kantian. See Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, chapter 3.

> man's disposal, and the more objectively the object appears, all the more subjectively (i. e. peremptorily) does the *subiectum* rise up, and all the more inexorably, too, do observations and teachings about the world transform themselves into a doctrine of man, into an anthropology. No wonder that humanism first arises where the world becomes picture. (Heidegger 70)

The increasing grid of subjectivity and inter-subjectivity, sensual, affective, and epistemological as well in this "humanism," comes through the eighteenth century with the proliferation of a textual media culture. The technology of modern writing implements an inward as well as outward theatrical turn, a turn influencing what Foucault calls "technologies of self" when modern self co-evolves with commerce, aesthetics and nationalism. This chapter gives a historical context for the discourse of sentiment in the eighteenth century and how it complicates matters like (in)visibility, intelligibility, and forms of exchangeability in "the growing fluidity of social relations[137]" of the century.

Sentimentality is often entangled with the emergence of a modern psychological self. In channeling a circulation of feelings among subjects and objects, brotherhood and otherhood[138], sentiment helps to clarify the liquidity and promiscuity of what is acknowledged as human subjects endowed with increasing inward interiority in the eighteenth century. In that century, sentiments are not yet always lodged within the private, inner lives of individual persons[139]. Rather, they often circulate among persons as somewhat autonomous substances, more as impersonal forces, sometimes contagious, and other times beneficial[140]. Therefore, it comes as

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[137] This phrase is taken from Jean-Christophe Agnew's *Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theatre in Anglo-American Thought, 1550-1750*, p. 59.
[138] A conceptual dichotomy used more in its historical sense by Benjamin Nelson in his *The Idea of Usury: From Tribal Brotherhood to Universal Otherhood*.
[139] Adela Pinch historicizes this inward turn of emotions in the century, which is inspiring for this current writing. See Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion:Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen*.
[140] Also see Pinch, p. 1.

no surprise that eighteenth-century accounts of subjectivity, for the concept of which emotion and sentiment occupy an integral part, take subjective events as particularized and observable as phenomenal events. This empirical emphasis upon observation is among what Richard Rorty describes as the rise of epistemology in the seventeenth century. For Rorty, John Locke finds that an analogue of Newton's particle mechanics for "inner space" would somehow be "of great advantage in directing our Thoughts in the search of other Things" and would somehow let us "see, what Objects our Understandings were, or were not fitted to deal with[141]." Regarding this epistemological shift, Mary Poovey observes "that the moral philosopher assumed he could conduct 'experiments' on subjectivity and that the results would simultaneously describe particular events and contribute to systematic knowledge" (Poovey 148) of universal human nature and a philosophy of government[142]. Arguing out of this affective and epistemological reference, this dissertation situates an economy of sympathy moving from "(real or supposed) affinity between certain things, by virtue of which they are similarly or correspondingly affected by the same influence, affect or influence each other (esp. in some occult way), or attract or tend toward each other" to that of being more on "relation between two bodily organs or parts such that disorder, or any condition, of the one induces a corresponding condition in the other[143]" in the middle of the eighteenth century. This genealogy of the emotional "technologies of self" is eventually to be individuated and inscribed upon an inward "psychosis[144]" at the end of the century. That economy of emotionality and interiority, in turn, pre-mediates the rise of

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[141] John Locke, *Essay* I, 1, I, and "Epistle to the Reader." For this epistemological turn in the history of modern philosophy as a discipline, see Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, chapter 3.

[142] This reminds of what Fredric Jameson argues for a "waning of affect" in our time. See Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Logic of Late Capitalism*, p. 10. Especially on page 15 through 16, when Jameson expresses willingness not "to say that the cultural products of the Postmodern era are utterly devoid of feeling, but rather that such feelings—which it may be better and more accurate, following J.-F. Lyotard, to call 'intensities'—are now free-floating and impersonal and tend to be dominated by a peculiar kind of euphoria."

[143] See *OED* online, under the entry of "sympathy."

[144] Similar to what David E. Wellbery discusses the concept of "soul" in relation to "representations" in the German aesthetic theory by Christian Wolff (1679-1754). See Wellbery, *Lessing's* Laocoon, pp. 9-42.

psychoanalysis as a rigorous human science at the end of the nineteenth century, as if out of historical necessity[145]. At the same time, like two sides of a coin, this highly emotionalized individuality requires an exchangeable political economy to maintain a new form of sociality, which includes "the nature of social identity, intentionality, accountability, transparency and reciprocity—the who, what, when, where, and why of exchange" (Agnew 9,10), as historian Jean-Christophe Agnew puts it[146]. This dissertation historicizes how *writing* as a communicative technology occupies a very significant position in this shift of interiorizing emotionalism and increasing exchangeability[147]. Whereas voice, as part of the oral culture, creates a unity in the members of the audience, silent reading—as consequential to a proliferating print media culture—makes each reader enter his or her own private inner world. As a result, it shatters the unity of the audience[148]. Modern print media helps textualize perceptions more into a visual sub-class of representations. Heidegger, Foucault, Hacking and Wellbery take representation as a fundamental category of thought in the eighteenth century[149]. Following this critical literature, this dissertation historicizes a new form of self, performance, and subjectivity in mediation as an emergent notion and a matrix of practices made possible through modern textual culture. This modern theatricalized selfhood climbs up several layers of artification and partakes of the systems of nature and culture, thereby creating a crucible wherein new social and cultural forms of exchange could be tested and tempered, specifically the marketplace questions of identity,

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[145] Also see Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact*, p. 148.
[146] For the argument that the medieval notion of "the individual" is distinct from the modern notion of the "individual subject," see Timothy J. Reiss, *The Discourse of Modernism*, chap. 2; see, generally, chap. 1, on the passage from pre-modern "patterning" to a modern discourse of "analytico-referentiality."
[147] For how writing effects a radically dramatized self in our modern society, see Raymond Williams, *Writing in Society*, pp. 1-10.
[148] See Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy,* p. 74.
[149] See Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture;" Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things,* pp 46-124; Ian Hacking, *Why Does Language Matter to Philosophy?*, pp. 15-53, 163-70; David E. Wellbery, *Lessing's* Laocoon, pp. 9-17. The rise of representation could also be seen as part of the epistemological shift from the seventeenth century, see Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, chap. 3.

transparency, and accountability. This gives rise to a modern economy of the perceptual and sensorial in what Jonathan Crary historicizes as "the progressive parcelization and division of the body into separate and specific systems and functions" (Crary 1990, 79) in the first half of the nineteenth century.

One example that illustrates the relation between language and emotional subjectivity addressed here comes from a politically feminist history of the British novel. According to Nancy Armstrong, the modern female subject is engendered by the male. In her political history of the novel, the relation between the sentimental affect and the social template for the human is configured in a visual sense. She reads the rape of Pamela by Mr. B in Richardson's novel *Pamela*, which was published almost two decades before Burke and Smith, as a male attempt to penetrate a servant girl's body that "magically transforms that body into one of language and emotion, into a metaphysical object that can be acquired only through her consent and his willingness to adhere to the procedures of modern love" (Armstrong, 1987 6). When Mr. B forcibly takes possession of Pamela's letters, we see the reappearance of erotic desire transferring from Pamela's body to her words:

> Artful slut! Said he, What's this to my question?—Are they [the letters] not *about* you?—If, said I, I must pluck them out of my hiding-place behind the wainscot, won't you see me?—Still more and more artful! said he—Is this an answer to my question?—I have searched every place above, and in your closet, for them, and cannot find them; so I *will* know where they are. Now, said he, it is my opinion they are about you; and I never undressed a girl in my life; but I will now begin to strip my pretty Pamela. (Richardson 245)

As he proceeds, Pamela capitulates and gives him what he desires. Richardson thus displaces the conventionally desirable woman onto a written one, and infuses the new body with erotic appeal. "The pleasure she now offers is the pleasure of the text rather than those forms of pleasure that derive from mastering her body" (6), Armstrong writes. For her, sentimentality (here of love and sexual desire) is textualized into a web of productions, which explains why "at the inception of modern culture, the literate classes in England suddenly developed an unprecedented state for writing for, about, and by women" (Armstrong 7). In turn, the proliferation of sentiment promoted by "writing for, about, and by women," the "first and foremost" modern individuals, is responsible for "the majority of eighteenth-century novels" (Armstrong 7-8). Mr. B. is configured into a reformed novel reader of sentimental novels. He learns to love Pamela not as an "object of desire" but for her "female sentimentality" (117). Thus, a linguistic and emotional text pushed into being through physical violence has generated a spectre-like gendered life of its own that grew from the emergence of modern mass media, specifically print media of the novel[150]. William Warner states the case more schematically:

> It is at this point that English readers start engaging in the sort of sympathetic identification with and critical judgment of fictional characters that will lie at the center of novel reading from Richardson, Fielding, and Frances Burney through Jane Austen, George Eliot, and Henry James. (223)[151]

This spectrality of subjectivity in "mediatic articulation" (to use Samuel Weber's phrase) comes to host female "individuals" as *dividuals*, presenting female subjectivity as mediated in between the screens of writing[152]. Nancy Armstrong argues that

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[150] For how the British novel is part of modern mass media, and how the rise of the British realism is a gendering process, see William B. Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684-1750.*
[151] Also see William Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, p. 224, note 21.

> It was first only women who were defined in terms of their emotional natures. Men generally retained their political identity in writing that developed the qualities of female subjectivity and made subjectivity a female domain. (4)[153]

Following this point, it is significant to take this first developed female subjectivity as what Samuel Weber defines as the first case where we see a loss of individuality consequential upon modern modes of inscription from modern media such as television, radio, film, and writing:

> As a 'host of spirits,' individuals do not merely cease to exist: they persist, but as dividuals, divided between life and death, spectator and actor, strange and familiar, entering an alien body and soul on the one hand, while on the other remaining sufficiently detached to see themselves taking leave of their selves (rather than of their 'senses'). The individual thus altered is here and there at once, and consequently can be neither exclusively here nor there, neither simply itself or simply other. This impossible 'situation' splits the site itself, rendering it something like a ghost of itself, lacking an authentic place or a proper body. (Weber, 2004 42)

The coming of modern mass media culture, of which writing and literature is their first case, enhances inscriptions between different media, establishes spaces for crossing boundaries, and thus conflates concatenations of situations engendering spectrality of selfhood. This dissertation tries to give a social history of textual media culture, and to suggest how a self-willing discipline

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[152] Weber's interest is in more than the technology of reading and writing, also including television, radio and film. His theoretical focus is rather the ways in which modes of inscription are media—the linkage between media "infiltrating" the lines of demarcation by which they are traditionally defined and thereby exposing them as "inscribed in, and as, a network" (3). This "mediatic aritulation" means that the concatenations of "mediatic articulation" cross the border that is supposed to separate the modern mass media from what has come before, "upsetting" and "dislocating," as Weber says, the commonly held notion of their "radical distinctiveness" (2). Samuel Weber, *Mass Mediauras: Form, Technics, Media*.

[153] This argument has inspired my *media* investigation of William Wordsworth's "poetic mediality" in this current writing.

and regulation of the spectrality and theatricality of modern selfhood is made possible because of this culture.

Specifically, in this historical period of media transition from an oral and scribal to a print society in Europe[154], a textual economy of feelings, emotions and sensibilities comes to occupy a more prominent position. This change remains coterminous, if not directly caused by, the rise of a textual media culture and the profound changes in modes of visuality that come along with it. Excessive (re)productions of words, images, sounds and the easily wide dissemination of the media system ferment "strange fits of passion"—to use half a line from one of William Wordsworth's "Lucy Poems," which invites anatomies of passions and physiognomies[155]. This dissertation situates Adam Smith's political economy of moral sentiments through sympathy as a later part of the textual and literary taming technology[156] to neutralize these "passions" and make them representable. Issues of other than lived experience, authenticity, and insincerity of selfhood are thus interwoven with "the nature of social identity, intentionality, accountability, transparency and reciprocity." This transparent exchangeability remains analogous to properties of commodities in modern society.

II.ii. Etymological History of Sentiment and Its Inward Turn in the Eighteenth Century as A Discourse of Sensibility

[154] Indeed, the mid-eighteenth century has been well defined as the period in which this media shift happened. See, for instance, Alvin Kernan, *Samuel Johnson and the Impact of Print*, p. 4. For a recent more sociological history of reading, see William St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*.

[155] As Adela Pinch writes: "Eighteenth-and early nineteenth-century writers seek after the origins and locations of feelings; as they try to pin feelings down, I shall argue, they often discover that one's feelings may not really be one's own" (Pinch 3). We will return to this point later. Robert Southey, a harsh critic of the practice of physiognomy, surveyed the galley slaves "with a physiognomic eye to see if they differed from the rest of the people," once he visited Lisbon. See "Marginal Practices" by Patricia Fara in *The Cambridge History of Science: Eighteenth Century Science*, p. 495.

[156] Regarding how "literature" was an "engine" of social change, and categorized as "aesthetic" in the second half of the eighteenth century, see Paul Keen, "Preface," in *Revolutions in Romantic Literature: An Anthology of Print Culture, 1780-1832* (Ed. Paul Keen), p. xvi. For "aesthetic" as a political "distribution of the sensible," see Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, pp. 12-19.

An etymological inquiry into the word "sentiment" in the direction of its theatrical relation with the textual medium would help to understand how it was an external entity to obtain a somatic existence as a placeholder of modern individual interiority or subjectivity. It remains useful to bear in mind the moment of textual engendering in the history of the female subject as illustrated by Nancy Armstrong, a point that will be touched upon regarding aesthetics throughout the current writing. The word "sentiment" and its cognates, the vocabulary of sentience, that is, revolve around the distinction between body, mind, and soul. In Lynn Festa's words, it "alludes to process (how one senses), power (the capacity or delicacy of the senses), and product (the impressions produced by or the results of thinking and feeling)" (Festa 17). In the middle of the eighteenth century, a significant semantic shift occurred in this vocabulary of sentiment. Samuel Johnson's 1755 *Dictionary* defines "sentiment" as "thought, notion, opinion" and, rather awkwardly, as "the sense considered distinctly from the language or things; a striking sentence in a composition." It is more about the "product" part, extraneous to either the process or the sentient power that brings it into being at the first place. Johnson's second entry explicitly states that it is a perception disjoined from words or objects. The lexicographer Johnson does not trouble himself to explain either what makes a sentence striking (and thereby has given the sentence "in a composition" rhetoric power) or what possible affective modes of the subject could originate from the "thought, notion, opinion." Lynn Festa regards Johnsonian "sentiment" as "a portmanteau for discrete and self-contained notions, aloof from the messiness of the senses and even the looseness of language" (Festa 19). It is not loaded with any tenuous process or effect of the inward affect. Rather its being "discrete and self-contained" entities ensures a freedom of movements between words, objects, and bodies, the historical context of which

agrees with Adela Pinch's argument[157]. One can discern a similar property in Johnson's definition of emotion: "disturbance of mind; vehemence of passion, or pleasing or painful." This is more about the intensity of movements and what this does to the mind (not the heart) than any specific affect like envy, irritation, anxiety, or paranoia. It stays with the classical etymological origin of the word "emotion," which "stems from the Latin, *e + movere*," originally meaning "'to move out,' 'to migrate,' or 'to transport an object[158].'" Thus why Julie Ellison's terminology of "the itinerary of feeling" (1) would almost appear tautological in that historical period. Raymond Williams traces it right when defining "sentiment" as used for "physical feeling" and "both opinion and emotion" from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries (Williams, 1976 281). The adjective "physical" appends a descriptive limiter to feeling, opinion and emotion, which are natural, tangible, and concrete. The affective or subjective self is still in motion and inter-subjective. Through the eighteenth century, sentiment begins to be more closely associated with sensibility, leaning more toward the process and power of feelings. Or, to use Williams' words: "a conscious openness to feelings, and also a conscious consumption of feelings" (Williams, 1976 281). It may not be exaggerating to rephrase it as "a conspicuous consumption of feelings," to appropriate twentieth-century American economist Thorstein Veblen's concept of economics[159], or at minimum a conspicuous consumption of the "sentimental," at least for some people. Raymond Williams quotes a Lady Bradshaugh in 1749: "[S]entimental, so much in vogue among the polite … Everything clever and agreeable is comprehended in that word … a sentimental man … a sentimental party … a sentimental walk" (qtd. in Williams, 1976 281).

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[157] See Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion*.
[158] James R. Averill, "Inner Feelings, Works of the Flesh, the Beast Within, Diseases of the Mind, Driving Force, and Putting on a Show: Six Metaphors of Emotion and Their Theoretical Extensions," in *Metaphors in the History of Psychology* (Ed. David E. Leary), p. 107.
[159] See Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class*.

Indeed, feeling was such a compelling subject central to both aesthetics and social experience that Samuel Johnson regards those attempts "to trace the passions to their sources" as "the fashionable study[160]" of his time. In Jeremy Bentham's 1781 *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*[161], "sensibility" appears such an important factor to consider that Bentham lists thirty-two categories of causes that will affect different circumstances, hence influence sensibility, and, therefore, call for specific gradations of penal punishment. On this list there are such items as "moral sensibility," "religious sensibility," "sympathetic sensibility," "sympathetic biases," "antipathetic sensibility," "antipathetic biases," "connexions in the way of sympathy," and "connexions in the way of antipathy[162]." Several decades later, the French literary critic Hippolyte Taine detects in the writings of Defoe, Addison, and Steele the inward and reflective turn in his *Histoire de la littérature anglaise* (1864):

> Two features are common and proper to [these books]. All these novels are character novels. Englishmen, more reflective than others, more inclined to the melancholy pleasure of concentrated attention and inner examination, find around them human medals more vigorously struck, less worn by friction with the world, whose uninjured face is more visible than that of others. (qtd. in Warner, 28)

Nevertheless, it is not painted yet as against either Bentham or Taine who feel "too much" or those who "indulge their emotions." The conservative poet Robert Southey's "the sentimental classes, persons of ardent or morbid sensibility" in 1823 (qtd. in Williams 282) have not yet come into historical being. This mode of excess in sensibility and its integrated necessity of

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[160] S. Johnson, "Preface to Shakespeare," cited by Christopher Fox in his *Psychology and Literature in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 1.

[161] *Introduction* was undertaken in the 1770s as part of a plan for a huge work. Mary P. Mack says that "Bentham wrote thousands of practice pages between 1769 and 1781. Some of them were incorporated in *The Principles of Morals*, printed in 1780, which was itself only a small fragment of his monumental plan to analyze the entire structure of law" (Mack 130). See John Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary*, p. 269, note 53.

[162] see John Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary*, p. 269, note 53.

cleansing have to wait till the coming of a considerable saturation of mass media, including a mature division of labor in writing technology[163].

The eighteenth century is an "Age of Sensibility," to use a label well defined by Northrop Frye several decades ago[164]. The era of sensibility, is sometimes extended from the end of the seventeenth century into the beginning of the nineteenth[165]. Jerome McGann argues that the term "sensibility" clings to the early decades of the eighteenth century, while "sentiment" has attached itself to a second, later phase. McGann wants to keep sensibility "the more primitive of the two," affiliated with instinct and the body. Sentimentality is elevated to "a sophisticated acquirement, a sympathetic understanding gained through complex acts of conscious attention and reflection" (McGann 7-8, 63). For Julie Ellison, sensibility as a cultural ethos manifests itself earlier than we thought. Its first appearance was probably in the late seventeenth-century's civic prestige and mutual friendship practiced by men of equally high social status. With a key historical shift occurring around 1713, it became after that "transactions between socially equal persons toward scenarios of inequality" (Ellison 9, 6). Ellison does not see any significant difference between sensibility in the first half of the century and Adam Smith's "moral sentiment" later on[166]. Janet Todd identifies sentimental literature's heyday as the period from 1740 to 1770. For her, Smith's

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[163] For a similar "cleansing" strategy that occurs in another medium—French painting, that is—in the age of Diderot, see Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality*; for how this happens in a media history of the British novel, see William Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684-1750*. As a matter of fact, the classes of people with "too much sentimentality" or "ardent or morbid sensibility" seems to be an undefined antagonist, for which Fried designates "theatrical"—what Jon Klancher defines as "the stances of both radical rhetoric and mass-cultural display," and "it is worth pointing out that theorists of this *kind* of reader/spectator nearly always fabricate a hybrid antagonist, composedly equally of radical discourse and mass culture" (191). For Klancher, this "kind" of theorists includes Samuel Coleridge, see chapter 5 in *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832* for his discussion. This tactic is indeed—as Jon Klancher points out—throughout media culture, whether literature or otherwise, see John Klancher, p. 191, note 46. For a Chinese case regarding the historical development of a musical medium *Qin*, see Ronald Egan, "The Controversy over Music and 'Sadness' and Changing Conceptions of the Qin in Middle Period China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 57, 1997. I thank Professor Ling Hon Lam for this reading.

[164] See Northrop Frye, "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility."

[165] See Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion*, pp. 1-16.

[166] See Julie Elllison, p. 6.

Theory of Moral Sentiments was the "end to a line of British moral philosophy" that admitted "the sentimental aim of trying systematically to link morality and emotion" (27). The discourse of sentiment and sensibility seems to have passed what Foucault would call a "threshold of epistemologization[167]" in the middle of the eighteenth century. Its cognates, for instance emotion, begin to allude to "specific affect originating from within" (Festa 29). Another critic, Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, argues that during the period from Descartes to Rousseau, emotions change from "reactions to invasions from something external to the self" into "the very activities of the mind, its own motions … and along with desires, the beginnings of actions" (qtd. in Festa 19). Similarly, the waywardness and vagrancy of English feelings turns inward, and is more integrated into the body with its association of the process and the power. The 1783 revision of Chambers's 1728 *Cyclopaedia* explicitly articulates this change:

> [T]he word sentiment, in its true and old English sense signifies, a formed opinion, notion, or principle; but of late years, it has been much used by some writers to denote an internal impulse of passion, affection, fancy, or intellect, which is to be considered rather as the cause or occasion of our forming an opinion, than as the real opinion itself. (qtd. in Festa 19)

Sentiment becomes more associated with sensibility in its modern use of *awareness* and the ability to feel[168]. Through the middle of the eighteenth century, its social currency may have been experiencing a great change in the economy of its concept, analyses, and demonstrations. In the middle of the century, David Hume defines sympathy as the means by which sentiments

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[167] See Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, in particular Ch. 6, "Science and Knowledge," with its elucidation of several thresholds of emergence of a "discursive formation": the thresholds of positivity, epistemologization, scientificity, and formalization (186-7). For Foucault, these are events whose dispersion is anything but evolutive, which is where his critical archaeological spirit lies.
[168] Also see Raymond Williams, 1976, p. 281.

were communicated, and "the psychological and emotive transaction which placed them at the heart of social life" (Chandler, 2009 22):

> No quality of human nature is more remarkable, both in itself and its consequences, than that propensity we have to sympathize with others, and to receive by communication their inclinations and sentiments, however different from, or even contrary to our own. (*Treatise*, 316)

By the end of the century, sensibility becomes the capacity to feel and transact sympathy. According to *The Monthly Magazine*, it was "that peculiar structure, or habitude of mind, which disposes a man to be easily moved and powerfully affected by surrounding objects and passing events[169]." This discursive phenomenon complicates itself with several realms that seem disparate for decades. G. S. Rousseau suggests this as a list of issues:

> [T]he cults of melancholy, hypochondria as a national institution, the 'English Malady,' as Cheyne called it, Richardson's novel of sentiment, later on the well-formed and mature 'man of feeling', Sterne's bizarre variations and subtle alterations on this theme, the eighteenth century's eventual attack on all forms of sentiment as fake. (Rousseau 151)[170]

This dissertation situates the proliferation and inward-turn of sentiment and sensibility in a period when literature "moved from a reptilian Classicism, all cold and dry reason, to a mammalian Romanticism, all warm and wet feeling[171]." The transitional period from the rhetorical and scribal culture into a modern textual media culture of the eighteenth century witnessed "the decisive popular fusion of sensibility and taste," and "the emotionally susceptibility was allied to aesthetic expression" (Ellison 6). It is not exaggeration to argue that

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[169] *The Monthly Magazine* 2:706 (October 1796), quoted in James Chandler, p. 22.
[170] Also see Samuel H. Monk, 1960, pp. 45, 49.
[171] See Northrop Frye, "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility," p. 144.

sensibility constitutes the emergent "science of man"—defined as "human passions" by David Hume—from the late seventeenth century through the British Enlightenment and beyond[172].

II.iii. Sentimentality, and Its Relevance with the Rise of Visuality Discourse in the Epistemological Shift

The argument of this section is that the inwardness[173] of feelings, sentiments and sensibility historically co-evolves with a long scopic tradition of vision that exists "in some sense continuous, for instance, from Plato to the present, or from the quattrocento into the late nineteenth century" (Crary 25-6). The possibility of a discourse of sentimentalization cannot dispense with the rise of visuality. These two issues complement each other, and present themselves respectively in the form of psychoanalytical and social self long existent in western modernity.

The rise of modern visuality mainly refers to the increasing significance of the visual regime of *camera obscura* from the fifteenth century on, which is often captured as Cartesian perspectivalism[174]. If modernity has been "dominated by the sense of sight in a way that set it apart from its pre-modern predecessors and possibly its postmodern successor" (Jay, 1988 3), this ocular-centric perceptual mode could not be have been achieved without the invention of a

[172] See G.S. Rousseau, "Nerves, Spirits, and Fibres," in which he defines John Locke's publication of *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) as the first to deal with this "science of man", influential to at least three subsequent generations of moral scientists: Mandeville, Shaftesbury, Hume, Adam Smith, La Mettrie, the *philosophes*, and dozens of others. Rousseau's methodology of doing an intellectual history regarding this key problematic is followed in this dissertation, however.

[173] For a speculation upon the difference between "inwardness" and "interiority," see Stephen Toulmin's fine essay, "The Inwardness of Mental Life."

[174] See essays collected in *Vision and Visuality*, especially Martin Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity," pp. 3-23.

modern print medium, as works of McLuhan, Ong and Eisenstein convincingly suggest[175]. It makes no historical sense to take the visual mode of *camera obscura*—specifically the invention of linear perspective in the fifteenth century—as a single apparatus. The economy of disciplining and regulating the status of an observer and its tangent forms of subjectivity co-evolves with many other issues over the long period of several centuries. Critical theorist Giorgio Agamben justifies the methodology of *paradigm* that has been reflected in his and Foucault's works on archaeology of knowledge. For him,

> joining Aristotle's observations with those of Kant, that a paradigm entails a movement that goes from singularity to singularity and, without ever leaving singularity, transforms every singular case into an *exemplar* of a general rule that can never be stated a priori. (Agamben 2008, 22)

The method of *paradigm* for Agamben is what Thomas Kuhn used in his historical study of sciences, and is dated back to Plato and Aristotle by Agamben. This method "is a singular case that is isolated from its context only insofar as, by exhibiting its own singularity, it makes intelligible a new ensemble, whose homogeneity it itself constitutes" (Agamben 2009, 18). Following Agamben's methodology on the relation between paradigm and exemplarity, this section takes the inward turn of sentiment and sensibility along with the predominant model of perception of *camera obscura* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which was "fundamentally nonreflexive, visual and quantitative," as Donald M. Lowe concludes[176]. It examines how a new stage of organization of subjectivity is reached as effective to the entire economy of the perceptual, affective, and cognitive. David E. Wellbery argues that

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[175] See Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*; Walter J. Ong, *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History*; Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe*.
[176] Donald M. Lowe, *History of Bourgeois Perception*, p. 26.

> Aesthetics, in its emergence as an independent philosophical discipline in the eighteenth century, is a *representational* theory; that is, the organizing model that lends this theory-type its character depicts the aesthetic field in terms of the category of representation. (Wellbery, 1984 44)

Modern aesthetics and representation are an emergent discursive formation closely related to a shift in perception, mediation of the sensible, and epistemology in general, of which the modern mode of visuality forms a part. Foucault writes that "observation" in the last two centuries is "a perceptible knowledge," and it "leaves sight with an almost exclusive privilege, being the sense by which we perceive extent and establish proof, and, in consequence, the means to an analysis *partes extra partes* acceptable to everyone" (Foucault 1970, 132-33). What this observation and practice of visuality valorize is"the appearance of its screened objects: lines, surfaces, forms, reliefs" (Foucault 1970, 133). If visuality is not the exclusive way of organizing knowledge[177], it becomes a significant episteme in talking about what Heidegger categorizes as "the projection of the objectivity of whatever is" since the Renaissance. Foucault defines this as "a mode that was to be considered as positive, as objective, as that of natural history" (Foucault 1970, 131) in the nineteenth century. This epistemic desire for the "tabulation of things" (Foucault 1970, 131) in western Enlightenment finds its fullest expressions in the pages of the *Encyclopédie*, a way of organizing knowledge made possible by a print media culture. The great project made of this thought is an exhaustive ordering of the world characterized by

> discovery of simple elements and their progressive combination; and at their center they form a table on which knowledge is displayed contemporary with itself. The center of

[177] See Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, chapter 2. Of course, visuality could never be the exclusive epistemological mode; the tradition of hermeneutics, for instance, is resolutely tied to aural experience. See Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought*, pp. 105-08.

knowledge in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is the *table*. (Foucault 1970, 74-5)

It is in this sense that the thought of the eighteenth century is, as Foucault says, "through and through a philosophy of the sign," and it formulates a new relation of object and subject. This "tabulation of things" in the visual modality, which is a semi-technology of documentation, provides a site of cultural labor, a body of textual formations that has to be worked through interminably, *ad infinitum*.

It is an epistemology of "imprinting," which, as John Locke says, "if it signify anything, being nothing else, but the making certain Truths to be perceived. For to imprint anything on the Mind without the Mind's perceiving it, seems to me hardly intelligible[178]." In Richard Rorty's words:

> It is as if the *tabula rasa* were perpetually under the gaze of the unblinking Eye of the Mind—nothing, as Descartes said, being nearer to the mind than itself… it becomes obvious that the imprinting is of less interest than the observation of the imprint—all the knowing gets done, so to speak, by the Eye which observes the imprinted tablet, rather than by the tablet itself. (Rorty 143-44)

Knowledge of self is immediately hinged upon a self-observation of the mediation between the internal and the external. The visual perception directly contributes to an epistemological construction of a selfhood. Jonathan Crary points out that perhaps the most famous image of the *camera obscura* is in Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, written one decade before the eighteenth century[179]:

External and internal sensations are the only passages that I can find of knowledge to the understanding. These alone, as far as I can discover, are the windows by which light is let into

[178] Locke, *Essay*, I, II, 5.
[179] See Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, pp. 41-2.

this *dark room*. For, methinks, the understanding is not much unlike a closet wholly shut from light, with only some little opening left … to let in external visible resemblances, or some idea of things without; would the pictures coming into such a dark room but stay there and lie so orderly as to be found upon occasion it would very much resemble the understanding of a man[180]. This becomes a predominant *apparatus,* epistemological as well as perceptual, through the eighteenth century. A strong sense of introspection is projected as a salient feature in this visualization of the spatial and perceptual operations of the intellect. The significant function of the mind's eye lies in its transparent and decorporealized mediation for an observer isolated, enclosed, and autonomous within the dark confines of the *camera obscura* operation[181]. The eye, as metonymical of the human subject, is prevented from having any capability of self-representation as both subject and object. The positioning of the body is marginalized into an invisible, spectral non-existence, so that an objective imprinting and representation could ensue. One could identify this as a case of what David Wellbery names as "the principle of transparency" (Wellbery, 1984 72) in the representational aesthetic theory of the Enlightenment. This transparency economy effaces any possibility of a reflecting self-reflection[182] for the purpose of objective "tabulation of things" before human beings becomes an event in the order of knowledge in the nineteenth century[183]. In the British context under discussion through this writing, it is reflected in the aesthetic disinterestedness as "a major watershed in the history of aesthetics" (Stolnitz 138). This emergence of modern aesthetics is first suggested in the first decade of the eighteenth century by Lord Shaftesbury, which opposes "the desire to possess or

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[180] Locke, *Essay*, II, xi, 17.
[181] See Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, p. 39.
[182] Also see Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York, 1978), p. 81.
[183] Of course, this is a Foucauldian formula, see specifically the last two chapters "Man and his doubles" and "The human sciences" in his *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*.

use the object" (Stolnitz 134). It becomes, by the middle of the century, a staple in British thought. Inhibiting any action on behalf of the self, this positions a subject as "a spectator rather than an agent," whose "involvement is controlled and tempered by the detachment of selflessness" (Stolnitz 136). Thus, the visual mode of *camera obscura* as an epistemology seems to be a paradigmatic[184] resolution of what Edmund Husserl defines as the major philosophical problem starting from the seventeenth century: "How a philosophizing which seeks its ultimate foundations in the subjective … can claim an objective 'true' and metaphysically transcendent validity[185]."

It is not far-fetched to read this increasing predominance and prevalence of the *camera obscura* reflecting Juri M. Lotman's characterization of the Enlightenment as a "battle against the sign[186]." During this battle, language is desacralized, extricated from its place within the ceremonies of religious and absolutist authority, and transformed into a medium of communication and debate among equal subjects. Language and representation become a medium of exchange, that is. At the same time, this also "impels a kind of *askesis*, or withdrawal from the world, in order to regulate and purify one's relation to the manifold contents of the now 'exterior' world" (Crary 39). Indeed, there exists a historical connection between such an observational empiricist theory of knowledge and what Adela Pinch terms as "emotional extravagance" (3) in the eighteenth century: "extravagance" both in the sense of "that which strays beyond boundaries" and "excessive, lavish, unrestrained emotionality, or sentimentality" (3, 4). This connection leads to the rise of individuality through an epistemological confinement towards its physical and sensory experience, and it is summarized aptly by Nietzsche in *The Will*

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[184] "Paradigm" here is taken as meaning what is advoated through Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben's archaeological writings. See Agamben (2009), "What Is a Paradigm?."
[185] Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology*, p. 81. Quoted from Jonathan Crary (1990), p. 41.
[186] Quoted from David E. Wellbery, *Lessing's* Laocoon*: Semiotics and Aesthetics in the Age of Reason*, p. 36.

to Power: "The senses deceive, reason corrects the errors; consequently, one concluded, reason is the road to the constant; the least sensual ideas must be closest to the 'true world.'—It is from the senses that most misfortunes come—they are deceivers, deluders, destroyers" (317)[187]. Martin Heidegger calls this "the necessary interplay between subjectivism and objectivism" (66) in the modern anthropology of man. This dissertation argues that this paradox of western modernity could be approached through a critical history of mediation and media study, and it is significant for another emergent media shift.

II. iv. Sympathy as moral sentiment, interiority, and exchange of things (and personae)

It is in this cluster of problems that we situate theories of sentiments in their relations to a history of media. This includes mediation or immediacy in communication, inward and external manifestations of feeling, and theatricality of sympathy in structuring a self and a world. What can sympathy, if seen from "the convergence of capitalism and print technology" (Anderson 46)[188], tell us about the "distribution of the sensible" (to use Jacques Rancière's phrase) and representation of self in this receding episteme of "tabulation of things" (to use Foucault's concept)? How does the capability of sympathy configure into the modern human body and intellect? What is the relation between emotional economy and an emergent aesthetics of exchangeability in what Foucault names as "the construction of an empirico-transcendental doublet" of human beings[189]? What theatrical stances—presence or absence—do different forms of humans take at a critical point in the history of global, systematized communication? These

[187] Quoted in Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, p. 40.
[188] Of course, this is Benedict Anderson's central argument regarding the emergence of nationalism in its modern form.
[189] See Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, chapter 9 "Man and His Doublets."

epistemological questions are what this writing tries to engage in a historical investigation of a rising textual media culture.

In the eighteenth century, the writings of the empiricists bring feeling "closer to epistemological matters: empiricism allows emotion to be a way of knowing" (Pinch 18-9). Adela Pinch argues that "almost all eighteenth-century thinking about feeling … concerns the relationship between its epistemological and ontological status, and its social character" (Pinch 18-9). It differs from the early modern thought of all emotional experience coming under the heading of "the passions," and "nor only as innate, natural forces tied closely to the body but also as the essence of volition" (Pinch 18). A reaction towards the Cartesian category of emotion as volition is found in John Locke, who writes in the last decade of the seventeenth century that "*desiring* and *willing* are two distinct Acts of the mind; and consequently that the *Will*, which is but the power of *Volition*, is much more distinct from *Desire*" (italicized sic.) (250). Adela Pinch identifies a fundamental shift of feelings and emotions, which is separable from the negative pictures of "the passions as fundamentally destructive and in need of restraint" (Pinch 18) of the seventeenth-century political theorists. Following Pinch's historical argument, this dissertation situates this shift in the historical period when "circulation becomes one of the fundamental categories of analysis" (Foucault 1970, 179). David Hume calls "sympathy" "a *communication of sentiments*[190]" (italicized sic.), and it suggests more volatile movement of feelings between persons than sensibility. The prevalence of a sympathy trope in the eighteenth century indicates the increasing mobility of feelings among subjects, objects, places, which occurs within a system of signs and a table of identities and differences. It builds affective affinities between circulating commercial markets, credit, and public opinions, acting at great distances in the modern system

[190] David Hume, *A Treatise*, p. 324.

of exchanges. The moral philosopher David Hume captures this social nature of people's ability to feel other people's feelings in this way:

> The minds of all men are similar in their feelings and operations, nor can any one be actuated by any affection, of which all others are not, in some degree, susceptible. As in strings equally wound up, the motion of one communicates itself to the rest; so all the affections readily pass from one person to another, and beget correspondent movements in every human creature[191].

In the first volume of his sentimental novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (1759-67), Laurence Sterne describes a village midwife, who, as

> she had all along trusted little to her own efforts, and a great deal to those of dame nature, —had acquired, in her way, no small degree of reputation in the world;—by which word world, need I in this place inform your worship, that I would be understood to mean no more of it, than a small circle described upon the circle of the great world, of four English miles diameter, or thereabouts, of which the cottage where the good old woman lived, is supposed to be the center. (Sterne 1.7.10)

The additional proclamation of a provincial English parameter of four miles indicates a world much beyond the local midwife's reputation, whose existence Sterne's readership is obliged to imagine and anticipate. The world is so obviously global that Sterne's message of irony could be easily missed. His French translator hastened in 1776 to add a footnote:

> But do not be fooled: it was not the whole world. She was not known, for example, among the Hottentot and Dutch women of the Cape of Good Hope, who are said to give birth like Mother Nature. The world to her was but a small circle. (qtd. in Festa 1)[192]

[191] David Hume, *A Treatise*, pp. 575-76.
[192] See Lynn Festa, pp. 1-2.

Indeed, the eighteenth century is one of striking growth in Britain's world-wide interests. British historian P. J. Marshall writes:

> Both the area and the number of people under British rule increased greatly. Far more ships took out many more British goods to colonial markets and brought back much greater quantities of mostly tropical products. (Marshall 1)

Of special significance is the Seven Year War, which formally lasted from 1756 to 1763. The term "British Empire" as a commonly accepted meaning of a collection of territories and peoples ruled by Britain is clearly established in the second half of the century. Sir George McCartney, later Lord McCartney, an ambassador to China in 1793, wrote in 1773 of "this vast empire on which the sun never sets and whose bounds nature has not yet ascertained" (qtd. in Marshall 8). Conduits of circulation, not only as an "empire of goods" (qtd. in Marshall 12) such as tea, silk, sugar, textile, furniture, porcelain, earthenware, but also as that of people: Scots, Irish, blacks, Indians, are formed and woven into a global economy. The British alone transported more than 3.4 million slaves from Africa to the Americas between 1662 and 1807[193]. By 1815, the British Empire embraced one-fifth of the earth's inhabitants[194]. Scale of contact with the world beyond "the four English miles diameter" was greatly increased in all aspects of eighteenth-century life. Abundant fluxes of data from places far away were flowing into and through the metropolis center, often collected as the "imperial archive," to use a phrase from Thomas Richards[195]. Their afterlives are either what would come to be called "science[196]" or "culture[197]" in the modern

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[193] See P. J. Marshall, "Introduction," *Oxford History of the British Empire*, p. 22.
[194] See Linda Colley, *Britons*, p. 323.
[195] See his book *Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (Verso, 1996).
[196] For a brief history of the historical relation between "science" and "natural history," see Deborah E. Harkness, "A Note about 'Science'," in her *The Jewel House: Elizabethan London and the Scientific Revolution*, pp. xv-xviii. W. G. Ward is given credit for coining a particular collective usage for *science* that remains valid through modern times, when he wrote in 1867: "We shall…use the word 'science' in the sense which Englishmen so commonly give to it; as expressing physical and experimental science, to the exclusion of theological and metaphysical." Also see *OED* item b.

period. Accordingly, sense of common identity, either a "Britishness" or, more precisely, an "Englishness" becomes a significant discursive site of contestation for different groups of people and things. Communications in commerce, matters, regions, peoples, and thoughts percolate through an economy of empire, which embodies the materialistic and the affective in the accumulation and dissemination of capital. Mechanics of sympathy as happening inter-subjectively or even between objects and subjects help mediate and regulate the protean empire's economy of changes, conflicts, struggles and disparities between the "small circle described upon the circle of the great world." In 1806 the physician Thomas Trotter, in his *A View of the Nervous Temperament*, defines the nervous system to be centered on the "GREAT SYMPATHETIC NERVE ... whose office directs the most important operation in the animal economy and binds together in one great circle of feeling, actions and notions both distant and opposite[198]." The body, as Jonathan Crary convincingly argues, becomes part of the modern system along with society and the economy[199], which requires government and management. Its moral consciousness and physiological productivity begins to function in the mechanism of the state, empire, and modern industrialization[200].

Indeed, as if symptomatic of a need of systematization, the eighteenth century, especially during its middle years, witnesses radical ruptures of relations between sympathy, sentiment and society. On one hand, we have David Hume saying:

> I am first affrighted and confounded with that forelorn solitude, in which I am plac'd in my philosophy, and fancy myself some strong uncouth monster, who not being able to

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[197] For a brief historical survey of the heavily loaded term "culture," see Raymond Williams' definition of the concept in his *Keywords*, pp. 87-93. Also see Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture*.

[198] Thomas Trotter, *A View of the Nervous Temperament; being a practical Enquiry into the increasing prevalence, prevention and treatment of those diseases,* 2nd edition (New Castle, 1807), in *Radical Food: The Culture and Politics of Eating and Drinking 1790-1820* (Ed. by Timothy Morton), Vol. III, p. 641. Quoted in James Chandler, "Sentiment and Sensibility," p. 24.

[199] See Jonathan Crary, "Modernizing Vision," in *Vision and Visuality* (Ed. By Hal Foster), pp. 29-50.

[200] Also see Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture*.

> mingle and unite in society, has been expell'd all human commerce, and left utterly abandon'd and disconsolate. Fain wou'd I run into the crowd for shelter and warmth; but cannot prevail with myself to mix with such deformity. (*A Treatise* 264)

Thus David Hume is featured as an evil fanatic and as the lord of a gloomy, gothic castle by James Beattie[201]. Besides this, here we see a philosopher-phobic "*Frankenstein*-like monster[202]"; a self consumed by contemplation and writing, who yearns for sense of politeness and normality in mingling with "society" and "human commerce." There may exist a prominent self in the division between an atomistic self and a larger scale of the public, the latter of which is materialized in "society" or "exchange between men of the products of nature or art." It is what "human commerce" meant in the eighteenth century[203]. On the other hand, feelings are not lodged within the private, inner lives of individual persons. Adela Pinch argues in her critical investigation upon this period's epistemologies of emotions:

> [T]hey [emotions] rather circulate among persons as somewhat autonomous substances. They frequently seem as impersonal, and contagious, as viruses, visiting the breasts of men and women the way diseases visit the body. (Pinch 1996, 1)

In other words, emotions, feelings, and sentiments have a rather exterior and more interchangeable existence in the eighteenth century, and they are internalized as inward psychological activities. A contribution to the *Lady's Magazine* in 1775 reflects this object-like, or *thingness,* property of sentiment and sensibility:

> Sensibility—thou source of human woes—thou aggrandiser of evils!—Had I not been possessed of thee—how calmly might my days have passed!—Yet would I not part with

[201] In his *Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth*, and allegory (unpublished in his lifetime) "The Castle of Scepticism," see Adela Pinch, p. 40, note 25.
[202] This phrase is from Adela Pinch, see Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion*, p. 31.
[203] *OED* online, under "commerce."

> thee for worlds. We will abide together—both pleased and pained with each other. Thou shalt ever have a place in my heart—be the sovereign of my affections, and the friend of my virtue[204].

Habitation of sensibility suggests either moral superiority or weakness, and is quite selective, excluding what the physician Thomas Trotter names in 1806 as "the untutored and illiterate inhabitants of a forest" (575). For Trotter, two groups of people are notoriously susceptible for such "fine impressions," which, if received by the "organ of sensation," "never fail to induce delicacy of feeling, that disposes alike to more acute pain, as to more exquisite pleasure" (Trotter 575). An argument iterated by commentators both medical and literary, is that women are more prone to sensibility because of their physical constitution. John Brewer thus generalizes this historical argument:

> Nature has endued the female to constitution with greater delicacy and sensibility than the male, as destined for a different occupation in life ... the female constitution, therefore, [is] furnished by nature with peculiar delicacy and feeling, soft in its muscular fibre, and easily acted upon by stimuli. (575) [205]

Another figure frequently identified as the victim of an excessive sensibility or sentiment is the author or literary man[206]. One Mrs. Donnelland comments to Samule Richardson:

> The misfortune is, those who are fit to write delicately, must think so; those who can form a distress must be able to feel it; and as the mind and body are so united as to influence one another, the delicacy is communicated, and one too often finds softness and tenderness of mind in a body equally remarkable for those qualities[207].

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[204] *Lady's Magazine* 3:251-5 (May 1775). Quoted in James Chandler, "Sentiment and Sensibility," p. 28.
[205] John Brewer, "Sentiment and Sensibility," p. 26.
[206] Brewer. pp. 26-7.

David Hume singles out this anxiety and Robert James labels it as "HYPERCHONDRIACUS MORBUS" in his *Medicinal Dictionary* (1743-5) for those "*Literati* ... who indulge themselves too much in Study, continual Meditations, and Lucrubrations[208]." Thus, self and sensibility, body, and sentiment are woven together, the excessive exemplary cases of which are about to be examined as an English disease. This composition of a selfhood partially through *things* and *mediations with things* accords well with Hume's idea of a Lockean concept of selfhood as a fictional construct. It is an atomized idea of the self through the skepticism expressed in Book I of the *Treatise*: we lack an impression of a "simple and continu'd self[209]." The Humean skepticism and fright upon the disconsolation and abandonment of a self itself is indicative of an affective rupture of "soul"—what David Wellbery argues is the most important concept in the eighteenth century. It projects itself as not contingent upon orthodox Christianity as it was in John Locke and other seventeenth-century philosophers[210].

If the first half of the eighteenth century was "still close to that of scholastic philosophy" (Yeo 241), the second half saw more of "words such as 'Physicks' (and its apparent double, 'Physick'), 'Physiology,' 'Pneumaticks,' 'Pneumatology,' 'Phytology,' 'Somatology,' and 'Aerology'" (Yeo 242) addressed not only to scholars but also to the reading public. In the historical period when information came of age, and various technologies of knowledge were developed[211], the soul was more associated with "physiology" and "logic." The study of the mind is transferred from the realm of pneumatology (that is, the traditional doctrine of "incorporeal" substances, concerning

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[207] *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson* (Ed. by Anna Laetitia Barbauld), Vol. IV, p.30. Quoted in John Brewer, "Sentiment and Sensibility," p. 27.
[208] Quoted in John Brewer, "Sentiment and Sensibility," p. 27.
[209] Obviously one can do a biographical reading of Hume's philosophical statement here. For how he changed his name from Home to Hume, and its relevance to his literary construction of a selfhood, see the chapter on David Hume in this writing.
[210] See Roy Porter, p. 370.
[211] See Daniel R. Headrick, *When Information Came of Age: Technologies of Knowledge in the Age of Reason and Revolution, 1700-1850*.

God, angels, and so on) to "psychology[212]." David Hartley (1705-57) significantly writes of a "psychology, or theory of the human mind," locating that endeavor as part of "natural philosophy." According to Chambers' *Cyclopaedia* (1728), (a hugely influential work, since it served as a template for Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*[213],) such "psychology"–"a Discourse concerning the Soul"–constitutes a sub-department *not* of "theology" but of "anthropology," the study of man[214]. Indeed, it is one of the beginnings of "the creation of a new body of thinking: the psychologization that is, of identity" (Porter 371). The formation of modern interiority, as advocated through empiricist natural philosophical writings, is manufactured for a rising consumer society in the eighteenth-century Britain[215]. This "account of subjectivity" helps to "explain desire, propensities, and aversions as being universal to humans as a group" (Poovey 147), which are cultivated by moral philosophers and remain essential to liberal governmentality. Thus, sentiment and sensibility, as sources of either virtue or distress, should be situated in the constellation of social forces such as politeness, good taste, sociality, commerce, and feminization[216] that configure a modern shape of selfhood. In this way, a political economy of feeling and its inwardness and outwardness parameter occupy a very significant position regarding the conceptualization of identity and sociality in western modernity, which witnesses the significance of emotion as part of the rising anthropology of man, the "human sciences," to use Foucault's phrase[217].

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[212] See Roy Porter, p. 371.
[213] Porter, p. 371.
[214] Porter, p. 371.
[215] See Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact,* pp. 147-48. For the eighteenth-century Britain as a consumer society, see *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Eds. by John H. Plumb, Neil McKendrick and John Brewer); *The Consumption of Culture, 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text* (Eds. by Ann Bermingham and John Brewer).
[216] For the relation between feminization, literature and commerce in Eighteen-Century England, see E.J. Clery's *The Feminization Debate in Eighteen-Century England: Literature, Commerce and Luxury*.
[217] The emergence of which, as Foucault writes in a Romantic vein in the last pages of *The Archaeology of Knowledge and Discourse on Language*, suggests the immediate emergent disappearance of human species from the

seashore of the world. In *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Foucault argues that the nineteenth-century "episteme" initially organized the world according to biological models: "… man, his psyche, his group, his society, the language he speaks—all these exist in the Romantic period as living beings" (Foucault, 1970 253-63).

Chapter III: The Making of a Literary Career through Writing: Hume in Passions

III. i. Sympathy, History, and Writing

Adela Pinch argues that for most middle and late eighteenth-century aesthetic theorists, sympathy "described not only interpersonal relationships but also relations between persons and representations" (Pinch 29). Sympathetic sentiments are aroused through realistic objects or interpersonal relations, which can always move into aesthetic representations. One passage in David Hume's *Treatise*'s discussion of compassion clearly suggests this:

> A spectator of a tragedy passes thro' a long train of grief, terror, indignation, and other affections, which the poet represents in the persons he introduces. As many tragedies end happily, and no excellent one can be compos'd without some reverses of fortune, the spectator must sympathize with all these changes, and receive the fictitious joy as well as every other passion. (*T*, 369)

This relation between sympathy and aesthetic representation begins to be common in the eighteenth century. Highly influenced by Hume, Adam Smith makes sympathy a more universal experience through the imagination of the spectators upon the agents in his *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (*TMS*). For him, we "form some idea of his sensations" and even feel something "which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them," and we do this by means of the imaginative experiment of placing ourselves in the agent's circumstance: "[W]e enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him" (*TMS*, 9). It is noteworthy that Smith emphasizes the aspect of the adverbial quality of sympathy—to feel

sympathetically[218], that is, while Hume's stress is on the process of sentiment as fictitious and manufactured, which is the well-maneuvered process of "a long train of grief, terror, indignation, and other affections" resulting, most likely, in "joy." In another passage on how sympathy is the "propensity" that we have "to receive by communication [others'] inclinations and sentiments, however different from, or even contrary to our own" (*T*, 316), Hume writes on the importance of processing representation in the economy of passions:

> 'Tis indeed evident, that when we sympathize with the passions and sentiments of others, these movements appear at first in *our* mind as mere ideas, and are conceiv'd to belong to another person, as we conceive any other matter of fact. 'Tis also evident, that the ideas of the affections of others are converted into the very impressions they represent, and that the passions arise in conformity to the images we form of them. (*T*, 319)[219]

In this economy of sympathy, it is of significance to grasp the procedure between ideas, identifying, impressing, and conforming, through which a strong sense of temporality is suggested. Sentiment is treated as "any other matter of fact." It is not subjective, and it requires intellectual effort rather than affective labor to realize. This might be identified as a part of the eighteenth-century civic humanism that is suggested through Joseph Addison and Richard Steele in the first decade of the century, if not earlier.

In their writings, sympathy, and sociality are designated as the basis for "a new kind of virtue, which served national interests by promoting civility and, not incidentally, by strengthening Britain's commerce with the rest of the trading world" (Poovey 152)[220]. The subscribers to their journal *The Spectator* "were directors of the Bank of England ... goldsmiths, private bankers or moneylenders," the largest group of which "included the 'great body of secretaries,

[218] See Alexander Broadie, "Sympathy and the Impartial Spectator," p. 163.
[219] See also Jerome Christensen, *Practicing Enlightenment*, p. 71.
[220] Also see Christensen, *Practicing Enlightenment*, p. 151, note 44.

commissioners, clerks, and agents in the various branches of government, civil and military, required to carry on the war abroad and manage affairs at home'"(Nicholson 55). Thus it becomes their natural concern

to promote a polite and civilizing sense of participation in the new society being developed, acclimatizing its readers to market priorities and procedures and familiarizing them with codes and conventions of recognition and self-recognition appropriate to their place in a burgeoning world. (Nicholson 55)

What is of interest here, however, is to situate Hume in a history of emotions and the history of the writing media. Hume's writing on passion and his act of writing itself mean more than establishing a "polite culture" that mediates "as a validating and confidence-building network of relationships" (Nicholson 55). They require a social constituency of a readership as imagined through the act of reading and writing. They self-consciously involve the changing essence of representation with regard to emotional realities and selfhood. For Hume, writing is an experience of the newly popular print medium, which affects a historical understanding of empirical philosophy and identitarian mediation.

Indeed, Hume carefully distinguishes the way passions derived from literature feel from those derived from real life. For him, the "*feelings* of the passions" caused by poetical fictions are fainter than "what they are when they arise from belief and reality": the passion "feels less firm and solid," and it is but a "mere phantom" of the passion caused by reality (*T*, 631). The point is that the absence of objects and circumstantial realities enhanced by increasing communication and information flow[221] becomes an issue of late eighteenth-century aesthetic theory, which "frequently pondered how an emotional response to an image of a thing should be like and unlike

[221] See Katherine E. Ellison *The Fatal News* and Daniel R. Headrick, *When Information Came of Age*.

a response to the thing itself" (Pinch 114)[222]. The issue becomes complicated in the Humean transposition of a representational work of self into the new forum of print medium through the work of writing. It is part of what Christensen declares "the significance of the printing press to Hume's philosophical project" (136)—the relation of causation in his epistemology of both sense data and history:

> When we infer effects from causes, we must establish the existence of these causes; which we have only two ways of doing, either by an immediate perception of our memory or senses, or by an inference from other causes; which causes again we must ascertain in the same manner, either by a present impression, or by an inference from *their* causes, and so on, till we arrive at some object, which we see or remember. It is impossible for us to carry on our inferences *in infinitum;* and the only thing, that can stop them, is an impression of the memory or senses, beyond which there is no room for doubt or enquiry.

For Hume, this "impression of the memory or the senses" exists merely in a procedural process. It is a means of mediation of something that, in another passage, is attributed to a remotely ancient historical past. Hume's historical knowledge, unlike that of Burke, has a visual beginning:

> Thus we believe that Cæsar was kill'd in the senate-house on the ides of March; and that because this fact is establish'd on the unanimous testimony of historians, who agree to assign this precise time and place to that event. Here are certain characters and letters present either to our memory or senses; which characters we likewise remember to have been us'd as the signs of certain ideas; and these ideas were either in the minds of such as were immediately present at that action, and receiv'd the ideas directly from its existence;

[222] For an elaboration on this observation in David Hume, William Wordsworth and Henry Kames, see Adela Pinch, pp. 114-6.

> or they were deriv'd from the testimony of others, and that again from another testimony, by a visible gradation, 'till we arrive at those who were eye-witnesses and spectators of the event. (*T* 82-3)

The certainty of a historical knowledge is caused by a chain of narration, that is, a "visible gradation" to the original "eye-witnesses and spectators of the event." Hume seems to suggest that there is no room for doubt or enquiry beyond that. The historical causation is manufactured into an establishment of a relational connection and continuity between units previously atomic and disparate.

This sympathetic epistemological and historical relation with "the original, indubitable testimony of an eyewitness to the historical event" (Christensen 138) would gradate as the intermediary connections increase. It can by assured, nonetheless, through "the republic of letters" and "the art of printing:" "One edition passes into another, and that into a third, and so on, till we come to that volume we peruse at present. There is no variation in the steps. After we know one, we know all of them" (*T* 146). Thus, "Europe is at present a copy, at large, of what Greece was formerly a pattern in miniature" (qtd. in Christensen 140). Representations make not merely historical knowledge possible; history becomes loyally printed copies of what was before. The process of mediation takes prevalence over what is mediated. The intermediary, as a consequence of the saturation of the print medium in the eighteenth century, occupies such a significant role of representation that what is supposed to be represented turns into it. The means overwhelms and, thus becomes the end. The proliferation of the medium *remediates* what goes before and what comes after. It becomes more than a mere technical instrument through which the historical and sympathetic—or, sympathetically historical—causation is communicated. This strong sense of reliance upon the printing press for communicating an authentic historical

knowledge exists in Hume's epistemological, philosophical and affective projection. For him, experience as reflected in empirical epistemology and philosophy is interwoven with an obsession with emotion and passion. Communicating an "authentic self" to "the republic of letters" through the print medium creates a specific sociality that could be identified as a "literary career" of the mid-century for him. The work of writing puts him "in a position where he can repeat himself over and over again" (Christensen 142). A career, a historical knowledge, and a proprietary selfhood converge through the possibility made by the print medium. Indeed, as the historian of print culture Elizabeth Eisenstein suggests, the life-long literary career as a modern writer is made possible through the saturating printing technology. It is the work of writing in a

> duplicating process that made possible not only a sequence of improved editions but also a continuous accumulation of fixed records. For it seems to have been permanence that introduced progressive change. The preservation of the old, in brief, launched a tradition of the new. (Eisenstein 124)

This sense of accumulation and progress is built into a social history of modern subjectivity in its proprietary as well as existential aspects.

This is specifically about the role of social sympathy—or sympathetic sociality—in Hume's work of writing. An evil fanatic and the lord of a gloomy, gothic castle as regarded by,more or less,his contemporary James Beattie[223], Hume establishes an economy of sympathy, which is different from that of Wordsworth writing in the late eighteenth century. As "*a communication of sentiments*" (*T*, 324), sympathy is a necessary part of the property transference in sentimental sociality:

> We can form no wish, which has not a reference to society. A perfect solitude is, perhaps, the greatest punishment we can suffer. Every pleasure languishes when enjoyed a-part

[223] See Pinch, p. 40, note 25.

> from company, and every pain becomes more cruel and intolerable. Whatever other passions we may be actuated by; pride, ambition, avarice, curiosity, revenge or lust; the soul or animating principle of them all is sympathy; nor would they have any force, were we to abstract entirely from the thoughts and sentiments of others. Let all the powers and elements of nature conspire to serve and obey one man: Let the sun rise and set at his command: The sea and rivers roll as he pleases, and the earth furnish spontaneously whatever may be useful or agreeable to him: He will still be miserable, till you give him some one person at least, with whom he may share his happiness, and whose esteem and friendship he may enjoy. (*T*, 363)

Here communicated and shared emotions are that of property, the importance of which to a Humean selfhood is even more than a transcendental possession of the universe. Solitude means scarcity and poverty. Sympathetic companionship implements a pleasurable and animating social selfhood. It is a sentimental sociality through a process of abstraction, during which Hume initiates *a necessity of writing* to make a self possible by not being a self, and to make a *medial* empiricism through print media as a literary property in the western Enlightenment.

A recent discussion suggests that the "event" of Enlightenment, one that conventionally occupies roughly a half-century between the 1730s-1740s and the 1780s, emerged "as an effect of" "*proliferating mediations*[224]." Hume's writing and philosophy can be situated in this theoretical and historical light. It is similar to his accounts of taste, through which, as Hume puts it, "considering myself as a man in general, [I] forget, if possible, my individual being and my peculiar circumstances[225]." It is a creation of a public life, *bios politikos*, in the market place of a

[224] See Clifford Siskin and William Warner, "This Is Enlightenment: An Invitation in the Form of an Argument," in *This Is Enlightenment* (Ed. Clifford Siskin and William Warner), pp. 1-36, especially p. 11.
[225] David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste," in *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, p. 239.

literary career, through deploying the pen, one of what Jürgen Habermas calls "public organs[226]", a specific political economy of social and literary labor as an apparatus. In "the context of incipient consumerism in the eighteenth century[227]," labor in representing is not as production but as performance, a performance in the literary marketplace that "is nothing other than a theater" (Christensen 118). Hume is aware of the danger of retreating (or advancing) "into a solitude (or a solidarity) that is either a solipsistic darkness or a violent method" (Christensen 119), which would mean an absence of access to the public, and a loss of the ability of performing as a literary producer. With a fanatic, gloomy and gothic phobia upon such an obsession, he invests theatricality and performance as forms of literary and emotional labor through the work of writing into the marketplace and theater of the printing press. Stephen Greenblatt observes that the new textual medium, indeed, presents a theater of performance through iterated function:

> At the deepest level of the [theatrical] medium itself the motivation is the ... renewal of existence through repetition of the self-constituting act. The character repeats himself in order to continue to be the same character on the stage. Identity is a theatrical invention that must be reiterated if it is to endure. (Greenblatt 201)[228]

In other words, the theatrical space of the textual medium provides the spatial and material base for the invention of an iterable identity that can be produced and reproduced through revising. Thus the Humean theatricality becomes therapeutic for the disease of solitude, and the social sentiment of sympathy provides the cure, which is materialized through the act of writing. Historically, the concept of sympathy, as in the phrase "sympathetic nervous system," belongs in Graeco-Roman physiology and medicine and in particular figured significantly in Stoic

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[226] See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, pp. 2-3.
[227] Christensen, p. 118, note 24.
[228] *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (Chicago UP, 1980).

thought[229]. Hume may well have been familiar with the medical concept of sympathy. It is illustrated in a tripartite classification of causes of disease in parts of the body by James Crawford (d. 1732), a member of the Physiology Library to which Hume also belonged. Crawford was also a teacher of medicine at Edinburgh University where Hume was a student. He writes:

> That a Part is affected by *Protopathia*, when it is essentially in itself lesed [=diseased], and owes not its Origin to any Communication from another Part. Or by *Idiopathia*, when tho' it be essentially lesed, yet the hurt was at first propagated to it from some other Part. Or lastly, by *Sympathy* or Consent, when the Part in itself is yet whole and sound, and is only affected by the fault of some other Part ... Diseases by Consent are propagated from a Distance, (in which case only I shall consider them) either by long Muscles or Nerves[230].

This medical discourse of sympathy is frequently taken through the Scottish Enlightenment, and used "by physicians both in respect of physiology and physical sickness and also in respect of the psychology of physician/patient relations" (Broadie 161). Hume's anxiety about solitary sympathetic nerves motivates an *ad infinitum* theatricality in print medium through the iterable act of writing to foster a fragmentary identitarian existence, which obtains a sense of causation and continuity. Writing, while creating and curing more sympathy, is both poison and medicine[231].

III. ii. Theatrical Presence in Print Medium and Masculinity in Media Modernity

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[229] See Alexander Broadie, "Sympathy and the Impartial Spectator," p. 161.
[230] James Crawford, "Practical Remarks on the Sympathy of the Parts of the Body by the Late Dr. James Crawford Professor of Medicine in the Universe of Edinburgh," article XV, in *Medical Essays and Observations, Revised and Published by a Society in Edinburgh*, vol. 5, pt. 2, (1744); quoted in Alexander Broadie, "Sympathy and the Impartial Spectator," p. 161.
[231] As Jacques Derrida traces the Greek word "pharmakon." See his "Plato's Pharmacy" in *Dissemination*, pp. 61-171.

In this sense, "sympathy," for Hume, refers to a feeling as well as a principle of communication of opinions. It correlates to issues of the emergence of modern subjectivity, individualism, and literary character through a history of mediation upon the body. In a phenomenological perspective upon the coming of modernity from the medieval to early modern theater, William Egginton argues that examining relations of space is more significant for investigating a historical origin of modern "subjectivity." He details the notion of "presence."—For Egginton, the medieval spatial conception that was "full":

> Rather than taking place in an empty, geometrically determined space in which stories can be played out in relative independence of the reality of the audience's world, the hyperbolic solidity of the space of medieval drama reflected the instability of the distinction between the reality being represented and the reality of the representation. (55)[232]

The Spanish sixteenth century, as Egginton suggests, begins to witness a flattened space designating "the border between the real and the imaginary." Thus it becomes a "screen" (108), along which exists the "empty space" of modern theater. This "theatrical space" "is constituted by the presence of bodies in it, as opposed to the place where bodies may be shown" (56). In regard to the relation between subjectivity and theatricality, Egginton writes:

> This telescoping of separable spaces requires audiences to negotiate different levels of reality, which they do by means of characters or avatars, virtual selves that become conditioned to this new, fundamentally scopic organization of space, in which they watch and are watched watching; they become bodies saturated by the gaze. (121)

[232] William Egginton, *How the World Became a Stage: Presence, Theatricality, and the Question of Modernity*.

Egginton's suggestion of theatricality as a term of media analysis[233] is helpful for our historical investigation of the print medium in the eighteenth century. This new form of theatricality is manifested through an obsession with spatial presence, and also exists in the print medium, which offers a culture of abstraction in the "empty space" to be filled by iterable performative identities through the work of writing. Identity becomes a spatial presence, the absence of which is darkness and means non-identity. Modern subjectivity comes through this act of *filling*, which is realized in Hume as *writing* and *communicating* through sympathy. It is analogous to the *ad infinitum* shifting visual perspectives of watching and being watched through the audience. Charles Taylor suggests that modernity can be read as that experience whose leitmotif is of inwardness and detachment from self, which allows the emergence of both the themes of self-control and of self-exploration. For him, this self is put into a visually "separate, autonomous sphere of inwardness, capable of being separated from itself—as agent and object—and acting upon, manipulating, or exploring itself in a state of disengagement":

> What one finds running through all the aspects of this constellation—the new philosophy, the methods of administration and military organization, the new spirit of government, and methods of discipline—is a growing ideal of a human agent who is able to remake himself by methodological and disciplined action. What this calls for is the ability to take an instrumental stance to one's given properties, desires, inclinations, tendencies, habits of thought, and feelings so that they can be worked on, doing away with some and strengthening others, until one meets the desired specifications[234].

While the concept of "agency" may be alien to the eighteenth century, this observation and discipline of a modern "self" through engaging and disengaging is reflected in Hume's writing as

[233] See especially Egginton, chapter 5.
[234] Charles Taylor, "Inwardness and the Culture of Modernity," *Philosophical Interventions in the Unfinished Project of Enlightenment*, p. 99. Quoted from Egginton, pp. 128-29.

periodic melancholy—a phobia of solitary being, away from the communicating space of writing; thus, a lack of media sociality where the productivity of self is. This phobia itself, in a way, is productive of a subjective self. It is a moment of producing an inward self that was not normal, but still gothic in the middle of the eighteenth century, several decades before the coming of modern mass media.

Contemporary moral philosopher Charles Taylor puts this into a philosophical language of reflexivity: "What we turn to in radical reflexivity seems to demand description as something 'inner.' This spatial metaphor is irresistible to describe the 'space' opened by self-scrutiny[235]." The moment of producing an inward interiority, a spatial self-scrutiny that takes enormous labor and sentimentality, produces gothic melancholy. This reflexivity—the "Inner Eye," according to Richard Rorty, is not new but an invention of the seventeenth century[236]. Prior to Descartes and Locke, Rorty explains, there was no

> conception of the human mind as an inner space in which both pains and clear and distinct ideas passed in review before a single Inner Eye ... The novelty was the notion of a single inner space in which bodily and perceptual sensations ('confused ideas of sense and imagination' in Descartes's phrase), mathematical truths, moral rules, the idea of God, moods of depression, and all the rest of what we now call 'mental' were objects of quasi-observation. (Rorty 50)

Egginton takes a less intellectual, more materialistic approach to this serious problem of the seventeenth century. He suggests that this was "a theatrical experience of spatiality, one in which viewers had learned to become disembodied spectators of an action that only involved them as characters, as virtual rather than actual participants" (Egginton 138). It is a historical

[235] Taylor, "Inwardness and the Culture of Modernity," p. 103. Quoted from Egginton, p. 196, note 48.
[236] See Egginton, p. 138.

case that this "inner eye" is emblematic of a modern reflexive subjectivity, which originates from the seventeenth century. Along with it comes a shifting concept and practice of theatrical spatiality of presence. In the eighteenth century this presence proliferated, and this theatrical space expands with the coming of the modern print medium. Philosophically, this needs an association with the notion of disengagement, as Taylor puts it:

> Reason and human excellence requires a stance of disengagement. 'Disengagement' here is a term of art, meaning a stance toward something which might otherwise serve to define our identity or purposes, whereby we separate ourselves from it by defining it as at best of instrumental significance[237].

On a societal scale, Habermas calls this the public sphere. This subjectivity, "as the innermost core of the private, was always already oriented to an audience" (Habermas 49). The eighteenth-century Britain debated about taste and began to count disinterestedness as among its tradition of aesthetics. David Hume takes this as a device for disengaging, philosophically and experientially[238]. This very sense of disinterestedness is specifically suggested by David Hume's change of his own family name: Home. Considering Hume was the youngest son of a distinguished Scottish family in the system of primogeniture, he would not inherit his father's estate and must leave Home behind[239]. This change of family name is not merely about a new identity obtained, but also, more significantly, about a voluntary creation of identitarian spatial crevices between "home" and "not-home," the filling of which requires a mediation of sympathetic sociality as presence, and thus literary property. This is fulfilled through a theatrical

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[237] Taylor, "Inwardness and the Culture of Modernity," p. 103. Quoted from Egginton, p. 137.
[238] Though in Britain the word "aesthetics" did not achieve a triumph comparable to the Wolffian tradition in Germany until the end of the nineteenth century. See Marc Redfield *Phantom Formations*, pp6-7 and Jerome Stolnitz "On the Origins of 'Aesthetic disinterestedness'" in *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 20.2 (1961): 131-43. In a sense, aesthetics and economics developed out of moral philosophy, with economics probably originating from aesthetics. See Howard Caygill, *Art of Judgment* and John Guillory *Cultural Capital,* pp. 269-340. We will come back to this point while addressing Adam Smith.
[239] See Jerome Christensen, *Practicing Enlightenment*, p. 57 n. 14, and Adela Pinch, pp. 27-8.

performance of the pen apparatus in the modern print medium, which establishes an exchangeable space for the eighteenth-century men of letters. Hume deviates or departs from a monolithic and normalized "I" so as to be productive of himself as a literary character and in a literary career—"a versatile middleman" (Christensen 151).

In "Of Essay-Writing," Hume defines his identity as an "ambassador" between "the learned and conversable:" "I shall give Intelligence to the Learned of whatever passes in Company, and shall endeavor to import into Company whatever Commodities I find in my native Country proper for their Use and Entertainment" (*Essays* 535). A role of the middle print medium is structurally possible out of its relation with the other two media: the scribal and learned usually taken as masculine, the oral and conversable as feminine[240]. It is suggested by his turn from an unsuccessful moral philosopher—"the least entertaining and least political of all eighteenth-century genres" of knowledge producers (Poovey 146)—to an essay writer[241]. Essay writing is a new form of relationship and affiliation deploying the publicity of reason and emotion. In *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, Hume makes this point:

> A gloomy, hair-brained enthusiast, after his death, may have a place in the calendar; but will scarcely ever be admitted, when alive, into intimacy and society, except by those who are as delirious and dismal as himself[242].

This suggests a strong sense of dependence regarding exertions and relations of co-workers in the social labor of writing. The dependence expresses an anxiety over the rising public: "The

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[240] It is noteworthy that this is defined in a commercial terminology, which was anticipated by Joseph Addison in *Spectator* no. 69, indicating that "factors in the trading world are what ambassadors are in the polite world" (qtd. in Christensen 151).

[241] In the eighteenth century, "because it both sought to generate knowledge—in the form of a conversation—and elicited identification with a more or less particularized speaker, the essay constituted the generic bridge between experimental moral philosophy and the novel, where yet another mode of knowledge production was being codified" (Poovey 198). For this turn and its relation to an epistemological shift regarding an emergent problem of liberal governmentality, see Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact*, chapter 4, pp. 144-213.

[242] Quoted in Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion*, p. 17.

Public is the most capricious Mistress we can court[243]." In a strong repentant passage upon authorship, Hume writes:

> But I am so sick of all those Disputes and so full of Contempt towards all factious Judgments and indeed towards the Prejudices of what is call'd the Public, that I repent heartily my ever having committed any thing to Print. Had I a Son I shou'd warn him as carefully against the dangerous Allurements of Literature as James did his Son against those of Women; tho if his Inclination was as strong as mine in my Youth, it is likely, that the warning would be to as little Purpose in the one Case as it usually is in the other[244].

Interestingly, the public medium is portrayed as feminine, that is, "the most capricious Mistress," where "dangerous Allurements of Literature" are analogous to "those of Women." The dangerous and consumptive public is represented as a feminine sphere, which creates a career for him and makes the work of writing a property for him, and it replaces the son that he never had. Thus Hume expresses a strong sense of castration in his work. The development of a literary career is an articulated anxiety over the absence of an authentic masculinity that demands constant writing work to meet its requirements. As Jerome Christensen writes: "Hume not only did not father a son, but the enabling condition of his career is to respond to the allure of the feminine public by a castration that makes authorship a necessarily barren romance" (96). As a matter of fact, Hume establishes "the imagery of mutilation and references to various texts as children" or as a corpulent body[245]. In a letter to David Mallet, he writes:

> The Truth is, I am entirely idle at present so far as regards writing; and I am very happy in that indolent State. My Friends tell me, that I will not continue long so, and that I will tire of having nothing to do but read and converse; but I am resolved to resist, as a Temptation

[243] *The Letters of David Hume*, 1:222.
[244] *The Letters of David Hume*, 1:461
[245] Christensen, p. 197, note 12.

> of the Devil, any Impulse towards writing, and I am really so much ashamed of myself when I see my Bulk on a Shelf, as well as when I see it in a Glass, that I would fain prevent my growing more corpulent either way. [246]

The cumulative quantity of writing work is made analogous to the economy of the writer's body. It communicates a sense of boredom and tedium upon literary labor, as well as a desire to be abstinent from an addiction to performative theatricality in the print medium. Hume seems to suggest that writing too much—production and reproduction in work, that is—would cause corpulence in the body, and thus transform the body into one lacking sympathetic sentiments and virility. Mary Poovey argues that *Treatise of Human Nature*, as Hume's first publication, was already intended

> to the marketplace of ideas, where writers competed for readers and respect. Without a university position and acutely aware of the rewards and punishments meted out to writers in the burgeoning age of print, Hume increasingly sought to turn what might have seemed like an unfortunate necessity—the imperative to please his audience—into a stylistic practice infused with philosophical and moral import. (Poovey 204)

This audience imagined as feminine might reflect "a pervasive cultural ambivalence repeatedly expressed toward women by would-be arbiters of culture and morality in this period." It "expressed a mixture of loathing and admiration for the women whose consumption and production so indelibly marked the emergent consumer society" (Poovey 212). This is also suggested by recent feminist criticism of the work of Swift, Pope, and Richardson[247]. In the way that "money functions as the standard of value," "she functions strictly as the *standard* of taste" (Christensen 99). Before this standard, Hume is obsessed with his fertility, health, and offspring.

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[246] *The Letters of David Hume*, 1:369.
[247] See Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact*, p. 212, note 78.

In this sense, he provides a case in which masculinity is a defense strategy adopted in the coming of the print and literary modernity.

III. iii. Personal History of Writing in a Grammatical Issue of Identity of the Enlightenment

This strategy is also manifested in the autobiographic piece "My Own Life," the last essay that Hume wrote in his life. At the beginning of its last paragraph[248], we read: "To conclude historically with my own character. I am, or rather was (for that is the style I must now use in speaking of myself, which emboldens me the more to speak my sentiments); I was, I say….[249]" The literary death of an "I" or "Home" makes a transactional scarcity in the commerce of writing. It actualizes Hume's scribbling on "many a Quire of Paper, in which there is nothing contained but my own Inventions," which is put at the beginning of his *Treatise*. Writing, thereby, becomes an aesthetic tool for self-fashioning in an economy of capitalism. In his final composition Hume writes retrospectively:

> It is difficult for a man to speak long of himself without vanity; therefore, I shall be short. It may be thought an instance of vanity that I pretend at all to write my life; but this Narrative shall contain little more than the History of my Writings; as indeed, almost all my life has been spent in literary pursuits and occupations[250].

Roy Pascal is not accurate when he comments that

> Hume's *Life*, important historically as one of the first extended accounts by a writer of his

[248] Here is an opening paragraph of Hume's "My Own Life:" I was born the 26th of April 1711, old style, at Edinburgh. I was of a good family, both by father and mother: my father's family is a branch of the Earl of Home's, or Hume's; and my ancestors had been proprietors of the estate, which my brother possesses, for several generations. My mother was daughter of Sir David Falconer, President of the College of Justice: the title of Lord Halkerton came by succession to her brother."
[249] *The Letters of David Hume*, 1:7.
[250] *The Letters of David Hume*, 1:1.

> literary progress, fails to reach greatness because of Hume's unwillingness to tell us of anything but the facts directly relevant to his publications; from it one could scarcely guess at the content of his Essays[251].

It is exactly in this "little more than the History of my Writings," that this writing argues we have a theatrical imposition in print medium to satisfy the created discrepancy. This is a social consequence of moving away from a society that was dominated by "strategy rather than economy[252]" into a literary culture of modern market economy. It reflects a shift from the primogeniture system into the literary career marketplace. Ronald Paulson argues that Joseph Addison

> modulates the austere virtue of civic humanism into politeness, and extends the amenities across a broader spectrum of society, noting that the 'man of a Polite Imagination' feels 'greater Satisfaction in the Prospect of Fields and Meadows, than another does in the Possession.

For Paulson, this aesthetic pleasure is "precisely because it is *not* his own property and he sees in it the perspective of commerce and paper money, rather than inheritance, upkeep, and tenantry" (50-51)[253]. In Hume, this sense of property in representation through the work of writing is satisfied not merely in "the perspective of commerce and paper money," but more in inscribing emotions through working as part of an interiorized, and thus propertied selfhood.

This mapping of interior emotions is a means to socialize the relation between the writer and his public readers. It is made very clear in one of the passages taken from the *Treatise*:

> We may infer from them [the fleeing men], that the uneasiness of being contemn'd

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[251] *Design and Truth in Autobiography*. Quoted in Jerome Christensen, *Practicing Enlightenment*, p.45-6, n. 2.
[252] R. H. Campbell, *Scotland since 1707: The Rise of an Industrial Society*, p. 7. Quoted in Jerome Christensen, *Practicing Enlightenment*, p. 40.
[253] Paulson, *Beautiful, Novel, and Strange*.

> depends on sympathy, and that sympathy depends on the relation of objects to ourselves; since we are most uneasy under the contempt of persons, who are both related to us by blood, and contiguous in place. Hence we seek to diminish this sympathy and uneasiness by separating these relations, and placing ourselves in a contiguity to strangers, and at a distance from relations. (*T*, 322)

The local sympathy from blood relations or geographic closeness is rather detrimental, and thus makes a stronger sympathy more necessary for distances. This role of benevolence of sympathy upon the body, whether of oneself or others, is among the moral philosophical agenda in the Scottish Enlightenment. For instance, Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) takes sympathy as a fact that is included in his anti-Hobbesian doctrine. Unlike a warring-state between individuals, benevolence is natural to humans for Hutcheson. By sympathy or compassion, as Hutcheson writes:

> We are dispos'd to study the Interest of others, without any Views of private Advantage … Every Mortal is made uneasy by any grievous Misery he sees another involv'd in, unless the Person be imagin'd evil, in a moral Sense: Nay, it is almost impossible for us to be unmov'd, even in that Case. (qtd. in Broadie, 160)

In Hume, the provincial "strategy" gives way to economically relational "contiguity to strangers." Or, "ourself … is in reality nothing" (*T*, 340). What wants in geographic and physical "reality" needs fueling in global and representational "fiction" through writing, by which a "freely" self-actualizing personality is achieved. This economy of scarcity or a fictionalized self of sentimental deprivation is captured by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in their analysis of the capitalist deformation of desire: the "deliberate creation of lack as a function of the market

economy is the art of a dominant class[254]." Thus the Humean self becomes a necessity of production in a literary career in the early commerce of capitalism, not *that* much away from his original occupation in a merchant's office. With those "as delirious and dismal as himself", "in a contiguity to strangers, and at a distance from relations," the Humean self is always in the practice of a "process," the term that Northrop Frye used to characterize the artistic formations of the "age of sensibility[255]." It is a career of the men of letters, whose practice, like the society whose economy his career reflects, is "maintained at a continuous present by various devices of repetition[256]." A repetition of the imposition of a fictional self into a system of rational abstraction is a move "from observed particulars to general claims about universals like 'man' by claiming that their universals were somehow derived from an additive process that identified the 'greatest good of the greatest number' by looking at the philosopher's (representative) self" (Poovey, 149). For the British, and more frequently Scottish, moral philosophers of the eighteenth century, "the problem epitomized by identity becomes the problem of philosophy" (Poovey 201). "Considering myself as a man in general, [I must] forget, if possible, my individual being and my peculiar circumstances" (239), as Hume writes in "Of the Standard of Taste[257]."

Jerome Christensen argues that, for Hume and his fellow men of letters, "the general term that subsumed 'discourse' and 'conversation' was 'correspondence,'" and that "in the empiricist epistemology knowledge depends on the correspondence or analogy between sense impressions and mental ideas"(Christensen 10). Mary Poovey examines Hume's repudiation of experimental moral philosophy and his turn to the genre of the essay writing. She writes that:

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[254] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, p. 28.
[255] Quoted in Jerome Christensen, *Practicing Enlightenment*, p. 12.
[256] Christensen, p. 12.
[257] In Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary*.

> eighteenth century attempts to produce knowledge about a universal subject through experiment coexisted with another kind of knowledge project, which sought not so much to generate facts about a universal subjectivity as to engage readers' subjective response in the service of producing something else, which eighteenth-century writers variously called conversation, moral emulation, and self-improvement. (Poovey 150)

The concluding part of Book I of Hume's *Treatise* (1739) suggests a case of this experiment with conversation, the epistemological correlation it promotes, and the sympathetic sociality such experiment and knowledge production build. Hume writes:

> But setting aside some metaphysicians of this kind, I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind, that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement. Our eyes cannot turn in their sockets without varying our perceptions. Our thought is still more variable than our sight; and our other senses and faculties contribute to this change; nor is there any single power of the soul, which remains unalterably the same, perhaps for one moment. The mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance; pass, re-pass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations. (*T*, 252-53)

Self is put into a flux of theatrical performance. The physical phenomena accessible to sight and perceptions succeeding each other "with an inconceivable rapidity" contribute to a constantly altering soul at any moment. To put it in another way, the identitarian existence becomes an experiment through its relation with various "others" to encounter "in a contiguity to strangers." Rather than realized in (moral) philosophical self-reflection, this self is more like a procession

illustrated in a natural philosophy laboratory experiment that is indispensable with representations[258]:

> We must therefore glean up our experiments in this science from a cautious observation of human life, and take them as they appear in the common course of the world, by men's behavior in company, in affairs, and in their pleasures. Where experiments of this kind are judiciously collected and compared, we may hope to establish on them a science, which will not be inferior in certainty, and will be much superior in utility to any other of human comprehension. (*Treatise* xviii-xix)

Self-reflection and premeditation yield to observation of "others," which is made possible by a burgeoning quantity of anthropological materials supplied through traders, travelers, missionaries, and colonial administrators in the century[259]. The treatise illustrates a sympathetic "science" with which to experiment with general human understanding "in company, in affairs, and in their pleasures." This ethnographical approach to experiential data as a necessary extension of self is expressed more explicitly in Hume's *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*:

> Records of wars, intrigues, factions, and revolutions are so many *collections of experiments*, by which the politician or moral philosopher fixes the principles of his science, in the same manner as the physician or natural philosopher becomes acquainted with the nature of plants, minerals, and other external objects, by the experiments which he forms concerning them[260].

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[258] Regarding the relation between the emergence of modern laboratory science and representation, see Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer's *Leviathan and the Air-Pump*, and John Bender, "Novel Knowledge: Judgment, Experience, Experiment".

[259] Alan Bewell, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment*, p. 19.

[260] *The Philosophical Works of David Hume*, 4:64, my emphasis. The practice of experimental moral philosophy in the eighteenth century is devised in the image of natural philosophy, as suggested in this passage. In Scottish universities, natural and moral philosophies not only coexisted but overlapped. See Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact*, pp. 175-76.

Selfhood is put under the gaze of a medical physician and a natural philosopher. It is, in a sense, objectified. Thus, subjectivity is achieved as a visual sympathy or understanding. It is theatrically established, and it always remains fluid in conversable exchanges.

In a contemporary sense, this theatrical metaphor reminds of the theatrical spatiality of John Malkovich's body in Spike Jonze's film *Being John Malkovich* (1999). In the film, theatricality is also used to indicate the constant flux of the mind in the sense of visuality and ethnography of selfhood. The dispossessed human body of Malkovich's is similarly "no longer a self-contained vessel." It is "the vehicle of a no less self-contained soul" and does not demarcate "the internal self-containment of a subject" either. Thus it becomes "a kind of apartment house or, better, a dwelling for transients," "as a temporary container and as an observation post, something like a loge in a theater" (Weber 317). In the cases of Hume and this film, a strong sense of theatricality is displayed through the body and mind site. This reminds of Walter Benjamin's writing about Brecht's Epic Theater, in which he describes the actor's ability to "fall out of one's role artistically" and by implication to "fall" into another one (qtd. in Weber, 2004 317). The site of Malkovich's body is "thus the site of a struggle for 'possession' in which expropriation and reappropriation alternate" (Weber, 2004 318), as Samuel Weber puts it. The theatrical mind stage of Hume's is not a *tabula rasa* either. It is a social stage representing a causal continuity as performative and articulating an identity. Hume famously writes:

> … all the nice and subtile questions concerning personal identity can never possibly be decided, and are to be regarded rather as grammatical than as philosophical difficulties. Identity depends on the relations of ideas; and these relations produce identity, by means of that easy transition they occasion. But as the relations, and the easiness of the transition may diminish by insensible degrees, we have no just standard, by which we can decide any

> dispute concerning the time, when they acquire or lose a title to the name of identity. All the disputes concerning the identity of connected objects are merely verbal, except so far as the relation of parts gives rise to some fiction or imaginary principle of union…. (*T*, 262)

Out of the grammatical as well as the verbal, Hume composes a literary career. The sense of temporality in the transfer of different perceptions and relations of ideas regarding the organization of an identity leads to "the *History* of my Writings" (emphasis mine.): "Thus we feign the continu'd existence of the perceptions of our senses, to remove the interruption; and run into the notion of a *soul*, and *self*, and *substance*, to disguise the variation." Hume admits in the very grammar of his sentence:

> I cannot compare the soul more properly to any thing than to a republic or commonwealth in which the several members are united by the reciprocal ties of government and subordination, and give rise to other persons, who propagate the same republic in the incessant changes of its parts. And as the same individual republic may not only change its members, but also its laws and constitutions; in like manner the same person may vary his character and disposition, as well as his impressions and ideas, without losing his identity. Whatever changes he endures, his several parts are still connected by the relation of causation. And in this view our identity with regard to the passions serves to corroborate that with regard to the imagination, by the making our distant perceptions influence each other, and by giving us a present concern for our past or future pains or pleasures. (*T*, 261)

The self is more like a segregation of different parts, which may change with relations and transitions of ideas. As a "fiction or imaginary principle of union," the identity issue is dependent upon "the relation of causation" to construct a future history. This sense of a

multiplying self into segments takes an introspective interior dialogue as a means of self-government. It might not have struck Hume's contemporaries as strange. Through a corroboration of "the passions" and "the imagination," it is part of the new science of aesthetics of the century. Shaftesbury and his *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711) is one of its beginnings. For Shaftesbury, an introspective self resembles the "art or science" of surgery. Similar to Hume's, it suggests a social process of interaction:

> Accordingly, if it be objected against the above-mention'd Practice, and Art of Surgery, "That we can no-where find such a meek Patient, with whom we can in reality make bold, and for whom nevertheless we are sure to preserve the greatest Tenderness and Regard": I assert the contrary; and say, for instance, That we have each of us Our Selves to practise on. "Mere Quibble! (you'll say:) For who can thus multiply himself into two Persons, and be his own Subject? Who can properly laugh at himself, or find in his heart to be either merry or severe on such an occasion?" Go to the Poets, and they will present you with many Instances. Nothing is more common with them, than this sort of Soliloquy. A Person of profound Parts, or perhaps of ordinary Capacity, happens, on some occasion, to commit a Fault. He is concern'd for it. He comes alone upon the Stage; looks about him, to see if any body be near; then takes himself to task, without sparing himself in the least. You wou'd wonder to hear how close he pushes matters, and how thorowly he carrys on the business of Self-dissection. By virtue of this Soliloquy he becomes two distinct Persons. He is Pupil and Preceptor. He teaches, and he learns.[261]

The poetic soliloquy is a theatrical skill for self-examination, which creates a self-dissecting interiority. For Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury—"devoted disciple of Renaissance

[261] *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, vol. 1, part I, section I.

neo-Platonism" (Eagleton, 1990 3), it is a punitive as well as pedagogical necessity. This surgical discourse is part of the emergent aesthetics of the eighteenth century, "a creative turn to the sensuous body, as well as an inscribing of that body with a subtly oppressive law" (Eagleton, 1990 9). The split and fragmentation leads to what Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) proposes as the modern "Spirit in Self-Estrangement" in his *Phenomenology of Mind*[262]. Different social and political positions are "united by the reciprocal ties of government and subordination," and would enhance a different somatic body of the republican self.

III. iv. Causation in Print Medium as Empirical Philosophy

What remains of significance for Hume is that of "relation of causation." It is not explicitly stated in Shaftesbury's aesthetics. As a key issue in Hume's philosophy, it is contoured by a principle of property in Hume's construction of aesthetics. This is correlated as an epistemological question. Hume writes in the "Appendix" to the *Treatise*:

> Philosophers begin to be reconcil'd to the principle, that we have no idea of external substance, distinct from the ideas of particular qualities. This must pave the way for a like principle with regard to the mind, that we have no notion of it, distinct from the particular perceptions. If perceptions are distinct existences, they form a whole only by being connected together. But connexions among distinct existences are ever discoverable by human understanding. We only feel a connexion or determination of the thought, to pass from one object to another. It follows, therefore, that the thought alone finds personal identity, when reflecting on the train of past perceptions, that compose a mind, the ideas of

[262] See Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity*, pp. 33-39.

them are felt to be connected together, and naturally introduce each other. (*T* 635)

Introspective identity becomes that of an iterable process of being connected. An intellectual labor of "thought" is needed to make a "train," and thus a history of perceptions and ideas so as to maintain a continuity of the "distinct existences." It creates crevices between fragments and parts, and it anticipates what Ira Livingston detects as "disciplinarity" in the "portable panopticon" of Romantic poetry: "a *plaid*, a pattern of patterns that works not b being radiated from a center but b generating correspondences among nodes in multiple networks" (Livingston 21). This poetics of processive parts is manifested in a materialist and property-like form through the publication history of the *Treatise*. Jerome Christensen examines this in detail:

Although the first edition was published in 1739 and 1740 (and remained unsold in 1756), sections of the *Treatise* appeared in *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748), *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751), and the essay 'Of Passions' (1752); another portion was intended for the 'Fourth Dissertation,' which was never set up in print. The *Treatise* appeared under the imprint of three publishers: books 1 and 2 were printed by John Noon; book 3 was originally published by Thomas Longmans; and Andrew Millar published all the later reworkings of the *Treatise* during Hume's lifetime. (Christensen 122)

In a metaphoric sense, human nature and understanding of an identity is never an organic unity. Rather, it consists of various parts, which are materialized and realized through different compositions. The body of work finds it analogous in the forms of a book and aesthetics of selfhood. It demands intellectual labor and the work of writing through the corresponding public organ of the pen. Christensen argues that:

It is not the immediate possession of the whole that defines the value of the *Treatise* for Hume or its interest for anyone else; rather, it is the relation in which those parts stand to

> one another and to the individual. The scattering of parts, as long as they are held together as property by copyright, is a means of turning scarcity into plenty. (Christensen 124)

In other words, to establish a relation of this kind is Hume's strategy to accumulate his capital achieved on limited labor and life-time. The aesthetics of a fragmentary self—what Shaftesbury calls the "Art of Surgery" of self-dissecting—has obtained a material history in the print medium of the eighteenth century. This poetics about parts constitutes the creation of an emotional selfhood through the work of writing. The organization involved in working through constant revisions and publications for the men of letters since the emergence of a print culture reminds of what Antonio Gramsci holds as the difference between the orator and the new intellectual:

> The mode of existence of the new intellectual can no longer consist of eloquence, the external and momentary arousing of sentiments and passions, but must consist of being actively involved in practical life, as a builder, an organizer, 'permanently persuasive' because he is not purely an orator—and nevertheless superior to the abstract mathematical spirit[263].

As a process, the dispersion of the work of writing and the knowledge it produces is analogous to the constancy of revision, and partition. This uniformed replication allowed by the printing press makes the birth of the modern author. The copyrighted relation of the mechanically reproduced knowledge to the author is what "connects," which is a relation previously impossible to the print culture. According to Elizabeth Eisenstein,

> Scribal culture could not sustain the patenting of inventions or the copyrighting of literary compositions. It worked against the concept of intellectual property rights. It did not lend itself to preserving traces of personal idiosyncrasies, to the public airing of private thoughts, or to any of the forms of silent publicity that have shaped consciousness of self

[263] Quoted in Jerome Christensen, p. 126.

> during the past five centuries[264].

It is part of the historical proposition made through modernity, like the financial revolution of the 1690s, during which, as J. G. A. Pocock argues, a crisis in the traditional association of landed property with propriety was precipitated:

> Property moved from being the object of ownership and right to being the subject of production and exchange, and … effect of this on the proposition that property was the basis of social personality [which] was to make personality itself explicable in terms of a material and historical process of diversification, refinement and perhaps ultimate decay and renewal.[265]

The print medium creates publicity of "personal idiosyncrasies," "private thoughts," and "consciousness of self" that maintains the continuity of identity through production (writing), exchange (publication), and reproduction (revision or refinement, or re-edition).

For Hume, the capital realized through the publicity of print medium is that of scarcity, which is unequally distributed through an economy of emotions: "There is no such passion in human minds, as the love of mankind, merely as such, independent of personal qualities" (*T* 309). Emotion exists merely as a reflection of a diversity of personalities. This, however, does not mean that there does not exist universality of human love or understanding:

> The skin, pores, muscles, and nerves of a day-labourer are different from those of a man of quality: So are his sentiments, actions and manners. The different stations of life influence the whole fabric, external and internal; and different stations arise necessarily, because uniformly, from the necessary and uniform principles of human nature. Men cannot live without society, and cannot be associated without government. Government makes a

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[264] *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, pp. 229-30.
[265] J. G. A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 119

> distinction of property, and establishes the different ranks of men. This produces industry, traffic, manufactures, law-suits, war, leagues, alliances, voyages, travels, cities, fleets, ports, and all those other actions and objects, which cause such a diversity, and at the same time maintain such an uniformity in human life. (*T*, 402)

Analogous to the train of perceptions, feelings and opinions are made into a bundle with the grammatical issue of identity. The republic is composed of a diversity of careers, between which "a uniformity in human life" is somehow established through association and exchanges in the public. The "distinction of property" and "different ranks of men" work into a sentimental economy of accordance, similar to a processive construction of a personal identity. The necessary mediation from the government takes the "relation of causation" further into a distinction between nature and culture, self and society, external and internal, sensibility and commerce. It forms diversifications and fragments. This point anticipates William James in a moment of scientific psychology in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890):

> *In its widest possible sense… a man's Self is the sum total of all that he CAN call his*, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank-account[266]. (italicized sic.)

A self is a composition of *ad infinitum* partitions. It can claim itself as a property in its structural relation with others, physical and affective, exterior and interior. This probably explains, for Hume, that "History" of his self "shall be short." It is not merely because of what Hume claims as "difficult for a man to speak long of himself without vanity" (*Essays* xxxi), but more significantly, of just a practical impossibility to reiterate all the processes and qualities. Literally,

[266] William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, p. 291. Quoted from Daniel M. Gross, *The Secret History of Emotion*, p. 120.

it is beyond humans to re-live life as each life has gone through different impressions, perceptions, and ideas in the Humean process of "identity." It is beyond "little more than the History of my Writings" (*Essays* xxxi).

Samuel Weber outlines a critical history of theatricality as medium in western tradition. In his short chapter on two contemporary films *Being John Malkovich* and David Cronenberg's *eXistenZ* (1999), he defines "theater" as what "signifies the *imposition of borders* rather than a *representational-aesthetic genre*." "Theatricality," for him, is a "*problematic process of placing, framing, situating* rather than as a process of representation" (Weber, 2004 315). It is exactly this "little more than the History of my Writings" in Hume that initiates and actualizes a grammatical and fictionalized Humean self-identity, which is a concrete example of objectifying the personal in an exchange economy of the print. After all, it is in between "Home" and "Hume"— "home" and "not being home"—that the name change was made in the first place. This initiation makes possible a realization of a theatrical medium in a writing career through its "imposition of borders" and "placing, framing, situating" in a sentimental sociality of sympathy. Theatricality is realized in the presence in print and literary medium, which becomes iterable and iterated in Hume's empiricism and discourse of experience. This reminds of what Horkheimer and Adorno call the "totalitarianism" of the Enlightenment:

> For enlightenment is as totalitarian as any system. Its untruth does not consist in what its romantic enemies have always reproached it for: analytic method, return to elements, dissolution through reflective thought, but instead in the fact that for enlightenment the process is always decided from the start. When in mathematical procedure the unknown becomes the unknown quantity of the equation, this marks it as well-known even before any value is inserted … Thinking objectifies itself to become an automatic, self-

> activating process; an impersonation of the machine that it produces itself so that ultimately the machine can replace it[267].

Writing, like the republic's government, becomes a machine to produce and reproduce itself, a thing not being able to be captured through other writing about it. This is why "the history of my Writings" is almost impossible. Knowledge production, through initiating and maintaining a selfhood, is an enlightenment system made possible through a uniform process of *pressing* and *impressing* with presence through the print medium.

The "totalitarian" empiricist knowledge production, on the one hand, depends on the correspondence or analogy between sense impressions and mental ideas. On the other hand, it depends on continual and natural exchanges of ideas between one person and another. At the end of the discussion of how sympathy explains our esteem for the rich and powerful, Hume remarks: "The minds of men are mirrors to one another, not only because they reflect each others emotions, but also because those rays of passions, sentiments and opinions may be often reverberated, and may decay away by insensible degrees" (*T*, 365). Emotions, indeed, play a very significant role in the Humean empiricist epistemology of selfhood. The affective correspondence with others—sympathy, that is—"appears to be a phenomenon that complicates the 'mechanistic' or Newtonian aspects of Hume's understanding of force, impression, and idea and reverses the unidirectional fading of force" (Pinch 37). The correspondence could be uni-directional, however, once it involves the relation between our own minds and the world of matter. The move is more from exteriority to interiority, from high social power to less so: "No internal impression has an apparent energy, more than external objects have. Since, therefore, matter is confess'd by philosophers to operate by an unknown force, we shou'd in vain hope to attain an idea of force by consulting our own minds" (*T*, 633). This particular correspondence is

[267] Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, pp. 24-5.

situated in a particular relation of power, as Hume discusses in one of his ethical thought experiments:

> 'Tis evident, that tho' all passions pass easily from one object to another related to it, yet this transition is made with greater facility, where the more considerable object is first presented, and the lesser follows it, than when this order is revers'd, and the lesser takes precedence. Thus 'tis more natural for us to love the son upon account of the father, than the father upon account of the son; the servant for the master, than the master for the servant; the subject for the prince, than the prince for the subject.

Or, as he explains in such terms: "our passions, like other objects, descend with greater facility than they ascend" (*T*, 221-22). Passions, like other materials, are more communicative attitudes than subjective feelings. They are maintained through a system of hierarchy and order, not without trace of the eighteenth century "great chain of being[268]". It is an issue of impression and force upon the mind, which are property-like regarding their significances in forming a Humean identity. At another level, for Hume, passion is invested in labor in a democratic sense, which, in turn, produces property[269]. There is a form of literary labor "that annexes it to commodity production under the rubric of passion" (Christensen 100), as suggested in Hume's essay "Of Commerce:" "Everything in the world is purchased by labour; and our passions are the only causes of labour" (*Essays* 261). Passion, as causes of literary labor, is put into the circulation of literary commodities, and the neutralizing literary market serves as the only standard to judge. It makes historical sense to situate Hume's ambivalence and his grammatical issue of personal identity in a society that begins to be dominated by a modern market economy.

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[268] See Arthur Lovejoy's classic study *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea*.
[269] See Christensen, p. 148.

III. v. Affective Property and Literary Copyright in Print Virtualization

A "physicist of emotions[270]," Hume puts his economy of identities in the light of the correspondence of feelings. Passions "are so contagious, that they pass with the greatest facility from one person to another, and produce correspondent movements in all human breasts" (*T*, 605), Hume writes. Affective interiority is, rather, very flat, and exists as an epidemic syndrome. Passions come from without and subordinate individuals: "Hatred, resentment, esteem, love, courage, mirth and melancholy; all these passions I feel more from communication than from my own natural temper and disposition" (*T*, 317). Exchangeable communication through sympathy, rather than solipsist solitude, is the means, form and content of affective labor. Transfer of feelings is similar to the very act of writing that composes "little less[271]" than a life for Hume. It is constitutive of a personhood susceptible to darkness and skepticism, which could be a form of literary laziness and lack of sympathetic communication:

> Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return? Whose favour shall I court, and whose anger must I dread? What beings surround me? And on whom have I any influence, or who have any influence on me? I am confounded with all these questions, and begin to fancy myself in the most deplorable condition imaginable, inviron'd with the deepest darkness, and utterly depriv'd of the use of every member and faculty. (*T*, 269)

Hume also writes this in a less autobiographic way:

> Man is altogether insufficient to support himself; … when you loosen all the holds, which

[270] Jerome Neu, *Emotion, Thought, Therapy: A Study of Hume and Spinoza and the Relationship of Philosophical Theories of the Emotions to Psychological Theories of Therapy*, p.1. Quoted in Jerome Christensen, *Practicing Enlightenment*, p. 80.
[271] See an analysis of that "little more" above.

he has of external objects, he immediately drops down into the deepest melancholy and despair …. Hence company is naturally so rejoicing, as presenting the liveliest of all objects, *viz*. a rational and thinking Being like ourselves, who communicates to us all the actions of his mind; makes us privy to his inmost sentiments and affections; and lets us see, in the very instant of their production, all the emotions, which are caus'd by any object. Every lively idea is agreeable, but especially that of a passion, because such an idea becomes a kind of passion, and gives a more sensible agitation to the mind, than any other image or conception. (*T*, 352-53)

Passion communicates a sense of agreement between man and "all the holds" external to him. "Sentiments," "affections," "actions," and "emotions" become communicable in the sense of production, which keeps one away from "the deepest melancholy and despair." The point is not whether the passages of this kind are Hume "not on his best behavior," in "youthful indiscretion," in "a philosophical and emotional extravaganza," "melodrama," or "a kind of schizophrenia" as many times identified by modern critics[272]. Nor is it about whether Hume presents himself as a true skeptic or not. Rather, it is about the emotionality involved in the production of ideas and the communication of literary labor. Emotion has to be extravagant and excessive so as to appear authentically Humean, and to be of a productive literary identity and career. Literary labor is "nothing other than the technique for matching indirect passions with satisfaction indirectly acquired," and "the career of the man of letters is the most abstract labor of all"(Christensen 155). The trope of sympathy, more than images or conceptions and "nothing but the conversion of an idea into an impression by the force of imagination" (*T*, 427), turns individuals into communicating bodies. In the public sphere of the coffee houses, "their public was recruited from private people engaged in productive work" (Habermas 34). The publicness

[272] See Adela Pinch, p. 40.

of a writing career entails a necessity of self-fashioning for the sake of public secrecy. Emotionality has to be sincere in this production process. Similar to the independence of the male property owner in the market as complemented by the dependence of the wife and children[273], the personal and emotional makes possible a public and philosophical Hume. It produces the "firmness, or solidity, or force, or vivacity" of an impression, which "did once exist" "from the present idea" (*T*, 106):

> For as this idea is not here consider'd, as the representation of any absent object, but as a real perception in the mind, of which we are intimately conscious, it must be able to bestow on whatever is related to it the same quality … with which the mind reflects upon it, and is assur'd of its present existence. The idea here supplies the place of an impression, and entirely the same, so far as regards our present purpose. (*T*, 10)

"The present idea," "especially that of a passion," operates like a physical property, and to be measurable as such, as Adela Pinch points out[274]. It is that "little more than" in between "Hume and "Home," which is a theatrical space of the mind. "[The theater,] like sympathy at large, works as an implicit guarantor of property rights because appropriation conventionalized is not the theft of property but its transfer" (Christensen 72). Jerome Christensen argues that "Post-Cartesian representation of the passions contributed both to the stability of their possession and to the facility of their transfer in an exchange with another passion owner" (Christensen 72). This, nevertheless, is not merely about ideas or Enlightenment thinking as Christensen proposes . It has a material base. The sense of "totalitarianism" in the empiricist epistemology presents the writing of a Humean self as a medium, a process of abstraction and generality, and a seemingly transparent sociality of sympathy that produces by leaving the "firmness, or solidity, or force, or

[273] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, p. 47.
[274] Adela Pinch, p. 33.

vivacity" of an impression or transferring it to another mind. It is a new form of materiality, virtual and immaterial, which presents a human being-figure in a bourgeois public sphere of the literary. It embodies an act of composition that

> unlike oratory, is a *labor* of conversion—the writer copying down his ideas (themselves copies of his impressions) and thus, whether we have reference to letter, fair copy, or published text, converting ideas into graphic, communicating impressions so that the reader can repeat the process in reverse, performing the same sort of labor.
>
> (Christensen 106)

As communication, sympathy is established between the spectator and reader, who observe, and the agent and writer, who produce. The reader-like psychological interiority and subjectivity in modern literature and Romantic poetry as communication and imitation originates in Hume's moral philosophy of experience:

> When any affection is infused by sympathy, it is at first known only by its effects, and by those external signs in the countenance and conversation, which convey an idea of it. This idea is presently converted into an impression, and acquires such a degree of force and vivacity, as to become the very passion itself, and produce an equal emotion, as any original affection. However instantaneous this change of the idea into an impression may be, it proceeds from certain views and reflections, which will not escape the strict scrutiny of a philosopher, though they may the person himself, who makes them. (*T*, 317)

It is a process of observing, being impressed, internalizing, and expressing. The philosopher—a position close to Smith's impartial spectator[275]—holds a position of strict observer. This brings to mind the role of natural philosopher upon objects and things as well as being suggestive of the

[275] For the difference regarding economies of sympathy between Hume and Smith, see Alexander Broadie, "Sympathy and the Impartial Spectator."

role of the print as a supposedly transparent communicant medium. The visual scrutiny could penetrate into the most obscure and private part of a self. Textuality becomes a process of emotional impression and evocation, which is materialized through a transmission relay in the exchange of ideas. It is

> stimulated by the luxury status of the impressions that an author makes (refining them from the truth that one already has) and that a reader receives (the new impressions are fundamentally a surplus version of that idea of herself that she already has. (Chrstensen 106)[276]

It necessarily involves production and reproduction of class, as Jürgen Habermas writes:

> The fully developed bourgeois public sphere was based on the fictitious identity of the two roles assumed by the privatized individuals who came together to form a public: the role of property owners and the role of human beings pure and simple. (Habermas 56)

The places where we see a gothic and gloomy Hume are, exactly, the self-reflexive places of the writing medium, through which Hume confirms his job of writing as literary market labor, rather than any noble activity that Hannah Arendt calls "work[277]." The work of writing unfolds itself in the literary laborer's subjectivity, which presents a case of virtualization through the writing medium used by Hume and about Humean identities. No wonder we have a scene of this kind in Richard Ellman's biography of James Joyce: "Joyce suddenly asked some such question as, 'How could the idealist Hume write a history?' Beckett replied, 'A history of representations'" (qtd. in Christensen 3).

[276] Also see Christensen, p. 112.
[277] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, chapter III "Labor," pp. 79-135.

In 1695, the Licensing Act[278], which had legalized censorship, was allowed to lapse. So did the monopoly rights it conferred on certain powerful printers and booksellers. In 1710, the English copyright Act[279], though "in effect a qualified response to the Stationers' pleas for the protection hitherto provided under the licensing regime" (Johns 234), was passed to provide statutory protection for what was increasingly called "the property in the copy[280]." It was the first legal endorsement of what was to become copyright, whose intent is made clear through the statute's full title: "An Act for the Encouragement of Learning by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of Such Copies[281]." This legalized system of patenting of inventions or the copyrighting of literary compositions was impossible in a scribal culture, which worked against the concept of intellectual property rights[282]. Only the proliferation of a print culture would encourage publishers to advertise authors and authors to advertise themselves. For Samuel Johnson, who lived through such an age and made a career similar to that of Hume, "Written work might be quite different from the products of a laborer worthy of his hire, or even, perhaps, the lands that a gentleman purchased or inherited" (Kernan 101), as Alvin Kernan points out in his thoroughly investigated history of Johnson's literary life in the age of print. The writer "created," not just made, bought, or received his property. Thus, "authors," as Johnson writes, had "a stronger right of property than that by occupancy; a metaphysical right, a right, as it were, of creation, which should from its nature be perpetual[283]." This birth of modern author[284] and intellectual copyright is described by Lionel Gossman as

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[278] See Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, p. 120. Also see Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book*, p. 130.
[279] See Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book*, p. 215, 233, 234, 353, 454-55, 620. Also see Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, pp. 556-67.
[280] John Feather, "Book Trade in Politics," in his *Publishing, Piracy and Politics*, pp. 51-63.
[281] Also see Alvin Kernan, *Samuel Johnson and the Impact of Print*, pp. 91-117.
[282] See Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, pp. 229.
[283] Quoted in Alvin Kernan, *Samuel Johnson and the Impact of Print*, p. 101.

> the identification of works with individual graphically recorded utterances [that] led to a conception of literary creation as absolutely original production, arising out of and in some way embodying a unique, substantial and autonomous self[285].

This "unique, substantial and autonomous self" was legalized and therefore objectified by the 1710 English copyright Act as "an invention distinctive enough to be patented[286]," to use a phrase from Northrop Frye. Mark Rose shows in his important book *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright* that legal theorists such as Blackstone defined a literary work as consisting solely of its "style and sentiment." "These alone constitute its identity," Blackstone wrote. "The paper and print are merely accidents, which serve as vehicles to convey that style and sentiment to a distance." It was on the material "accidents" of "the paper and print" that the concept of literary property was formulated on the model of the landed estate by the eighteenth-century jurists of Blackstone's kind[287]. "Copyright as an absolute right of property, a freehold 'grounded on labour and invention'" (Rose 8), that is. Thus in this blending of literary and legal discourses in the context of the contest over perpetual copyright, "the literary-property struggle generated a body of texts—parliamentary records, pamphlets, and legal reports—in which aesthetic and legal questions are often indistinguishable" (Rose 6). The legal history of copyright, indeed,

> had important consequences for literature that went beyond purely legal considerations, for it helped to solidify the literary author as a man of original genius (the author's assumed gender in these discourses was invariably male) who created literary property by mixing

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[284] Also see, of course, the classic essays by Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes: "What Is an Author?" and "Death of the Author."
[285] Lionel Gossman, "Literary Education and Democracy," in *Modern Language Notes*, 86 (1971), 761-89. 72. p. 773. Quoted in Kernan, p. 102.
[286] Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*, p. 90. "Poetry can only be made out of other poems; novels out of other novels. All this was much clearer before the assimilation of literature to private enterprise concealed so many of the facts of criticism" (96-7), as Frye writes pages later.
[287] See Mark Rose, *Authors and Owners*, p. 7.

> his intellectual labor with the materials afforded him by nature—much as Locke had argued men created private property by mixing their labor with the land. (Hayles 31)[288]

Thus, the modern sense of literary labor and property comes from an older sense of the legal and theological definition of physical property. For Locke, it is through labor that an individual might convert the raw materials of nature into private property, whose familiar passage from the *Two Treatises of Government* (1690) is worth quoting:

> Though the Earth, and all inferior Creatures be common to all Men, yet every Man has a *Property* in his own *Person*. This no Body has any Right to but himself. The *Labour* of his Body, and the *Work* of his Hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the State that Nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his *Labour* with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his *Property*. (305-06)

If private property in the physical sense derives from a literal labor with physical hands, the literary and intellectual property is from an affective communication of a spatial theatricality of presence through the print medium as in the case of Hume. The physical body through the aesthetic labor becomes virtualized, expanded, theatricalized, and emotionalized. Jerome Christensen writes:

> If ... there are three discrete features of text production that the invention of the printing press highlighted—uniform replication, infinite reproduction, and indefinite dispersion—the last remained *in potentia* until the eighteenth century, when, in England at least, a distribution that could rapidly saturate a market came for the first time a real possibility. (Christensen 184)

[288] As N. Katherine Hayles argues in her *Writing Machines*.

Textualized presence thus becomes a communicable transparency of modernity. Circulation enhances the neutrality and objectivity of the print medium, which is analogous to qualities of commodities that began to pervade in the eighteenth century[289]. At the same time it creates a possible being of gloomy and gothic consciousness that remains absent from the theatrical space of the print medium. Thus, we could locate the Humean self and its theatrically staged sympathetic sentimentality in the problematic of personal and literary identity that was being legalized and virtualized through the rise of a print media[290]. If, as Pierre Levy puts it, "virtualization" distinguishes itself above all through its tendency towards "deterritorialization" and through "a movement of becoming-other or heterogenesis[291]," Hume's self presents an early case of "virtualization" in print culture through deterritorializing identities from moment to moment in the form of his work of writing. Out of that he obviously made a good fortune, as stated in "My Own Life":

> But, notwithstanding this variety of winds and seasons, to which my writings had been exposed, they had still been making such advances, that the copy-money given me by the booksellers, much exceeded any thing formerly known in England; I was become not only independent, but opulent. I retired to my native country of Scotland, determined never more to set my foot out of it; and retaining the satisfaction of never having preferred a request to one great man, or even making advances of friendship to any of them. (*Essays* xxxviii)

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[289] See the collection of essays in *The Consumption of Culture 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text* (Ed. by Anne Bermingham and John Brewer).

[290] For an intellectual history of this problematic as it had distressed British thinkers ever since John Locke, in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), challenged tradition and located personal identity in consciousness, see Christopher Fox, *Locke and the Scriblerians: Identity and Consciousness in Early Eighteenth-Century Britain*.

[291] Quoted in Samuel Weber, "The Virtuality of the Media," p. 297.

This "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement" (*T*, 252), as Hume puts it, is performed in his work of writing and is a theatricality realized in the print media. Sympathetic sentiment materialized through the pen offers him a financial opulence instead of a corpulence of the body, and thus secures a cozy solitude from any friendship. It is only in this sense we can see the significance of Hume's declaration that "the passions are so contagious, that they pass with greatest facility from one person to another, and produce correspondent movements in all human breasts." In this light, a media history of emergent interiority in the inter-subjective correspondence of sentiments is realized in transferring between "Home" and "Hume." Jerome Christensen writes:

Although inexperienced in the trade, Hume pursued his interests with considerable acumen. And from the very first those interests were understood in terms of future, successive, and altered editions of the *Treatise* … Hume managed the *Treatise* not as a child, attached to him by bonds of nature, but as his property, which, as we have seen, subsists not in simple possession but in a *mode* of possession. (Christensen 123)

This "*mode* of possession," consists not merely of specific work, or even specific modes of work[292]. More significantly, it is a *mode* of experience taken as part of the empiricist philosophy of identities as an issue of representation. The work of writing shapes a literary career not only in the materialistic sense, but also in the ontological sense. A deterritorialized crevice between "Home" and "Hume" makes possible a mode of emotional identity as mediated in this emergent textual media culture.

[292] Like that of correction, as illustrated by Christensen's argument. See Jerome Christensen, *Practicing Enlightenment*, chapter 5 "The Commerce of Letters," pp. 120-200.

Chapter IV: Poetic Mediality and the Possibility of Modern Textual Media: Feminine Sentiments in Wordsworth

IV.i. Man of Feeling and Romanticism in a History of Mediation

The expressive mode of emotion in western modernity gives rise to anxieties about affective authenticity and sincerity. It suggests a new kind of personality, which we call an "individual." Literary critic Lionel Trilling puts it in this way: "At a certain point in history men became individuals" (24). For Trilling, this is reflected in the impulse to write autobiography, establishing "one's only authority" over "the truth of one's experience and the intensity of one's conviction of enlightenment" (Trilling 23). Thus, the expressive mode is also about the increasing importance of representation in the making of modern self in the eighteenth century[293]. The proliferation of feelings in the century and our accessibility to them, themselves, argue for the point that the existence of emotion reflects not just the content of mental representations but the fact that they are representations[294]. The realm of language is constructed as an autonomous epistemological field in the seventeenth century, through which modern knowledge becomes possible[295]. This new mode of representation could be discussed with the concept of "theatricality," concerning a selfhood individuated and privatized against an increasingly

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[293] See also David E. Wellbery, *Lessing's* Laocoon*: Semiotics and Aesthetics in the Age of Reason*, pp. 9-42.
[294] See my discussion on the making of a literary representation of an identity in the previous chapter on David Hume. Also see Rei Terada, *Feeling in Theory*, p. 18. Words like "emotion," "passion," "feeling," "affect," "sensibility," "sympathy," and "sentiment" are used in an impressionistic fashion unless noted otherwise and is done intentionally. Historically speaking, as Adela Pinch remarks, "the many names for emotion travel as freely as the emotions themselves" (16) and these terms are almost interchangeable in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writing. What these terms have in common is much more significant than what differentiates them from each other in this current writing. Theoretically, I follow Rei Terada's methodology: "I try to steer a middle course between imposing a single vocabulary on all discussions of texts and giving up on terminological discussions altogether" (4). For a brief discussion on the shades between "emotion," "feeling," "passion," and "pathos," see Terada, pp. 4-5.
[295] See Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, pp. 41, 86.

hypostatized "society." For Trilling, this could have been added into a group of vocabulary now of capital importance that has come into use in their present meanings in the last decades of the eighteenth century and in the first half of the next: "industry," "democracy," "class," "art" and "culture[296]." "Society," as an aggregate of individual human beings, becomes "something other than human, and its being conceived in this way, as having indeed a life of its own but not a human life" (Trilling 19). It is what Bruno Latour asserts about modernity, which is constituted by language as the domain of stories, texts, and discourses[297]. In the case examined in this chapter, this period of history sees a vernacularization process. Sheldon Pollock identifies it as "literization," which is the commitment of oral and vernacular poetic forms to writing, as forms of modern literature in the production of modern text-artifact[298]. By 1800, James Raven points out, "print issued from hundreds of presses operating in London and almost every small town in the country[299]." Against this background, representations of sentiment and emotion are examined as politics of authenticity and sincerity, both of which occur in the space of hybridity between the source text—conceived as the oral—and the modern textual medium of the book in the eighteenth century[300]. A new literary culture encapsulates writing work that generates forms of subjectivity. Furthermore, it invents a nature through representations that is both historical and historicizing. Indeed, as Walter J. Ong argues, "writing restructures consciousness[301]." This new textual culture positions the oral as the dangerous other from which literacy as the province of rational morality is promoted. This probably starts with what Frances Yates names "the inner

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[296] As they are also examined by Raymond Williams in his *Culture and Society*, especially pp. xiii-xx.
[297] Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, p. 88.
[298] Sheldon Pollock, "Indian in the Vernacular Millennium: Literary Culture and Polity, 1000-1500," p. 41; "The Cosmopolitan Vernacular," p. 9. Also see Michael Silverstein, "Metapragmatic Discourse and Metapragmatic Function," especially p. 38.
[299] See James Raven, "The Book Trades," p. 1.
[300] See Richard Bauman and Charles L. Briggs, *Voices of Modernity: Language Ideologies and the Politics of Inequality*, p. 16. Also see McLane (2008), p. 251 and Susan Stewart, "Notes on Distressed Genres," p. 7.
[301] Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*, chapter heading for pp. 78-116.

deep-seated changes in the psyche during the early seventeenth century"—"the vital period for the emergence of modern European and American man[302]."

By the end of the eighteenth century, William Wordsworth attributes this formation of a "society" to "a multitude of causes unknown to former times" that "are now acting with a combined force" (Wordsworth, "Preface" 232). This includes both "the great national events which are daily taking place" and the more gradual processes of modernization, such as "the encreasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies" (Wordsworth, "Preface" 232). For him, "the change has been silently going on ever since we were born; the disease has been growing, and now breaks out in all its danger and deformity," as he writes in an 1812 letter to Catherine Carkson[303]. The mission of Romantic poetry is to counteract "the gross and violent stimulants" to which the human mind is vulnerable when exposed to "frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse" (Wordsworth, "Preface" 232). In other words, Wordsworth proposes an economy of selfhood different from that stimulated from emotional extravagance. He sees a mature British literary technology and system being contaminated by "the rapid communication of intelligence" from the media of foreign Gothic novels. His project is against the conformity with "this tendency of life and manners" that "the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country" display. For him, this major feature of his contemporary popular literature situates a large population of displaced laborers, peddlers, and beggars at a distance from being susceptible to the socializing influences of nature: "A primrose by a river's brim / A

[302] F. Yates, "Bacon and the Menace of English Lit.," p. 37.
[303] The letter was written from London: "The lower orders [who] have been for upwards of 30 years accumulating in pestilential masses of ignorant population." Wordsworth to Catherine Clarkson, 4 June 1812, *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth*, 3:21. Also see his *The Prelude*, Book VII.

yellow primrose was to him / And it was nothing more" (218-20). Instead, they are all too susceptible to "whatever vice / The cruel city breeds" (274-75). Wordsworth addresses this "disease," "danger and deformity," and "vice" through handling, hierarchizing, and authorizing medially disparate sources. He develops a complex system of anthropological *poiesis* with lyrical ballads, which is a genre of writing different from novels in its oral features[304]. Through distinguishing his poetry from "the popular Poetry of the day," not by rejecting but by using its figures[305], Wordsworth explores that edge, geographically and medially, and renders his lyrical ballads as a quasi-anthropological trope[306]. His critique of the contemporary reading public amounts to an attempt to replace debased readers with readers who have been "purified and exalted." Jon P. Klancher writes:

> Out of his [Wordsworth's] prefaces, supplements, and letters emerged a whole vocabulary with which literary history and the sociology of culture came to distinguish the transmission of cultural works: their 'reception' by some readers, their 'consumption' by many others, and the abyss between serious and mass culture that has only recently begun to be critically explored[307].

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[304] For the genre of British "novel" as institutionalized as a modern work of writing in the eighteenth century, see Clifford Siskin, *The Work of Writing,* especially chapter 7 "The Novel, the Nation, and the Naturalization of Writing." For how a collection of ballads, "full of the majiestick Simplicity which we admire in the greatest of the ancient Poets" (as Joseph Addison ratifies its cultural value in *The Spectator* 74 [25 May 1711]), is both of an articulation of tradition-based cultural difference (thereby antiquarian) and a new construction of Britishness in the eighteenth-century Britain, see Susan Manning, "Antiquarianism, Balladry and the Rehabilitation of Romance."

[305] "The Popular poetry of the day" includes portrays of the "species of unfortunates" in the 1780s and 1790s, among whom were also prostitutes. See Robert Mayo, "The Contemporaneity of the Lyrical Ballads." The Susan figure from his "Poor Susan," along with many others, may be one of the characters taken from there, as judged from the original poem's last stanza, which was excised by Wordsworth. This leads to controversial debates about Susan's ambiguous moral character, which Charles Lamb bothers to close by clearly assuming Susan as a prostitute. For interpretations of this poem against the developments of early industrial England—the capitalization of agriculture in the country and the growth of an urban underclass in London, and how a gendered discourse—whether late eighteenth-century poem or contemporary historicist criticism—maps the ideologies of country versus city onto the figure of a woman, see Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion*, pp. 98-106.

[306] An anthropological vision is at the core of Wordsworth's poetry writing. See Alan Bewell, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment: Nature, Man, and Society in the Experimental Poetry*.

[307] Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences*, p. 135.

The form of ballads, in which appear "the figure of the primitive, the popular, and the authentically emotive, whether encountered at home or abroad" (McLane 2008, 223), and the deluge of feelings are domesticated into the emergence of a modern literary medium in Wordsworth's poetry writing. It manufactures a vehicle of self-representation: "I breathed (for this I better recollect) / Among wild appetites and blind desires, / Motions of savage instinct, my delight / And exaltation" (*Home at Grasmere*, MS. B, lines 912-15)[308]. It is a poetic project of trans-mediation that encompasses various media activities, including reading, singing, watching, collecting, and transcribing.

It has been admitted as a critical fact that Wordsworth—at least for many of his early readers—was notorious for "the disproportionate nature of his emotions" (Pinch 72). Lucy Aikin remarks in her review of Wordsworth's *Poems in Two Volumes* (1807) upon the poet's "unfortunate habit … of attaching exquisite emotions to objects which excite none in any other human breast[309]." Another reviewer puts Wordsworth's emotional extravagances in gendered terms: "Mr. Wordsworth … gave considerable testimony of strong feeling and poetic powers, although like a histerical schoolgirl he had a knack of feeling about subjects with which feeling had no proper concern[310]." Samuel T. Coleridge, the collaborator of the lyrical ballad project, agrees that Wordsworth demonstrated

> an intensity of feeling disproportionate to *such* knowledge and value of the objects described, as can be fairly anticipated of men in general, even of the most cultivated classes; and with which therefore few only, and those few particularly circumstanced, can

[308] Which is the prospectus to *The Reclus* (a "philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society."
[309] Lucy Aikin in *Annual Review*, quoted in Marlon Ross *The Contours of Masculine Desire: Romanticism and the Rise of Women's Poetry*, p. 50.
[310] Qtd. in Ross, pp. 51-2.

be supposed to sympathize[311].

Wordsworth refers himself as the "sentimental traveller" in a note to *Descriptive Sketches* (1793)[312]. In his anthologized poetry album as a gift for Lady Mary Lowther, more than half of the poems consist of poetry by women[313]. He expropriates the conventionalized images of women's suffering as the medium through which a transmission of feeling and of a romantic *poiesis* is (re)produced[314]. Wordsworth's editorial practice, Adela Pinch argues,

> suggests that for the poet and his contemporaries, what motivated the anthologizing of women's poetry was a desire to represent women's voice as the production of a certain kind of lyric feeling predicated on women's suffering. (Pinch 75)

Seeking for "appropriate human centres" is a very significant means for the central figure of Wordsworth's poetry to locate himself in a "hurrying world" (*Preface* [1850] IV, 355-360). It differs from Henry MacKenzie's lachrymose man of feeling, Harley, whose response to an insane girl's cry—similar to Wordsworth's Mad Mother—is to "burst into tears[315]," an explicit instance of emotional extravagance. Wordsworth's contemporaries did not miss this point. His "reworking and intensification of what sentimentalism conventionally labeled 'the pathetic'" (Averill 11) is well recognized. For instance, William Hazlitt writes in "My First Acquaintance with Poets:"

> [I]n the *Thorn*, the *Mad Mother*, and the *Complaint of a Poor Indian Woman*, I felt that deeper power and pathos which have been since acknowledged, 'In spite of pride, in erring

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[311] Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, 2:136.
[312] Quoted in Averill, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, p. 10.
[313] It includes the poems of Anne Finch, countess of Winchelsea, texts by Ann Killigrew and Laetitia Pilkington, clearly drawn from *Poems by Eminent Ladies* (1755), a popular anthology of women's poetry. See Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passions*, chapter 3 "Female Chatter: Gender and Feeling in Wordsworth's Early Poetry," pp. 72-110, especially p. 72.
[314] See Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion*, pp. 74-5.
[315] Harley's encounters include a tableau of suffering, such as the mad girl, the beggar and his dog, the discharged soldier Edwards. See James Averill, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, pp. 10-11.

> reason's spite,' as the characteristics of this author; and the sense of a new style and a new spirit in poetry came over me[316].

Coleridge, who initiates the projection of "interiority" into Romanticism[317], defines Wordsworthian economy of poetic sentiment more regarding its narrative structure:

> a meditative pathos, a union of deep and subtle thought with sensibility; a sympathy with man as man; the sympathy indeed of a contemplator; rather than a fellow-sufferer or co-mate, (spectator, *haud particeps*) but of a contemplator, from whose view no difference of rank conceals the sameness of the nature; no injuries of wind or weather, or toil, or even of ignorance, wholly disguise the human face divine. (Coleridge, *BL* 150)

For him, Wordsworth, with Goethe, "both have this peculiarity of utter non-sympathy with the subjects of their poetry. They are always, both of them, spectators *ab extra*,—feeling *for*, but never *with*, their characters[318]." Charles Altieri argues that Wordsworth's 1802 "Preface" attempts "to provide a passionate rendering about the effects of passion, which then makes sense only if one provisionally adopts the projected state of mind[319]." Wordsworth admits his economy of emotions, especially in his discussion of "the pathetic" in the 1815 "Essay, Supplementary to the Preface." There are two "emotions of the pathetic:" one as "simple and direct" that "participates of an *animal* sensation," another as "complex and revolutionary." More significantly, "there is also meditative, as well as a human, pathos; an enthusiastic, as well as an ordinary, sorrow; a sadness that has its seat in the depths of reason, to which the mind cannot sink gently of itself—but to which it must descend by treading the steps of thought." "The

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[316] *The Collected Works of William Hazlitt*, XII, p. 270; review of *Poems in Two Volumes* in *Edinburgh Review* 11 (1807), rpt. in Elsie Smith (ed.), *An Estimate of William Wordsworth by His Contemporaries 1793-1822*, p. 76.
[317] See Robert Miles, "Romanticism, Enlightenment, and Mediation: The Case of the Inner Stranger," in *This Is Enlightenment*. Especially Miles's analysis of Coleridge's "Frost at Midnight."
[318] *Specimens of the Table Talk of the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, 16 Feb 1833. Quoted. from *Biographia Literaria*, p. 150, note 1.
[319] Charles Altieri, "Wordsworth's Poetics of Eloquence: A Challenge to Contemporary Theory," p. 372.

depths of reason" and "treading the steps of thought" creates a space of reflection and a medial distance towards immediacy. Thus, Wordsworth lists "Sensibility" second among "the powers requisite for the production of poetry," commenting that "the more exquisite it is, the wider will be the range of a poet's perceptions; and the more will he be incited to observe objects, both as they exist in themselves and as re-acted upon by his own mind[320]." Thus, a poet's perceptions and ability to observe are of primary significance for the production of poetry for Wordsworth. In the note to "The Thorn," Wordsworth stresses the intrinsic connection between a poetic language and passion: "Words, a Poet's words more particularly, ought to be weighed in the balance of feeling, and not measured by the space they occupy upon paper. For the Reader cannot be too often reminded that Poetry is passion." Thus, the history of poetry is also a "history or science of feelings[321]." The dual focus of the emotional object and subject makes Wordsworth's poetry writing possible. His sense of observational neutrality or impartiality in the management of sentiments from the "objects of distress" is discernible in his marginal figures like women, beggars, old men, and maniacs among others. In the American context, it is not until the late nineteenth century when "the discourse of virility so central to the rhetoric of literary realism" becomes in "part an attempt to keep distinct 'quality' writing from the creeping sensuality of romance[322]." In the British context, as argued through this chapter, Wordsworth's political economy of feelings is gendered as female in the making of British Romantic poetry, which is gendered as male. This *poiesis* seems like what Henry Mackenzie explains as the genesis of *The Man of Feeling*: "I was somehow led to think of introducing a Man of Sensibility

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[320] *The Prose Works of William Wordsworth*, III, p. 26.
[321] *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*.
[322] Lauren Berlant makes this historical argument, as she writes: "Realist novels that included sentimental-romance elements tended either to denigrate actively those modes of 'feminine' excess or to embrace those plots, motivated by a desire to speak female discourse better (technically and perceptually) than the woman herself." See Berlant, "The Female Complaint," p. 244.

into different Scenes where his Feelings might be seen in their Effects[323]." However, for Wordsworth, a relation between the oral (either singing, or reading) and the print (or the "textual") is transposed, presenting the poet as a mediator. It thus positions a poetic "author" in the British Romantic poetry as a *bona fide* transmitter, which is a performative medial role absent in the fragmentary episodes of the life of Harley in Henry Mackenzie. In this sense, literary form, and its proprieties of authorship and consumption, absorb the nature of gender, which runs through a history of modern media[324]. In this cultural history of modes of containment and management, a textual culture presents itself as *neutral* and *objective* in a historical period that Jeremy Bentham categorizes as "the regime of publicity[325]," whereas the oral, female, sentiment is always that of the other. (The other of writing (reading, singing, speech), of culture (the voice of nature), of the modern (a pre-modern, pre-linguist past), that is.) Stylistic strategies and modes of narration required of modern publics absorb viewers into textually constructed positions of general subjectivity, which also serve the historical convergence of social and economic objectives[326]. It is from here, I argue, a poetics of interiority is deployed and well developed in the growth of a poet's mind, which maintains an economy of exclusion that otherwise marks the domestic sphere.

Contemporary media theorists Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, following Marshall McLuhan, call the constant remix of older media forms by newer ones and vice versa "remediation," the goal of which, as reform, is "to refashion or rehabilitate other media" (Bolter and Grusin 55-6). Their influential formulation is invoked by N. Katherine Hayles in *Writing*

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[323] Henry MacKenzie, *Letter to Elizabeth Rose of Kilravock on Literature, Events, and People, 1768-1815*, p. 16.
[324] For an American example, see Lauren Berlant, p. 244.
[325] It is a phrase drawn from Bentham's *An Essay on Political Tactics*, which was printed in 1791 but not published until 1816. According to Andrew Franta, it was Bentham who introduced "publicity" into the English language. See Andrew Franta, *Romanticism and the Rise of the Mass Public*, pp. 1-2.
[326] Another illustrative example would be from American early cinema. See Miriam Hansen, *Babel in Babylon*.

Machine in a simpler formula: "*Remediation*, the cycling of different media through one another" (5). In the light of this theoretical framework, Wordsworth *remediates* what he calls "the gross and violent stimulants" and "frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse." Out of this process the oral is transposed into the textual. This conjuring of "orality" in textual culture invites us to reckon with what another media theorist, Friedrich A. Kittler, calls "a transposition of media[327]." It is an attempt to recoup the voice of orality in all its presumed authenticity of context. What matters here is to see what theatrical presence Wordsworth performs in transposing feminine sentimentality into poetic work in "the history or science of feelings." This would be of significance to throw light upon an investigation of the making of sentiments and feelings in moral philosophy, literature, political economy, and science from the middle of the eighteenth to the late nineteenth centuries, which is a history of media as "historical subjects" in their full historical and historicizable complexity[328]. Raymond Williams takes "mediation" as "an active relationship, or, more interestingly, a specific transformation of material" (Williams 1977, 158), as "a way of emphasizing the material production" (163)[329]. The print medium of communication is, for Williams, also a "means of production[330]." The current writing follows this Marxist vein of realism, and locates how the man of feeling appropriates what Maureen McLane calls "the glamor of the oral" (214) in the Romantic period to configure the real in the emergence of a textual media culture. Robert Miles argues that

Romanticism is distinguished by a self-consciousness that simultaneously looks backward

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[327] Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900,* in particular the section "Untranslatability and the Transposition of Media," in "Rebus," pp. 265-73.
[328] See Lisa Gitelman, *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture*, especially "Introduction: Media as Historical Subjects," pp. 1-24.
[329] See Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, pp. 158-64.
[330] Raymond Williams, "Means of Communication as Means of Production."

> toward a state of naivety from which history has permanently deviated, and forward toward new forms of expression… Thus one of the fundamental ironies of Romanticism: it is often most modern when most 'nostalgic,' or backward-looking. (Miles 185)[331]

In a history of media, it could be addressed as less a transition stage and more a "cusp" that includes both the oral and print, the reader and the writer, interiority and media[332].

IV.ii. Sensibility as Gendered, Authenticity, and the Scriptural System

In the eighteenth century, as Michel Foucault suggests:

The entire female body is riddled by obscure but strangely direct paths of sympathy; it is always in an immediate complicity with itself, to the point of forming a kind of absolutely privileged site for the sympathies; from one extremity of its organic space to the other, it encloses a perpetual possibility of hysteria. The sympathetic sensibility of her organism, radiating through her entire body, condemns woman to those diseases of the nerves that are called vapors[333].

This problematic relation between control and anxiety about the female body is a reflection upon the long-time existent discourse upon women's susceptibility to "passions," which leads to hysteria–the depictions of feminine sensibility and disorder. Robert Whytt, for example, writes in his *Observations* of 1765:

> It is true that in women, hysteric symptoms occur more frequently, and are often much more sudden and violent, than the hypochondriac in men; but this circumstance, which is only a consequence of the more delicate frame, sedentary life, and particular condition of the womb in women, by no means shews the two diseases to be, strictly speaking,

[331] He follows Charles Taylor's argument on secularization in *A Secular Age*.
[332] As Robert Miles, following Taylor's argument, situates Romanticism between Providential Deism and modernity.
[333] Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, pp. 153-54.

different[334].

Woman's liability to disorder is particularly associated with her reproductive capacities, which is the womb. Several pages latter, Whytt defines the problem through the nervous system. "WOMEN, in whom the nervous system is generally more moveable than in men, are more subject to nervous complaints, and have them in a higher degree.[335]" Certainly this discursive attribution of sensibility to women does not merely exist in medical treatises. John Mullan writes:

> In many of the novels of the eighteenth century which elevate sentiment, and most notably in *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison*, the investment in sensibility is an investment in a particular version of the feminine—tearful, palpitating, embodying virtue whilst susceptible to all the vicissitudes of 'feeling.' (Mullan 218)

Terry Eagleton calls into this a broad "feminization of discourse" (Eagleton, 1982 14) that is represented in Richardson. E. J. Clery argues that this constitutes a "feminization debate," in which the growing status and influence of women was "variously condemned as cause and symptom of national decline, or celebrated as an index of increasing refinement or civility" (Clery 1). Thus, through the century, different discourses, medical or literary, attribute to women "an elevated sensibility, an especially vivid imagination, a highly tuned sympathy, and a susceptibility to narratives of misfortune and suffering" (Brown 113)[336]. Feminine sensibility and disorder "is, and continues into the nineteenth century to be, the object of a male scrutiny

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[334] Robert Whytt, *Observations on the Nature, Causes, and Cure of those Disorders which have been commonly call'd Nervous, Hypochondriac, or Hysteric*, p. 105.
[335] Robert Whytt, *Observations*, p. 118
[336] For how feminine sensibility or sentimentality is promoted largely because of the influence of civic humanism in the first half of the eighteenth century (like in Addison and Steele), and how it begins to be a factor in a commercial society in the second half of the century (in Richardson, for instance), see E.J. Clery, *The Feminization Debate in Eighteenth-Century England*, pp. 1-12, and chapter 5-6, pp. 95-170.
For a brief analysis on the apprehension of "effeminacy" in the eighteenth-century England that covers from the traditional ideology of civic humanism to the innovative ideology of sensibility, see Michael McKeon, "Historicizing Patriarchy: the Emergence of Gender Difference in England, 1660-1760."

which is by turns suspicious, enraptured, and dismissive" (216-7)[337]. This is partially true of Wordsworth's first published composition, "Sonnet on Seeing Miss Helen Maria Williams Weep at a Tale of Distress," the title of which already suggests a tinge of scrutinizing voyeurism in a sentimental reading scene, which is sedentary, domestic and private[338]. The poem, as one of the many youthful poems of Wordsworth's, was published pseudonymously in the *European Magazine* of March 1787 under the Latin name of "Axiologus," which means "words' worth." Miss Helen Maria Williams's *Poems, in Two Volumes* was published in 1786, and short poems of recognition of a fellow poet were a minor genre popular in the late eighteenth century[339]. In many ways, however, this first composition is not simply an exercise for Wordsworth[340]. Nor is it the development of "a connection between sympathetic emotion and moral improvement" started from *The Ruined Cottage* and *Peter Bell*[341], as James Averill argues. Instead, it reveals much about Wordsworth's self-consciously established relationship to contemporary popular culture and to a history of sentiment as materialized in textual media, with its extraordinary dramatic complexity and tensions within Wordsworth's early experimental poems. As a matter of fact, the theatrical strategy of posing himself not only as a writer but as a viewer and a cultural transmitter, with a sophisticated manufactured perception of and proximity to feminine sentimentality, is throughout Wordsworth's rhetoric of sentiment. It is also among the century-long "attempts to raise the dead, to hear what has vanished, to re-animate the scene" that "become coupled with the authors' desire to fix their own history in perpetuity—that is, to control the future of language as well" (Stewart 8). It is one of the primary means that British

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[337] John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociality*.
[338] The voyeuristic pleasure for an absorbed reader, long before Wordsworth, is well constructed in the amorous fictions by Behn, Manley, and Haywood, such as *Love Letters*, *The New Atlantis*, and *Love in Excess*. See William Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, pp. 216-17.
[339] See James H. Averill, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, p. 33.
[340] Esher Schor claims it is. See Esther Schor, *Bearing the Dead: The British Culture of Mourning from the Enlightenment to Victoria*, p. 69.
[341] See James Averill, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, p. 38.

Romantics deploy for the production of their literary work as they project themselves as productive and valuable through their work of writing[342].

In this first published poem of Wordsworth's, he moves swiftly across gender lines in expressing a response to another person's emotion as a beholder in an elaborate and fictitious situation devised through the work of writing:

> SHE wept.—Life's purple tide began to flow
>
> In languid streams through every thrilling vein;
>
> Dim were my swimming eyes—my pulse beat slow,
>
> And my full heart was swell'd to dear delicious pain.
>
> Life left my loaded heart, and closing eye;
>
> A sigh recall'd the wanderer to my breast;
>
> Dear was the pause of life, and dear the sigh
>
> That call'd the wanderer home, and home to rest.

The sonnet's language is conventional and derivative, with an overdependence on adjectives, and much of the vocabulary echoing that of Helen Maria Williams[343]. In the late eighteenth century, there exists a type of sentimental figure responding to sentimental objects, which mediates between human suffering and its ultimate audience—figures such as Yorick, Tristram, Belford, Harley, and even Rasselas[344]. Probably this is why this poem has not been given that much critical attention and significance, and has been often brushed aside as a "marginal poem" or "an exercise in a certain style of late eighteenth-century poetic diction" (Pinch 76). The original

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[342] Perhaps this could explain why the British Romantic poets are six males. This is especially obvious in the work of Thomas De Quincey—as the author of both *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1822) and *The Logic of the Political Economy* (1844), who is a Romantic aspiring to be something of a political economist. See Catherine Gallagher, *The Body Economic*, pp. 29-31.

[343] See James H. Averill, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, p. 34.

[344] James H. Averill, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, pp. 28-9.

pathos, however, is placed further from the reader than it had ever been in other similar literary texts—such as Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling*. In this poem, the real or present objects of distress are not accessible to the reader, to whom is presented a mediated occasion to view Miss Williams's reading or hearing of a tale of distress—both as oral activities. Her book or tale is closed to the reader, and in this textualized situation merely a sentimental woman figure is manufactured[345]. In place of a presentation of the moving incidents from the tale Williams was reading (qtd. from Averill 208)[346], there is the drama of consciousness, sentimentality, and somatically involved trepidations. Wordsworth authors a context as well as an artifact. Right at the beginning, we have the poetic incident presented through a short but significant predication—"SHE wept," which, different from "a void of physical sensation" (Averill 200) in Wordsworth's later poems such as "The Pedlar[347]," initiates a "descent" into the meticulous somatic details of the poet's body in the octet: the purple tide, the thrilling vein, the slow pulse, the swollen, "loaded" heart, the closing eye[348]. It suggests what Paula McDowell discerns as "a renewed fascination with the human body as a powerful (and potentially universal) communications medium" (McDowell, 2010 241) in the eighteenth century. The quickening impulse comes from the contemplation of the sentimental. It brings to mind Coleridge's description of *The Recluse* as a poem that would involve a history of the progress of sensation in its relation to conjectural history, which was popular around that historical period: it treats "man as man, a subject of eye, ear, touch, and taste, in contact with external nature, and informing the

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[345] As a matter of fact, Wordsworth did not have chances to meet Williams until 1820. See James Averill, p. 40.
[346] "… incidents are among the lowest allurements of poetry," as Wordsworth writes to Coleridge, in *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Early Years, 1787-1805*, p. 234. Also see Geoffrey Hartman, *Wordsworth's Poetry*, pp. 157-162.
[347] On which James Averill comments: "its suffering is silent, and its narrative without 'bodily form,' 'scarcely palpable,' ill adapted 'to the grosser sense'" (Averill 200).
[348] See Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion*, p. 77.

senses from the mind, and not compounding a mind out of the senses[349]." Peter Murphy argues that

> in the modern world the written self may appear to be more capricious and free, but that self is sutured ever closer to the bodily self, since its career generates profits that the bodily self wants, and which culture becomes ever more capable of overseeing and collecting. (Murphy 134)

Vision, as a metaphor of encounter and interaction between subject and suffering object, becomes contagious and tactile, through which what Earl Wasserman has called the "doctrine of sympathy[350]" is achieved. It already initiates Wordsworth as a Romantic poet, who stands for "a particularly powerful form of sympathetic relationship between author and reader" (Franta 55)—what Coleridge writes in the following way:

> And therefore it is the prime merit of genius and its most unequivocal mode of manifestation, so to represent familiar objects as to awaken in the minds of others a kindred feeling concerning them and that freshness of sensation which is the constant accompaniment of mental, no less than of bodily, convalescence[351].

This self-sentimentalizing move collapses the distance between the sympathizing observer and the weeping subject he contemplates. It is a tendency of Wordsworth's contemporary sentimental literature "to bring the reader self-consciously into literary structure" (Averill 37), and to remind of "a literary situation in which the reader had been aware of himself as reader and of the work as literary artifact" (Averill 45)[352]. It subordinates the concreteness of lived relations to imaginary, which thereby substitutes and cancels the unruly detail and flux of the real through

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[349] Samuel T. Coleridge, *Specimens of the Table Talk of the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. Also see Esther Schor, *Bearing the Dead*, p. 70.
[350] See Earl R. Wasserman, "The Pleasures of Tragedy."
[351] *Biographia Literaria*, 1:81.
[352] For an illustration of a dynamic relation between reader-like expectations and the structure of the poetic experience, and how a psychology of writing, reading and response is established, specifically in "Simon Lee, the Old Huntsman," see James Averill, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, pp. 162-66. Also see Andrew L. Griffin, "Wordsworth and the Problem of Imaginative Story: The Case of 'Simon Lee.'"

gestures of suppression and absorption. This is a gesture of confining it in the feminine sentimental scene, so that it is possible to reassert orality as a nurturing mode rather than the corrupting influence of popular literature. Maureen McLane categorizes this as "the romance of orality" in the transformation of a Romantic *poiesis*, an "emergence of a new literary orality" in eighteenth-century Britain[353].

The central role of language is given a significant position by Wordsworth in the formation of moral sentiments and beliefs. In a criticism of the contemporary moral philosophy, he suggests that moral philosophers set an "undue value ... upon that faculty which we call reason" and, therefore, appeal to us in "lifeless words, & abstract propositions." They are "impotent over our habits," he writes. For him, only if a language is directed toward the body can our passion and habit be reshaped:

> Can it be imaged by any man who has deeply examined his own heart that an old habit will be foregone,or a new one formed, by a series of propositions, which, to the [? mind] (*sic.*) can convey no feeling which has any connection with the supposed archetype or fountain of the proposition existing in human life?

Furthermore, a text—such as Miss Williams is reading, as well as the artifactualized text through Wordsworth's work of writing—should "melt into our affection[s]" and "incorporate itself with the blood & vital juices of our minds" in the act of reading, so as to inform "us how men placed in such or such situations will necessarily act ... thence enabling us to apply ourselves to the

[353] See McLane, *Balladeering, Minstrelsy, and the Making of British Romantic Poetry*, chapter 7, "British Romantic mediality and beyond: reflections on the fate of 'orality," pp. 212-51. Also see her "Ballads and Bards: British Romantic Orality."

means of turning them into a more beneficial course" (qtd. in Bewell 11)[354]. Thus, the ethos of a reading audience is interpolated through the regulation of an expanding cultural economy of intimacy, and a rhetorical relationship between readers and the writer is established. It is through presenting the illusion that he, and the actual readers, share the activity of constructing a literary reality. Reader and writer are conflated in the act of watching through a sense of complicity, which merges reader and writer in the "action" of the poetic text. This is different from moral philosophy[355]. A sense of contextual realism is negotiated through a developed sense of closeness between narrator and audience. It follows the empirical mode of sentimentalism prevalent in the eighteenth century[356]. The dramatic monologue form of the poem initiates what Robert Langbaum recognizes as the impulse toward the "poetry of experience" stemming from the late eighteenth century[357].

However, there is not merely a transition of poetic objects, presumably from the feminine sentimental scene "SHE wept" to descriptions of its "physiological effects" (Pinch 77) upon the poet's body. More than that, this description of the internal response to the tale of feminine sentimentality is a transposition of media, from the visual and aural (and even tactile) to the literary, and in the extension from the mimetic into the realm of pure language. It anticipates—if it's not already an instance of—how Celeste Langan identifies print as quite "recognizable as a medium" by 1800: "[T]he medium of print becomes recognizable as a medium ... by its attempt

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[354] *Prose Work* 1:139.
[355] The "science of MAN" as David Hume termed it. David Hume, A *Treatise of Human Nature*, p. xv. Wordsworth was writing at exactly the moment when the field of moral philosophy was about to "break up into the modern disciplines of anthropology, sociology, psychology, philosophical ethics, economics, history, and political science" (Bewell 13).
[356] As is suggested by Walter Scott's comment upon Henry Mackenzie, whose work is to represent "the effect of incidents, whether important or trifling, upon the human mind" and "to follow the fluxes and refluxes of the mind when agitated by the great and simple affections of our nature, " see Walter Scott, *Lives of the Novelists*, p. 298. For a detailed analysis of the relation between empiricism and Romanticism, see Cathy Caruth, *Empirical Truths and Critical Fictions*, pp. 2-4.
[357] Robert Langbaum, *The Poetry of Experience*.

to 'deliver' audiovisual information[358]." Literature as part of the emergent modern print medium invents and legitimizes the personal and familial in the oral forms as "a nostalgia for the presence of the body and the face-to-face, a dream of unmediated communication that, of course, could never be approximated even in the oral—a dream of an eternal present, a future-past" (Stewart 23)[359]. If, starting from the early eighteenth century, "in works such as *The Dunciad* and *A Tale of a Tub*, Pope and Swift reflect on and register threatening oral practices as part of their extended meditation upon the problems and possibilities of print[360]", orality including the readerly activity of reading, in a later period of the century, is sanctioned and revivified by its acquisition of an imaginary feminine scene. Penny Fielding, in her *Writing and Orality*, notes that when the "romance of orality" is "constructed by a dominant ideology it begins to look suspiciously like writing" (10). It would be fixed, authoritative, monologist, and culturally hegemonic. Some forms of orality are better than others. In a "graphocentric society" (10)[361], it is the elite literati who sift and determine the values and meanings of the oral, or as Friedrich Kittler claims, "all the passion of reading consisted of hallucinating a meaning between letters and lines: the visible or audible world of romantic poetry" (40).

The poetic subjectivity perceives, hears of, and even (possibly) physically approximates the weeping female poet, and presents the somatic details all through the actual work of his writing. This agrees with the picture of the Enlightenment anthropology, which, though guided by an ethnocentric belief that all cultures are on the way to becoming European, nevertheless assumes a

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[358] Celeste Langan, "Understanding Media in 1805: Audiovisual Hallucination in the Lay of the Last Minstrel."
[359] This is also why in the works of Maupassant, Peter Brooks identifies "an urban literature, self-consciously a commodity in a marketplace, which nonetheless returns again and again to fictive situations of oral communication." See Brooks, "The Tale vs. The Novel."
[360] Paula McDowell, "Mediating Media Past and Present: Toward A Genealogy of 'Print Culture' and 'Oral Tradition," in *This Is Enlightenment*, p. 238.
[361] Penny Fielding, *Writing and Orality*.

greater degree of reciprocity in this relationship[362]. Wordsworth, strongly influenced by moral philosophical texts[363], follows the moral philosopher constructing his "science of man." He remains far removed from the societies that provided the raw materials of his theories, and presents philosophical speculations in the form of textual activities[364]. In this poem, it is partially true that "it is not clear how many characters people the sonnet" (Averill 35). It is also partially true that

> the speaker's detachment from his object, his leaving her spontaneously and immediately to retreat into his own response, is balanced by a blurring of the boundaries between his body and hers, as if his feelings were physically propped upon hers, rather than reflecting or imitating them. (Pinch 77)

That is, a possibility (or ambiguity) of ventriloquism exists in the poem. All of this, however, may be read more broadly as an index of "mediality," a term proposed by Friedrich Kittler, which David Wellbery amplifies as "the general condition within which, under certain circumstances, something like 'poetry' or 'literature' can take shape[365]." Wordsworth takes this occasion of "SHE wept" to stage himself as that person feeling, as well as doing the work of writing. The female vocal activity is used to conjure a sense of "orality" in modern literature, which is made possible by a "general" medium of print. Regarding the historical relation between literacy and orality, Celeste Langan argues, in the case of Walter Scott:

> Once print has achieved its would-be transparency—once literacy has become *general* (I use "general" rather than "universal" here to signify that literacy had become both an acknowledged goal and a norm though not an actuality), the storage system of 'oral

[362] See Alan Bewell, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment*, p. 22.
[363] See Bewell, pp. 13-17.
[364] See Bewell, p. 22.
[365] See David E. Wellbery's "Foreword" to Friedrich A. Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900*, p. xiii.

> literature' would seem to be obsolete. But precisely for that reason, it becomes available as the ostensible content of the broadcast medium of print. (Langan 70)

This is also true of this first poem of Wordsworth's, in which the oral is configured in an artifactualized Miss Williams weeping. Sentimentalism's orientation toward response, which fastens attention exclusively upon a sympathetic economy of the emotions of the perceiver[366], is made into a dialectic between orality (weeping), literacy (reading), and viewing ("I" and the implicated reader) in this "transparency" economy of the print medium. This process of transmission is exactly what Friedrich Kittler calls "the transposition of media," through which the male writer—as words' worth—of the poem becomes what might be aptly captured as the "participant observer" in the parlance of cultural anthropology[367] in the discourse of sentimentality. The weeping female (poet or not) is positioned as that of an anthropological object[368]. If, indeed, it is that "an imperative issues from the realization that the transposition of

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[366] As Northrop Frye suggests, "Where there is a sense of literature as process, pity and fear become states of mind without objects, moods which are common to the work of art and the reader, and which bind them together psychologically instead of separating them aesthetically" ("Toward Defining an Age of Sensibility," p. 316).

[367] Johannes Fabian suggests that the "denial of coevalness" of actually coexisting peoples is a "constitutive phenomenon" of the modern discipline of anthropology, a discipline whose origins he traces to this period. See Matti Bunzl, "Foreword" to Fabian's *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*, pp. x-xi. Indeed, as Maureen N. McLane observes, "the late eighteenth-century problem of representing ballad informants—indeed, whether to represent them at all—forecasts the kinds of debates scholars like Johannes Fabian, Edward Said, James Clifford, and others have animated regarding twentieth-century ethnography and more broadly the representation of 'others.'" See McLane, "Mediating Antiquarians in Britain, 1760-1830: The Invention of Oral Tradition; Or, Close Reading Before Coleridge" in *This Is Enlightenment*, p. 251.

[368] This anthropological attitude is also expressed in Wordsworth's acknowledgement of the existence of a peasant's written culture, for instance, in a letter to Francis Wrangham, 5 June 1808: "I find, among the people I am speak of, half-penny Ballads, and penny and two-penny histories, in great abundance; these are often bought as charitable tributes to the poor Persons who hawk them about (and it is the best way of procuring them); they are frequently stitched together in tolerably thick volumes, and such I have read; some of the contents, though not often religious, very good; others objectionable, either for the superstition in them (such as prophecies, fortune-telling, etc.) or more frequently for indelicacy. I have so much felt the influence of these straggling papers, that I have many a time wished I had talents to produce songs, poems, and little histories, that might circulate among other good things in this way, supplanting partly the bad; flowers and useful herbs to take place of weeds. Indeed some of the Poems which I have published were composed not without a hope that at some time or other they might answer this purpose." And yet rustics themselves do little reading, and there does not exist a public sphere of letters in the bourgeoisie sense: "The labouring man in agriculture generally carries on his work either in solitude, or with his own Family, persons whose minds he is thoroughly acquainted with, and with whom he is under no temptation to enter into discussions, or to compare opinions." *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth*, 2:247-48.

media is always a manipulation and must leave gaps between one embodiment and another[369]," here we have the gaps between the male observer and the female sentiment, reading, watching and writing. Alan Bewell argues that

> Wordsworth's anthropology is distinct from most of the work done prior to the twentieth century in that it is grounded on direct observation and participation in fieldwork, not on the distanced synthesis of ethnographic documents ... denies any neutral form of observation or description ... continually draws our attention to the place, function, and intellectual limits of the observer in anthropological narratives. (Bewell 91)

Indeed, this more complex and self-conscious manner of anthropological discourse in the poem establishes a staging situation, where the poetic narrator's body must be of meticulous somatic details so as to be authentic and sincere: not merely the authenticity and sincerity of the authorial "I," but also that of the female weeping reader. This accords well with the century's attempt to represent honest feeling honestly, as suggested through the critical work of Michael Fried on French eighteenth-century painting and David Marshall on Shaftesbury, Defoe, and Rousseau[370]. It suggests a mode of excess in sensibility when the "society" is saturated with mass media. What the conservative poet Robert Southey names "the sentimental classes, persons of ardent or morbid sensibility" in 1823 (qtd. in Williams 282) already has its historical precursors in the eighteenth century. It exists as an undefined antagonist, which Fried designates "theatrical"—what Jon Klancher defines as "the stances of both radical rhetoric and mass-cultural display," and "it is worth pointing out that theorists of this *kind* of reader/spectator nearly always fabricate

[369] As proposed by Friedrich Kittler, 1990, p. 267.
[370] While Fried and Marshall's arguments are more textually based, the current analysis tries to situate this proliferation of sentiments in a saturated history of media and mediation. See Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality*; David Marshall, *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy*.

a hybrid antagonist, composed equally of radical discourse and mass culture" (191)[371]. What draws Wordsworth's reforming impulse in his preface to the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* is, prominently, the prevailing taste of the gothic novels—what Wordsworth calls "frantic novels[372]." The exemplar of this taste is "an implicit endorsement of a mindless but entertaining practice of absorptive reading that requires a willing suspension of disbelief" (Warner 291) in Horace Walpole's novel *The Castle of Otranto* by (1764). For Wordsworth and Coleridge, his collaborator, an authentic-deep-self has to be established for accessing the substance of interiority[373]. This might also be the primary reason why the first generation of English Romantic poets finds "simulation"—the creation of virtual realities, through panoramas, billboards, or phantasmagorias—especially noxious[374]. The strategy of blurring the boundaries between his body (and consciousness) and hers is a shrewd camouflage of projecting the textual media of poetry-writing as male and the oral form of weeping as female[375]. In other words, Wordsworth seems very aware of what de Certeau summarizes as the pedagogical function of the book at the heart of the Enlightenment: a certain concept of education as mimicry, with a "scriptural system" that assumes: "[that] although the public is more or less resistant, it is molded by (verbal or iconic) writing, that it becomes similar to what it receives, and that it is imprinted by and like the text which is imposed on it" (167)[376]. In this way, Wordsworth accomplishes the

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[371] For Klancher, this "kind" of theorist includes Samuel Coleridge, see chapter 5 in *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832* for his discussion. This tactic is indeed—as Jon Klancher points out—throughout media culture, whether literature or otherwise, see John Klancher, p. 191, note 46. For a Chinese case regarding the historical development of a musical medium *Qin*, see Ronald Egan, "The Controversy over Music and 'Sadness' and Changing Conceptions of the Qin in Middle Period China." I thank Professor Ling Hon Lam for this reading.
[372] Also see Martha Woodmansee, *Author, Art and the Market*, p. 114
[373] Also see Clifford Siskin, *The Historicity of Romantic Discourse*, pp. 11-13.
[374] See Gillen D'Arcy Wood, *The Shock of the Real*.
[375] See Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion*, p. 78.
[376] John Locke's theory of the mind as a *tabula rasa* presents the mind of the marginal people in the British Enlightenment—idiots, children, savages and illiterates, who are also recurrent figures that Wordsworth observes and writes about—as in its natural state, where innate ideas could possibly be written. See de Certeau, Michel. *Practice of Everyday Life*. See also James Ross Holstun, *A Rational Millennium: Puritan Utopias of Seventeenth-*

emotional authenticity claim as realized in the somatic details of the poet writing through mimicry, while distancing the oral reader of Miss Williams into an anthropological object.

IV.iii. Political Economy of Romantic Literary Labor in Media History

Here it claims the author and the first person "I" as the authentic producer of literary value—words' worth. It does not address Miss Helen Maria Williams as a writer at all but as a sentimental reader distanced from a reading audience. Interestingly, in the eighteenth century, the novel-addicted reader in Britain is usually female[377], and "this figure of the woman reader can function as an admonitory figure for men as well as for women: because novels render readers sensitive and erotic, they menace men with feminization" (Warner 141). Miss Helen Maria Williams, the actual woman writer, is poeticized into a prevalent figure of a popular female reader but as admonitory for men who perform as the producer of literary work. The actual pedagogical process—Wordsworth the young learner while Miss Williams the established poet is to be learned from—is reversed: the woman reader is the pedagogical subject[378]. Furthermore, a first-person narrative, unlike the third-person narratives in early fictions by Behn, Manley, and Haywod[379], would not take the reader into an affect-laden, supercharged sympathy with the thoughts and sensibilities of the characters, but with that of the author, *à la* the observer. It is a fully self-conscious authorial response to that media culture eroticized and feminized by

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Century England and America, pp. 34-39 and 110-15, for an insightful discussion of the political uses of the *tabula rasa* metaphor in seventeenth-century utopian texts.

[377] See William Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, p. 140.

[378] This corresponds to Wordsworth's politics of a poetic language in general, about which Jon Klancher argues that the poems of 1800 "compose the textual countermove against that vast social transformation that since Wordsworth's birth has been turning one (full) culture into another (empty) culture, as the peasants who speak 'the very language of men' become historically the future urban readers who, at further and further textual removes, can at best read only *about* such a language in the poems the poet offers them. Thus the increasingly bleak strategy of a writer who casts the act of *reading* against ineluctable historical development itself" (Klancher 144).

[379] See William Warner, p.151.

feminizing consumption and female production: the body of the author is instrumentalized along with his pleasure and experience through an act of voyeurism. His power comes from standing apart but nevertheless watching, the classic gesture of the anthropological participant observer, through which we can see an embryonic structure of narrator, audience, and victim complicated in later poems of Wordsworth's. This exteriority to the scene he contrives offers an evidential "I," with which the reader is persuaded to identify. It lies outside any overwhelming and sentimental consumption of reading, and is thus able to produce work for readings. This "I"—a figure of what Geoffrey Hartman has called "the ocular man in Wordsworth[380]"—develops an ethos that facilitates the serialization of the life of a reader into a sequence of absorbing adventures; it could be about Miss Helen Maria Williams or anyone else that takes the role of textualized characters weeping and reading. From this a sense of steady, cost-free accumulation of experience becomes possible, and a print media becomes addictive.

This sentimental sympathy in Miss Helen Maria Williams's reading scene—NOT in her writing scene—as watched with an erotic tinge by a Wordsworthian "I" becomes a necessary condition for the visibility of her virtue in print[381]. It helps situate the literary value of a Wordsworth, whose work keeps readers free from the contagious feminizing reading-tale activity. Feminine reading, writing women, and written women (those women written about in literary works, especially in sentimental scenes) are resolved with this strategy of the "containment of the contagion," to use a phrase Paula McDowell used in a different context[382]. Writing here indeed structures simultaneously poison and cure[383]. The rift is at once temporal, epistemological, and

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[380] Geoffrey Hartman, *Wordsworth's Poetry, 1787-1814*, p. 148.
[381] This reminds of the way Samuel Johnson introduces Samuel Richardson to the readers of the *Rambler* as the writer who "has taught the passions to move at the command of virtue." See Johnson, *Rambler*, head note to Richardson's guest appearance in No. 97, Feb. 19, 1751.
[382] Paula McDowell, "Defoe and the Contagion of the Oral: Modeling Media Shift in *A Journal of the Plague Year*."
[383] See Jacques Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," in *Dissemination*, pp. 61-172.

ethical. An implicit as well as complicit contract is formed between "I" in the poem and its reader. Thus a hierarchy of writing and reading, literary producer and consumer is established along the gender axis to reassure the distancing authority of the author in the reader, who enters the sentimental scene and goes away unscathed. There lies the whole possibility of a carefree absorption of the reader in transition between reading, weeping and listening. It is reminiscent of a similar gesture that we see in Francis Bacon's experimental philosophy of the British Enlightenment:

> For as yet we are but lingering in the outer courts of nature, nor are we preparing ourselves a way into her inner chambers. Yet no one can endow a given body with a new nature, or successfully and aptly transmute into a new body, unless he has attained a competent knowledge of the body so to be altered or transformed. (Bacon 7)

In Bacon's method, nature is subjected to our will to transform it, under a penetrating gaze of a male gendered knowledge. The feminine nature enables a possibility of knowledge in a sexualized cartography, which, in turn, grants an aggressive masculinity and male dominion over nature many times identified as modernity[384].

In the same way, Wordsworth takes the imitation-inducing powers ascribed to an absorptive reading with an emergent feminine sentimentality, and then harnesses them to the cause of virtue through the authorial mediation of print in the sestet of the poem:

> That tear proclaims—in thee each virtue dwells,

[384] This is also manifested in what Wordsworth identifies as a universal "music of humanity"—or "we have *all* one human heart"—in his language politics, as Jon Klancher's analysis suggests: "To 'select' from, 'adopt,' or 'adapt,' above all to 'imitate' a 'real language' of the peasant poor, is to assert that such a language exists ontologically apart from the language of the urban middle class, that the very framework of representation—where one language 'imitates' another—will at last reveal yet a third language. Neither peasant nor middle-class, this language is the very 'music of humanity.' Here the ambitious, profoundly moral act of writing produces an audience that may escape its unacknowledged prison house of language, its own class-limited cultural position, and gaze into the far freer realm of a humanity that 'suffers' rather than 'craves'" (Klancher 140). For Bacon's sexualized epistemological cartography, also see Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature*; Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science*.

And bright will shine in misery's midnight hour;

As the soft star of dewy evening tells

What radiant fires were drown'd by day's malignant pow'r

That only wait the darkness of the night

To cheer the wand'ring wretch with hospitable light

The relation of the oral to the literate within literature is projected as a theatrical performance and medium in print, a type of theatricality exploitative of female sentimentality and female writers, which, in the first place, provides a means of entering the poetic arena. The transmission relays established through Wordsworth makes the poem an open social channel for readers to internalize. It serves an intermediary linguistic bridge between Williams, "I," Wordsworth and the reader, that link between "soul" and "self" in the unusual figure of the "stranger within" of the eighteenth century[385]. Anna Letitia Barbauld's "A Summer Evening's Meditation"(1773) presents a case of an inner self, or "soul" of providential deism projected across the heavens in an act of imaginary interstellar level[386]. The sublime "God" from within in "this dead of midnight" as "a spark of fire divine"—to which the transported "self-collected soul" turns inward—is replaced by the inter-subjective and inter-medial sentimental and virtuous (and

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[385] For a more detailed analysis of this "stranger within" in Edward Young and Samuel Coleridge, see Robert Miles, "Romanticism, Enlightenment, and Mediation: The Case of the Inner Stranger," in *This Is Enlightenment*, pp. 173-88.

[386] … is there not
A tongue in every star that talks with man,
And wooes him to be wise; nor wooes in vain:
This dead of midnight is the noon of thought,
And wisdom mounts her zenith with the stars.
At this still hour the self-collected soul
Turns inward, and beholds a stranger there
Of high descent, and more than mortal rank;
An embryo GOD; a spark of fire divine,
Which must burn on for ages, when the sun,
(Fair transitory creature of a day!)
Has clos'd his golden eye, and wrapt in shades
Forgets his wonted journey thro' the east.
See Robert Miles, "Romanticism, Enlightenment, and Mediation: The Case of the Inner Stranger," p. 177 and p. 186.

vivifying) tears of either Williams, "I," Wordsworth and the reader, with its cathartic affect achieved with each. It is this mediating practice between subjects and media that performs cultural work for words' worth. The earlier inward turn to Providence in the "self-collected soul" converts to a more buffered zone of medial space for representation, reflection, and response. The vertiginous effects, which the eighteenth century typically gained by contemplative projection into outer space[387], are achieved by Wordsworth as interiority and consumptive reading. By absorbing the older (female) forms of sentimental scenes (weeping, as well as writing for Williams) into the new (male) buffered zone as its content, the print media both contains the older forms and draws strength from them as it develops into new practices[388]. In this characteristically Wordsworthian transparency[389], he lays bare his own history of received transmissions—the voyeuristic gesture—and his profound, painful internalization, the agonized power he himself invests in his work. The poet's body is made internalized, textual—weeping as a consequence of reading activity—possibly a silent solitary reading[390], with Williams's as the oral. The narration itself works the change. The transmission relays work to invite a re-oralization from the actual readers of that historical period[391]—what Coleridge realizes as "the devotees of the circulating libraries[392]" and "the luxuriant misgrowth of our activity: a Reading Public![393]". Don H. Bialostosky even argues that Wordsworth does not view the poet as "a

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[387] See James Averill, p. 92, and especially note 8 on that page.
[388] This performative and anthropological gesture also exists in Wordsworth's politics of language, what Jon Klancher calls his "metalanguage,"—"a framework of highly qualified 'poetic' language that carefully 'selects,' 'adapts,' 'adopts,' or 'imitates' a 'real language of men' as its object:" "Deprived of the real by the corruption of his own language, the self-conscious poet must now hypothesize another language—the language of the peasant poor—that preserves all the crucial referentials the poet can no longer summon himself" (Klancher 139).
[389] Also see Maureen McLane, *Balladeering, Minstrelsy, and the Making of British Romantic Poetry*, p. 231.
[390] Chartier warns that the distinctly modern shift toward silent solitary reading was far from complete or unidirectional, see Chartier, *Order of Books*, p. 20.
[391] Also see Maureen McLane, p. 230.
[392] In his *Biographia Literaria*. Quoted in Andrew Franta, pp. 4-5.
[393] In his *The Statesman's Manual: A Lay Sermon*. Quoted in Paul Keen, ed., *Revolutions in Romantic Literature*, p. 19. Of course, Coleridge's history of the book as part of the emergent nineteenth mass media is rather dreary, which retrogrades from "religious oracles" to "venerable preceptors," "instructive friends," "entertaining companions," and

maker in the medium of language but a maker of poems representing speaking persons[394]." If the eighteenth century had access to interpretation of catharsis likening the effect of tragedy to physical purgation, the expulsion of what Samuel Johnson calls "impurities of tragedy from the human body[395]," the "darkness of the night" is enlightened or refined into "hospitable light" in the practice of writing and reading. It is another place where Wordsworth situates his poetics in eighteenth-century philosophy and "conjectural history"[396], which "takes up a specific stance toward marginal individuals, viewing them as keys for unlocking otherwise insoluble problems about human origins" (Bewell 25). Sentimentality, gendered as feminine, is used to lend support for textual speculation and production. The meticulous somatic details of the poet's body in the octet are not for nothing; they are for the sake of individual—as well as textual—sincerity and authenticity, pure and hygienic. This is what Wordsworth suggests as the labor of a poetic genius in his 1915 Essay:

> Of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening the sphere of human sensibility, for the delight, honor, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the

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finally "culprits to hold up their hands at the bar of every self-elected, yet not the less peremptory, judge" (57). He claims in *Biographia Literaria* that "[t]he same gradual retrograde movement may be traced, in the relation which authors themselves have assumed toward their readers" (58): "Poets and philosophers, rendered diffident by their very number, addressed themselves to '*learned* readers;' then, aimed to conciliate the graces of 'the *candid* reader;' till, the critic still rising as the author sunk, the amateurs of literature collectively were erected into a municipality of judges, and addressed as THE TOWN! And now finally, all men being supposed able to read, and all readers able to judge, the multitudinous PUBLIC, shaped into personal unity by the magic abstraction, sits nominal despot on the throne of criticism" (59). For a convincing historical argument on Coleridge's attitudes towards a reading public, see Jon Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832*, pp. 150-70.

[394] Bialostosky, *Making Tales*, p. 19.

[395] James Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, III, 39. Quoted from James Averill, p. 131, note 24.

[396] "Conjectural history" is also called "stadial theory" of history, elaborated through Scottish Enlightenment historiography—a model summarized by Adam Smith thus: "The four stages of society are hunting, pasturage, farming, and commerce" (Smith, *Lecture on Jurisprudence* 1). Other exponents of this theory include Adam Ferguson in his *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, William Robertson in *A View of the Progress of Society* and *History of the Discovery and Settlement of America*, and Henry Home, Lord Kames in his *Sketches of the History of Man*.

> employment of them in such a manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the poet? Is it to be supposed that the reader can make progress of this kind, like an Indian prince or general—stretched on his palanquin, and borne by his slaves? No; he is invigorated and inspirited by his leader, in order that he may exert himself; for he cannot proceed in quiescence, he cannot be carried like a dead weight. Therefore to create taste is to call forth and bestow power, of which knowledge is the effect; and *there* lies the true difficulty[397].

This view of the male literary labor of Romantic genius is a trope prevalent in the Romantic anxiety about literary value. Jerome J. McGann observes it as "A Romantic Agony": "Imagination and poetry do not offer a relief and escape but a permanent and self-realized condition of suffering" (McGann 131)—these are efforts of Romantics to identify their work as labor in the coming of political economy[398]. This political economy is conditioned upon feminine and female sentimentality, through which the musing male's settling into the vivifying virtue and hospitable light is primarily a response to mediation and the process of writing. Wordsworth poeticizes this sentimental scene in the tradition of eighteenth-century empirical philosophy, through the writing of which "a specific group of marginal and otherwise anonymous people entered into writing and history ... structured to meet the demands of these texts and to function as an idiom or working grammar within the language of empiricism" (Bewell 28). Elsewhere Wordsworth writes: "Poetic excitement, when accompanied by protracted labour in composition, has throughout my life brought on more or less bodily

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[397] "Essay, Supplement to the Preface," *The Prose Works of William Wordsworth*, vol. 3, p. 82.

[398] A typical case of in between Romanticism and political economy would be Thomas De Quincey, whose *The Logic of Political Economy* (1844)—whose significance lay "in its impulse to draw out and examine the issue of subjective desire in political economy. In doing so, he [De Quincey] anticipated the political economy of the end of the century..." (30), as Catherine Gallagher points out. See Catherine Gallagher, *The Body Economic*, p. 30.

derangement[399]". This "bodily derangement"—as a form of what Robert Whytt identifies as "the hypochondriac"– needs the feminine sentimental virtue to vivify, as a baby wants its mother's gaze[400]. It provides a virtue of pleasure and productivity[401]. Different from Richardson, who engages in what Madeleine Kahn calls "narrative transvestism"—hiding himself behind an alluring story of a sexually embattled fifteen-year-old girl[402], Wordsworth presents a relational mediality between the sentimental feminine reading, the authorial "I" seeing, and the reading experience, drawing a space represented as individualistic and private into the public sphere of print. This poetic strategy throughout his career locates the poetic subjectivity in the isolated as well as sharing position, in similar cases to what Walter Benjamin sees in the novelist:

> The storyteller takes what he tells from experience—his own or that reported by others. And he in turn makes it the experience of those who are listening to his tale. The novelist has isolated himself. The birthplace of the novel is the solitary individual ... [403]

For instance, *The Prelude*, the great unread poem (because published posthumously) of the Romantic period, emphasizes the necessity of literacy, the ability to read, to be able to discover human emotional subjectivity, which is the object of a poetic epistemology. In a sense, this suggests the emergence of a lonely male writer and reader in the bourgeoning textual culture:

> When I began to enquire,
>
> To watch and question those I met and speak
>
> Without reserve to them, the lonely roads

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[399] *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, volume 3, p. 542.
[400] See below.
[401] A pleasure and productivity perhaps not unrelated to the brief surge of sales in poetry during the first decades of the nineteenth century, which was an anomaly attributable to the inflated price of paper during the Napoleonic wars. As Lee Erickson argues in *The Economy of Literary Form*, the consequently inflated cost of books increased the value of condensed language, and temporarily encouraged the rereading that Wordsworth and Coleridge had both proposed as the particular pleasure of poetry and as the demand it places on consumers. See Erickson, *The Economy of Literary Form*.
[402] See Madeleine Kahn, *Narrative Transvestism*.
[403] Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller: Reflections on the Work of Nicolai Leskov," in *Illuminations*, p. 87.

Were open schools in which I daily read

With most delight the passions of mankind,

Whether by words, looks, sighs, or tears, revealed;

There saw into the depth of human souls,

Souls that appear to have no depth at all

To careless eyes. [Book XIII. 160-68][404]

The need to "inquire / To watch and question" these individuals—as an act of silent reading, the means by which the "passions of mankind" and the "depth of human souls" can be "daily read"— is a process of education and socialization for poetic subjectivity. The observer, rather than the observed, is educated with a literacy of reading deep into souls, and this is conducted in a domestic context, restricting a knowledge formed from observations to and conversations with people with whom he held "familiar talk[405]." The solitary poetic voice (as suggested by traveling on "the lonely roads") technologizes an oral tradition—part of "low and rustic life"—into that of literacy: a specifically oral medium which is eventually supplanted by the more efficient technology of reading. Through the oral, an interior subjectivity—" the depth of human souls"—is produced as a consequence of literate reading. It is a process of "glamor"—the way Walter Scott defines it in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805): "Glamour, in the legends of superstition, means the magic power of imposing on the eyesight of the spectators, so that the appearance of the object shall be totally different from the reality" (41). Penny Fielding points out that, in Scottish culture, "the association of writing with magic is preserved, as 'grammar', or book-

[404] *Wordsworth: Poetical Works*, p. 581.

[405] For how Wordsworth's employment of the language of moral speculation as a domestic anthropology is different from the prevalent discourse of an eighteenth century anthropology—where ethnographic descriptions of other peoples are provided by travel narratives (which were Wordsworth's favorite reading), see Alan Bewell, p. 30.

learning, became 'glamour', or magical power" (Fielding 66)[406]. It is as if the Scottish culture works upon Wordsworth in a figural sense. In the case analyzed here, this poetic strategy is realized in the beginning of his literary career in a virtualized familiarity with Miss Williams through Wordsworth's reading of and learning from women's sentimental poems in the 1780s. The magic of literacy makes possible the somatic reactions of poetic subjectivity in "She weeps." It could be identified as what Kittler calls "alphabetism" in a larger context of historical media: "Around 1800, the book became both film and record simultaneously—not, however, as a technological reality, but only in the imaginary of readers' souls. General compulsory school attendance and new technologies of alphabetization helped to bring about this new reality" (Kittler, 1997 39).

IV.iv. Sympathetic Life in Things, Silence, and the Sublime

This erasure of female literary labor in "poetic mediality[407]" is not specifically that of Wordsworth, nor merely of this poem. Adela Pinch points out that "Sonnet on Seeing Miss Helen Maria Williams Weep at a Tale of Distress" is similar to other contemporary poems addressed to women poetesses—Anna Seward, Charlotte Smith, Hannah More, Ann Yearsley, and Williams—that populated the poetry sections of the magazines in the 1780s[408]. This general

[406] Walter Scott, as the editor of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, "in seeming to mediate between oral texts and a literate readership ... maneuvered himself into a position which kept orality and literacy firmly apart" (66). See Penny Fielding, *Writing and Orality*, p. 66. For how the necromantic or etymological relation between "glamour" and "grammar" is situated in a historical transition from orality to literacy by Walter J. Ong, in the case of Walter Scott, see Celeste Langan, p. 59.
[407] Also see Maureen McLane, 2008, p. 231.
[408] See Adela Pinch, p. 79. James Averill writes: "Certainly the genre flourished in the poetry section of the *European Magazine*. In 1786, six such poems appear, five of them addressed to poetesses. There are 'Stanzas to Mrs. Barbauld,' a 'Sonnet, Addressed to Miss Seward,' three sonnets to Mrs. Smith, and an 'Ode to the Author of the Triumph of Benevolence'" (Averill 33). In the American context, it was not until the 1830s that an intimate public sphere of femininity "constituted the first subcultural, mass-mediated, market population of relatively

textual media strategy is deployed for control of and anxiety the possibly hysterical female body at a time decades after "the female body came to be understood no longer as a lesser version of the male's (a one-sex model) but as its incommensurable opposite (a two-sex model)" (Laqueur viii)[409]. The female body and passion are so potentially contaminating that in another poem of Wordsworth's—written in 1799 or 1800—there has to be a literary death:

A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal

A slumber did my spirit seal;

I had no human fears.

She seemed a thing that could not feel

The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;

She neither hears nor sees;

Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,

With rocks, and stones, and trees.

The poem's sources in the ballad tradition have long been recognized[410]. The literary death of the female figure is reminiscent of a similar female informant mentioned in Thomas Percy's headnote to his "Edom O'Gordon, a Scottish ballad" (1765): "We are indebted for its publication (with many other valuable things in these volumes) to Sir David Dalrymple, Bart., who gave it as

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politically disenfranchised people" (Berlant, 2008 xii). Berlant's pessimistic optimism, as "located in the centrality of aesthetics and pedagogy to shaping fantasies, identifications, and attachments to particular identities and life narratives" (xii), is shared in this current writing. See Lauren Berlant, *The Female Complaint*.

[409] "Orgasms that had been common property were now divided. Organs that had been seen as interior versions of what the male had outside—the vagina as penis, the uterus as scrotum—were by the eighteenth century construed as of an entirely different nature. Similarly, physiological processes—menstruation or lactation—that had been seen as part of a common economy of fluids came to be understood as specific to women along" (Lacqueur viii). Thomas Lacqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*.

[410] Especially in Robert Anderson's "Lucy Gray of Allendale" (1798) and Percy's *Reliques*, specifically "The Children in the Wood," see Alan Bewell, p. 204.

it was preserved in the memory of a lady that is now dead[411]." The figure of a dead lady informant becomes part of what moral philosopher Dugald Stewart from Edinburgh calls "the culture of memory" and "the principles on which the culture of memory depends[412]"—a mnemonics constituted by the coming of the modern print[413].

In an important essay, Geoffrey Hartman argues that many of the spectral qualities that we associate with marginal figures in Wordsworth's poetry derive from their genealogical link to the world of ballads and romance. "The archaic or literary forms subsumed by Wordsworth," he writes, "are the literal spooks of Gothic ballad or tale, and the etiolated personifications endemic to poetic diction[414]." This Gothic tincture of female figures in Wordsworth's poetry is more explicitly stated in a primal scene of terror that happens in "The Thorn"—"one of the strangest poems in *Lyrical Ballads*"(146), according to Geoffrey Hartman[415]—before the narrator has a language to poeticize it. While climbing among the hills, the old sailor first comes to this seaside village and has not yet "heard of Martha's name" (173)when he is caught in a terrible storm:

> 'Twas mist and rain, and storm and rain:
>
> No screen, no fence could I discover;
>
> And then the wind! in sooth, it was
>
> A wind full ten times over.
>
> I looked around, I thought I saw

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[411] Thomas Percy, ed. *Reliques*, p. 140.
[412] Dugald Stewart, *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, Part I [1792], reprinted in William Hamilton, ed., *The Collected Works of Dugald Stewart*, 2:391.
[413] Dugald Stewart situates this in a progressive conjectural history of communications development: "[T]the means of communication afforded by the press, have, in the course of two centuries, accelerated the progress of the human mind, far beyond what the most sanguine hopes of our predecessors could have imagined" (10:54).
[414] "The Use and Abuse of Structural Analysis: Riffaterre's Interpretation of Wordsworth's 'Yew-Trees,'" p.169. For Wordsworth's simultaneous critique and appreciation of the conventions of the gothic, also see, for example, Karen Swann, "Public Transport: Adventuring on Wordsworth's Salisbury Plain," *ELH* 55:4 (1988): 533-53, and Michael Gamer, *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception, and Canon Formation*.
[415] Geoffrey H. Hartman, *Wordsworth's Poetry 1787-1814*.

A jutting crag, —and off I ran,

Head-foremost, through the driving rain,

The shelter of the crag to gain;

And, as I am a man,

Instead of jutting crag, I found

A woman seated on the ground.

I did not speak—I saw her face;

Her face!—It was enough for me;

I turned about and heard her cry,

"Oh misery! oh misery!" [177-91]

Seeking a rock, the poetic voice comes upon what seems an isolated woman, her body figuring so close to the earth that she becomes part of it, suffering, like mad Lear, the brunt of the storm[416]. S. M. Parrish contends that the narrator does not actually see Martha Ray, only "a gnarled old tree hung with moss" (Parrish 101). The encounter establishes itself as a literary artifact, reminiscent of Wordsworth's writing of "Sonnet on Seeing Miss Helen Maria Williams Weep at a Tale of Distress" before he actually met Miss Williams[417]. In this Lucy poem of Wordsworth's, the object-like spectral "she" "neither hears nor sees." "She" becomes part of the inanimate "earthly years," "rolled" "earth's diurnal course" with rocks, and stones, and trees, which, in turn, strike of interest because of being provided by consciousness of the human presence the eyesight of the narrator, the sympathetic erotic "touch," and their implied visual and aural sensorial abilities. Literature is presented as work and nature as that work. The entire absence of the readerly experience of the "audiovisual hallucinations" presents another

[416] Also see Alan Bewell, p. 167.
[417] Wordsworth did not have a chance to meet Williams until 1820. See James Averill, p. 40.

experience of the "blanking" from the auditory screen of the blank verse (Langan 53). Readers are thus presented at a crucial moment in an almost primitive encounter when standing before the other, a figure of inarticulate feeling, seeking sympathetic understanding that underlies and makes possible the mediation from writing. Only after an evocation through the sensuality of touch could the narrator claim knowledge and the right to speak the truth and reconstruct the primeval world. This is pre-human and pre-linguistic: she dies, as Geoffrey Hartman has observed, "at the threshold of humanization" (Hartman, 1964 60).

Condillac, in his *Essay on the Origin of Human Knowledge* (1746), situates his account of the origin of language in a postdiluvian period: "that some time after the deluge two children, one male, and the other female, wandered about in the deserts, before they understood any sign." "Who knows?," he asks, "but some nation or other owes its original to an event of this kind?[418]" Wordsworth, as almost certain to have been familiar with this *Essay*[419], seems to invest an origin of a poetic language through the erotic "touch of earthly years" communicated to the female figure. It accomplishes a transition from natural to instituted signs in a gesture of what Charles Taylor calls "the affirmation of ordinary life[420]"—"earth's diurnal course," that is[421]. It agrees with the way in which "Enlightenment theories of the origin of languages regarded poetry as the most archaic form of discourse, and meter and rhyme chiefly as mnemonic devices for the preservation of cultural history in the *absence* of writing" (Langan 50)[422]. Celeste Langan argues that

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[418] Qtd. in Alan Bewell, p. 74.
[419] See Alan Bewell, p. 74; also see Hans Aarsleff, "Wordsworth, Language, and Romanticism," in his *From Locke to Saussure*, pp. 372-81; and James Chandler, *Wordsworth's Second Nature*, pp. 216-34.
[420] Charles Taylor, "Conditions of an Unforced Consensus on Human Rights.
[421] Of course, Wordsworth "found in stones the sermons he had already hidden there" (Wilde 173), as Oscar Wilde remarks.
[422] See, for instance, Hugh Blair's "Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian" (1763), where he explicitly links the characteristics of Ossian's oral poetry to his "very remote area": "there are four great stages through which men successively pass in the progress of society. The first and earliest is the life of hunters; pasturage succeeds to this, as

> the problematic archaism of a written poetry culminates with the development in the eighteenth century of print capitalism as a truly massive medium ... The most widespread solution to this evident dilemma is to identify poetry as the language of the passions; poetry represents that excited utterance which, according to grammarians of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, is registered in prose only by the unmeaning interjection (oh!, ah! alas!) (Langan 50)

"A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal" presents an exemplary illustration of this solution through a complete absence of oral communication of passions, since the touch is tactile.

This insinuated fertility of the feminine suggested in the poem is not strange in Wordsworth's poetics: "for the Vale profound / Is overflowing with the sound" suggesting a voice and womb from the Solitary Reaper, who, "o'er the sickle bending," sings "a melancholy strain" of "natural sorrow, loss, or pain," or of "old, unhappy, far-off things," a primordial song whose power over the listener / narrative voice is pre-linguistic, connecting the ancient past with the present[423]. The south-to-north "progress of poetry"—as well as its east-to-west / downward-to-upward movement, is an ascent contrary to the descent in "Sonnet on Seeing Miss Helen Maria Williams Weep at a Tale of Distress." This movement accords well with progress from exteriority to interiority—"The music in my heart I bore, / Long after it was heard no more"[424], visuality to aurality, and, more significantly, the female poetic object to the male poetic subject that realizes the ethnographic poetic project, with a strong sense of ownership of landscapes obtained[425]. This

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the ideas of property begin to take root; next agriculture; and lastly, commerce. Throughout Ossian's poems, we plainly find ourselves in the first of these periods of society" (qtd. in McDowell, 2010, p. 245, note 23).

[423] Like language, which is believed to have been born "among Arabian sands," her song moves northward, breaking "the silence of the seas / Among the farthest Hebrides." See Alan Bewell, 177.

[424] This is suggestively discussed by Geoffrey Hartman, "Blake and the Progress of Poesy," in *Beyond Formalism*.

[425] From here, we can see that Walter J. Ong is not right when he comments that "Popular ballads, as the Border ballads in English and Scots, develop on the edge of orality," whereas "the novel is clearly a print genre, deeply interior, de-heroicized, and tending strongly to irony" (Ong, 1982 156). For how landscape is relevant to a rise of individualistic possession, see John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*.

characterizes the transformation of the temporality of speech into the spatiality of writing. Susan Stewart argues that: "The movement of time into space is often a device for the legitimation of territory and property, both private and national, by means of narrative or textual evidence" (23). The acoustically conscious singing culminates in a silencing move of the ascending male poetic consciousness: "I listen'd till I had my fill. / And, as I mounted up the hill, / The music in my heart I bore, / Long after it was heard no more." The work of writing aspires to achieve an Enlightenment ideal of transparent communication of a silent medium, where "print is the medium of a *virtual* community of speakers"(Langan 50)[426]. The silent reader of the blank verse, "no longer subjected to the *immediate* sensory input of verbal melody," can "gain access to the *mediated* (i. e., narratively evoked) musical sense of the poem" (Langan 53). The construction of the poetic is, rather, interiorized sound and vision in the poem.

Between the medium itself and this "community" there already exists a process of mediation—a constant inter-textual activity. Wordsworth remarks of "The Solitary Reaper:" "This Poem was suggested by a beautiful sentence in a MS. Tour in Scotland written by a Friend, the last line being taken from it *verbatim*[427]." In an entirely inverse gesture, the death of sentimentality and dearth of the magical repository of "audiovisual hallucinations" in "A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal" gives birth to the writer, assuming a common cause with the ethnologist and the archaeologist, who, as Michel de Certeau puts it, "arrive at the moment a

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[426] The fact that Wordsworth worked up this poem not from an actual encounter recalled from his and Dorothy's 1803 tour of Scotland but more directly from "a beautiful sentence" in his friend Thomas Wilkinson's manuscript—*Tours to the British Mountains*—offers another case of poetry-writing as an inter-textual production, always already mediated and in the process of mediation, which dismantles the Enlightenment and Romantic myth of origins. See Peter Manning, "Will No One Tell Me What She Sings?: *The Solitary Reaper* and the Contexts of Criticism," Ch. 11 of his *Reading Romantics: Texts and Contexts*, pp. 241-72.

[427] See his note to the poem in *Poems, in Two Volumes, and Other Poems*, p. 415. Jared Curtis, the editor of *Poems, in Two Volumes*, identifies the friend as Thomas Wilkinson, and adds that his "*Tours to the British Mountains* (London, 1824) circulated among friends in MS. for years before it was published; the passage reads: 'Passed a female who was reaping alone: she sung in Erse as she bended over her sickle; the sweetest human voice I ever heard: her strains were tenderly melancholy, and felt delicious, long after they were heard no more' (12)" (415). See Maureen McLane, 2008, p. 231, note 25.

culture has lost its means of self-defense" (de Certeau, 1986, 123). By the 1780s, indeed, as Paula McDowell points out, "one detects the crystallization of a new confrontational model of balladry, whereby an earlier, more 'authentic' tradition of 'minstrel song' is seen as having been displaced by commercial print" (McDowell, 2010 242). It is a confrontation stated very explicitly in John Pinkerton's preface "Dissertation on the Oral Tradition of Poetry" to his Scottish Tragic Ballads: "In proportion as Literature advanced in the world Oral Tradition disappeared" (qtd. in McDowell, 2010 243). The erotic and tactile touch is revealed as time, a gesture of classifying and ordering of objects. It produces a structure of rationalization, a legitimization of an end that only the present can bring to consciousness. The acoustic and visual faculties of the poetic figure are surrogate to a silent reader. It is the historical emergence of mass literacy identified by Friedrich Kittler as "around 1800," which teaches "'a silent and private way of reading.'" "[A]s a 'sad surrogate of speech' could easily consume letters bypassing the vocal organs" (1997, 38), so that "one believes one hears what one merely reads" (1997, 39)[428]. It reminds of Wordsworth's attempts to sink "deep into the mind of Man," into "the darkest Pit / Of the profoundest Hell, chaos, night" (*Home at Grasmere*, MS. B, lines 984-89) bred by superstition and fear, to reconstruct imaginatively the "vulgar metaphysics" of the world's first humans through a poetic media[429]. Lucy is so objectified here that she shares in the "rolling," after being rolled by the "obscurely animate, motion and force of that earth[430]" into periods of darkness, the measure of the early days and years, that occupies the threshold between nature and man, linking the two states. The spiritualizing progress is very rudimentary: "[W]hat has been immortalized is not a spirit, but the body, which rolls interminably, as a 'thing' hardly

[428] Friedrich Kittler, "Gramophone, Film, Typewriter," in *Literature*, *Media*, *Information Systems*, p. 31. This argument is elaborated in *Discourse Networks 1800 / 1900*.
[429] Also see Alan Bewell, p. 94.
[430] For a narratological interpretation of this poem, see J. H. Miller, "Narrative."

different from 'rocks, and stones, and trees,' in an elemental material nature" (Bewell 203). It is "transformed into a genius loci, an expression of the 'law and impulse' of nature[431]"—"Rolled round in earth's diurnal course," that is. What Herbert Lindenberger observes as the "rhetoric of interaction" throughout *The Prelude* and elsewhere in Wordsworth's poetry[432], charges the poetic incident through mirroring "my spirit," "she" and "early" rocks, stones, and trees. Before this, she is claimed as a "thing," a literary as well as sentimental dearth. The human figure is fused into her sympathetic relationship with natural objects[433]: "in all shapes … a secret & mysterious soul, / A fragrance & a spirit of strange meaning." "[M]oral life" is given to "every natural form, rock, fruit, & flower / Even the losse stones that cover the highway[434]." This remains similar to what Geoffrey Hartman has perceptively noted in the old man of the leech gatherer: "a relict of the spiritual flood ... a 'sea-beast' stranded by the ebbed side" (Hartman, 1966 33). The feminine body, through affective dearth, is reduced to a state of nature and can now epitomize, having regained the spirit through the erotic touch of writing, the transition from nature to culture. It is here one sees the poet that Hazlitt describes as scanning

> the human race as the naturalist measures with earth's zone, without attending to the picturesque points of view, the inequalities of surface. He contemplates the passions and the habits of men, not in their extremes, but in their first elements[435].

As the poet of the Lake District, Wordsworth wanders through a primeval landscape, engaged in the hazardous task of gathering a poetic language capable of withstanding the historical flow of

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[431] See Alan Bewell, p. 204. This comment addresses another of the "Lucy Poems"—"Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower," but is useful to our discussion here.
[432] Lindenberger uses this phrase to describe the recurrent imagery of transference and mirroring. See *On Wordsworth's "Prelude,"* pp. 41-98.
[433] This pantheistic tendency has long been noticed, for instance by H. W. Piper, *The Active Universe*; E. D. Hirsch, *Wordsworth and Schelling: A Typological Study of Romanticism*; and Jonathan Wordsworth, *The Music of Humanity*, pp. 184-232. See James Averill, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, p. 135, note 31.
[434] *"The Ruined Cottage" and "The Pedlar,"* p. 181. Quoted from James Averill, p. 135.
[435] *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, 19:11

time—a leech-gatherer of words. He writes that he feels a "wide ... vacancy" separating himself from his past, yet nevertheless he feels that "those days" have

> such self-presence in my mind
>
> That sometimes when I think of them I seem
>
> Two consciousnesses—conscious of myself,
>
> And of some other being. [*Prelude* 2:28-33]

This double self, an identity split into two parts—"the means by which he recovered that 'other being' within himself" (Bewell 35)—constitutes a condition as well as a product of his "poetic mediality." Poetry-writing works to create means of mediation between them to interiorize the outward glance—the objects of which are either nature, "uncouth vagrants," female sentiments, or females reading and creeping—into a way of looking inward. Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe argue that "since [Walter Scott], since a certain break or rupture that took place with [Scott], [poetry] is no longer what was understood by this word, but rather the agency (or insistence) of the letter in the unconscious. [Poetry] is the letter and hence what passes in and through the unconscious[436]." In Wordsworth we have one of the beginnings regarding this technology of writing in relation to an emergent form of the unconscious through media and mediation[437].

Wordsworth, loving a nature felt "all in all" (line 75) and seeing a larger interactive history embodied in the site of Tintern Abbey, learns

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[436] Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *The Title of the Letter: A Reading of Lacan*, pp. 22-23.

[437] Penny Fielding historicizes this in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, which "saw the emergence of the sign as an object of scientific scrutiny first in the anthropological obsession with the totem as a sign of social groupings, and then with the beginnings of psychoanalysis," and "if the speech / writing opposition is recast in the terms of psychoanalysis, the visual sign (writing or the phallus) becomes associated with the creation of the conscious while the oral is repressed into the unconscious and is unable to bear the same symbolic function as writing" (17). It could have started from *The Dunciad* in early eighteenth century: "It is to The Dunciad," McLuhan pronounces, "that we must turn for the epic of the printed word .... For here is the explicit study of the plunging of the human mind into the sludge of an unconscious engendered by a book. Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 147, p. 255.

To look on nature, not as in the hour

Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes

The still, sad music of humanity. [89-91]

The shift from "looking on" nature as a "thoughtless youth" to "hearing ... music" is mediated by the coming of a poetic consciousness, which is realized in the work of writing. A landscape made significant to a savage eye is poeticized into an acoustic *literacy* of the social ear to domesticate the sublime topographical landscape into an individualized listening experience[438]. This is probably why Wordsworth places the site of the poem "a few miles above Tintern Abbey" to manufacture "the landscape of the opening passage" to be "prehistoric rather than unhistorical, prefiguring the abbey that is not so much absent entirely as not yet there, but waiting downriver in the flow of time[439]." The facility for objectification and for distancing compels a poetic mediation from the work of writing to *mean* historically. The failure of the landscape is to meet the actual motivation for the composition of the poem, which is suggestive of what Andrew Franta identifies of "Romantic poetry's aspiration to achieve the kind of durability that will allow it to reach its readers" (Franta 15). It is an illustration of "the self-regarding quality of Romantic poetry—and of the poet 'who sits in darkness, and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds,'" which is "a formal acknowledgement of the necessity of transmission" (Franta 15). This media transmission is interwoven with a new and distinctly modern historical consciousness, which print culture historian Elizabeth Eisenstein attributes to "the printing press as an agent of change[440]." With the introduction of printing, Eisenstein suggests,

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[438] The poem's relation to the picturesque tradition has often been noted, especially on how Wordsworth has learned from William Gilpin's *Observations on the River Wye*. See M. H. Abrams, "Structure and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric;" and Marjorie Levinson, *Wordsworth's Great Period Poems: Four Essays*, pp. 16-18.
[439] James A. W. Heffernan, *The Re-Creation of Landscape: A Study of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Constable, and Turner*, pp. 16-18.
[440] Eisenstein 1979, p. 184.

> less effort was required to preserve and pass on what was known... Successive generations began to pride themselves on knowing more than had their forebears... Human history itself acquired the character of an indefinitely extended unfolding sequence. (Eisenstein 1986, 6)[441]

In this sense, the rise of a poetic consciousness in Wordsworth, as materialized through a saturating print technology, creates a historical sense. This involves an engagement with his contemporary situation, as Coleridge comments upon *The Recluse*: after surveying "the pastoral and other states of society," it was to have presented "a melancholy picture of the present state of degeneracy and vice," which would serve as proof of the "necessity for, the whole state of man and society being subject to, and illustrative of, a redemptive process[442]."

This redemptive historical sense cannot dispense with the sublime nature, the anthropological figures of which Wordsworth resituates in a domestic circumstance: idiots, children, villagers, women, the blind, the deaf, and the mute. What we call their sublimity is actually our "dim and undetermined sense" that they represent "unknown modes of being" (*Prelude* 1.419-20), like the leech-gatherer, who seems a figure "met with in a dream" (110). No wonder John Keats writes to Richard Woodhouse of "the Wordsworthian or egotistical sublime[443]." In the fragmentary essay "[The Sublime and the Beautiful]," Wordsworth claims that

> as we advance in life, we can escape upon the invitation of our more placid & gentle nature from those obtrusive qualities in an object sublime in its general character; which qualities, at an earlier age, precluded imperiously the perception of beauty which that

[441] Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*; and Eisenstein, *Print Culture and Enlightenment Thought* (Hanes Lecture. [Chapel Hill]: Hanes Foundation, Rare Book Collection / University Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1986).
[442] *Specimens of the Table Talk of the Late Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, 2:37-38.
[443] *The Letters of John Keats, 1814-1821*, 1:387.

object if contemplated under another relation would have been capable of imparting[444]. The sublime and the beautiful, simultaneously existing in nature, work differently than a maturing poetic mind, which is affected first by the "obtrusive qualities in an object sublime" and later by a more "placid and gentle nature[445]." James Averill argues that Wordsworth "finds such power in the traditional sources of literary energy inherited from previous generations of poets, the complex of images and responses collectively known as the 'sublime'." The four such sources of "sublimity" include "the cosmic space vision, the 'mountain glory,' the 'graveyard' and the 'psychological sublime'" (Averill 91). A sense of tranquility and catharsis achieved in "A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal" is through a convergence of these four sources: earth, rocks, death and slumber[446]—nature as the "agent *invisible*" (Hobbes' phrase[447]) materialized through touch. The performative function of narrative is well maintained through these two stanzas: "she" literally has to become a "thing," of which the narrator can claim an epistemological truth, and she does. The exploitative theatricality becomes even ghoulish. If "words" are "not only as symbols of the passion, but as things, active and efficient, which are of themselves part of the passion," (as Wordsworth conceives in his Note to "The Thorn,") in making "words" into a poem "she" has to become a "thing" and thereby part of the "words." The silence—"slumber"—of the poetic voice represents not tragic catharsis but a form of sublimity, and comes through with vacuity, darkness, solitude and a general privation of humanity rendered into earthly things and a printed image[448]. The doctrine of Love of Nature and Love of Mankind are merged by an

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[444] *The Prose Works of William Wordsworth*, 2:349.
[445] Also see Alan Bewell, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment*, p. 140.
[446] Another place of this realization of the sublime in nature would be in *Peter Bell*:

> The moon uneasy look'd and dimmer,
> The broad blue heavens appear'd to glimmer,
> And the rocks stagger'd all around. [518-20]

[447] *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes*, 3:95.
[448] Herbert Lindenberger, in *On Wordsworth's "Prelude,"* sees the dichotomy between "violent emotions" and the "calm and gentle" as a betrayal of Wordworth's learning in the ancient Quintillian's rhetorical distinction of *pathos*

economy of sympathy not in scarcity but almost in excess. Wordsworth, not proposing a Burkean emotionalism, has a more self-conscious "moral discipline" towards feelings, some of which he considers to be "coarse sympathies[449]". Too much excitement from poetry should be tranquilized rather than celebrated, and excessive emotionalism could only be attributed to the marginal characters of his poems. The textual media, indeed, serves as the Freudian "superego" in the work process of writing and transmission. For instance, Wordsworth writes:

> The end of Poetry is to produce excitement in coexistence with an overbalance of pleasure. Now, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not in that state succeed each other in accustomed order. But if the words by which this excitement is produced are in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds[450].

He finds "the great social principle of life, / Coercing all things into sympathy" (*The Prelude*, II 408-09). It reminds of some abiding sense of calm that Coleridge finds in sympathy with the real or imagined life of objects: "The rocks and Stones put on a vital semblance; and Life itself thereby seemed to forego its restlessness, to anticipate in its own nature an infinite repose, and to become, as it were, compatible with Immoveability[451]." Albert O. Wlecke argues that for Wordsworth, as for Coleridge, "the true source of the sublimity of anything, physical object or

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and *ethos*: "… when Wordsworth speaks of 'a natural delineation of human passions, human characters, and human incidents,' he refers to *pathos* and its various attributes under the term 'passions,' to *ethos* under 'characters' and 'incidents'" (25). "Sonnet on Seeing Miss Helen Maria Williams Weep at a Tale of Distress," and "A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal" might be seen respectively as cases of *pathos* and *ethos* in this way. However, as throughout this analysis, the distinctions of these two rhetorical practices might not hold rigidly in Wordsworth's poems, the cross-fertilization between which makes possible a work through writing.

[449] *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, Vol. I, p. 334.

[450] *The Prose Works of William Wordsworth*, Vol. I, p. 146.

[451] *The Notebooks of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, I, 1616. Though in general this Wordsworthian tendency to sympathize with things and objects was denounced by Coleridge, as pointed out by Averill. See James Averill, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, p. 135.

idea, is always the subject," and "sublime consciousness" becomes "a structure of awareness in which all conceptions tend to recede from shapeliness, and the mind is left groping in the darkness of its own subjectivity[452]." A sublimating self-consciousness incarnates the poetic subjectivity in the object-like things like "she," trees and stones, words, or the companionship of Dorothy Wordsworth, who "enters the poem [*The Prelude*] not in her own right but in answer to the poet's and the poem's needs[453]." The sublimity of subjectivity is made possible through a necessary aesthetic distance between the observer and the object associated with sentimentality. If in the previous poem, the readers could still afford to have access to Miss Helen Maria Williams's poems published in the magazines of the 1780s, along with those by Anna Seward and Charlotte Smith, Wordsworth bases his poetic vision and possibility in the literary death of the female body when more into his career of being a poet[454]. Thus, the movement of Wordsworth from sentimental to topographical verse could be observed: the poetic energies that originally focus on sentimental human objects shift to "the infinite variety of natural appearances[455]," in both of which sources of "sublimity" are located and achieved in mediation, whether or not what M. H. Abrams terms as "visual peripety[456]" is devised. It is in this way that female figures and sentiments are forged, collected, annotated, surveyed, transcribed, and edited into the conditions of existence in an emergent textual media culture.

IV.v. Nurturing Economy of Feelings, and Phobia of Feelings in the

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[452] Albert O. Wlecke, *Wordsworth and the Sublime*, p. 79 and p. 81. Quoted from James Averill, p. 107, note 24.
[453] See Margaret Homans, "Eliot, Wordsworth, and the Scenes of the Sister's Instruction," in *Writing and Sexual Difference* (Ed. by Elizabeth Abel), p. 53.
[454] "A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal" was published in 1799 or 1800—one or two years after the publication of *Lyrical Ballads* as a collaborative enterprise between Wordsworth and Coleridge, as identified by Harold Bloom. See *The Best Poems of the English Language: from Chaucer through Robert Frost*, p. 332.
[455] *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, Vol. I, 319. For an analysis of the same movement from sentimental to topographical verse in "A Ballad" and "Sonnet on Seeing Miss Williams Weep" to *An Evening Walk*, see James Averill, pp. 47-51.
[456] M. H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism*, pp. 376-377.

Work of Writing

Indeed, William Wordsworth draws an eighteenth-century myth of origins in which feelings are learned from women[457]. An example of this myth would be Richard Steele describing how he learns to feel by seeing his mother weeping in a 1710 entry of *The Tatler*:

> There was a Dignity in her Grief amidst all the Wildness of her Tranport, which, methought, struck me with an Instinct of Sorrow, which, before I was sensible of what it was to grieve, seized my very Soul, and has made Pity the Weakness of my heart ever since …. Having been so frequently Overwhelmed by her Tears before I knoew the Cause of any Affliction, or could draw Defences from my own Judgement, I imbibed Commiseration, Remorse and an unmanly Gentleness of mind. (qtd. in Pinch 81)

The transmission of emotion is taken "as a spontaneous, pre-cognitive process that seems to preclude the possibility both of ever deriving a feeling directly from a real 'cause,' and of ever making feeling itself an object of reason" (Pinch 81). This is very reminiscent of what Wordsworth defines as "good poetry" in his "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads*: "for all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (230)[458]. It helps create an image of Romanticism in general: im-mediated, natural, sincere, and authentic. This kind of transmission of affect taken as "having the continuity of bodily substances" (Pinch 81) also happens to Wordsworth's famous account of origins of feelings in *The Prelude*, in the Blessed Babe passage of book II:

> the Babe,
>
> Nurs'd in his Mother's arms, the Babe who sleeps

[457] Also see Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion*, p. 81.
[458] Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, p. 230.

Upon his Mother's breast; who, when his soul

Claims manifest kindred with an earthly soul,

Doth gather passion from his Mother's *eye*!

James Averill points out that scenes of this kind might come out as consequences of Wordsworth's reading of Erasmus Darwin's *Zoonomia*[459], particularly its chapter on "Diseases of Increased Volition." For Darwin, in cases of acute puerperal depression, for instance, the doctor suggests that "the child should be brought frequently to the mother, and applied to her breast, if she will suffer it, and this whether she at first attends to it or not; as by a few trials it frequently excites the storgè, or maternal affection, and removes the insanity[460]." In Wordsworth's "The Mad Mother," previous to *The Prelude*, the woman is given a relieved poetic voice:

Suck, little babe, oh such again!

It cools my blood; it cools my brain;

Thy lips I feel them, baby! they

Draw from my heart the pain away. (II. 31-34)

This could almost be read as a paraphrase of Steele's periodical essay. Here Paul de Man's seminal analysis in his *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* may be helpful to dismantle the Romantic myth of immediacy. Considered "Wordsworth's essay on the origins of language as poetic language" (de Man 90), this is, indeed, expressive of "an active verbal deed, a *claim* of 'manifest kindred' which is not given in the nature of things" (de Man 91)[461]. Contrary to the myth of

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[459] In a historical time "when a knowledge of medicine was understood as a prerequisite for empirical speculation," it probably would not have been unusual for a poet, seeking material for *The Recluse*, to have turned to Erasmus Darwin's *Zoönomia*, as pointed out by Alan Bewell. See Bewell, p. 145.

[460] Erasmus Darwin, *Zoonomia, or the Laws of Organic Life*, II, p. 360. Quoted from James Averill, *Wordsworth and the Poetry of Human Suffering*, p. 156.

[461] See Paul de Man, *The Rhetoric of Romanticism*.

immediacy in Romanticism, however, here lies a case of "the enigmatic phrase: to 'gather passion,'" which refers to "a process of exchange" that goes much beyond "continuity of bodily substances." It is

> the possibility of inscribing the eye, which is nothing by itself, into a larger, total entity, the 'same object' which, in the internal logic of the text, can only be the face, the face as the combination of parts which the mind, working like a synecdoche trope, can lay claim to—thus opening the way to a process of totalization which, in the span of a few lines, can grow to encompass everything, '*All* objects through *all* intercourse of sense.' (de Man 91)

Wordsworth's epistemology of passions, as also observed by Cathy Caruth, is "governed by the figure of passage, present here in the word *passion* as a sort of original movement[462]" (Caruth 50). Passion is like milk and the eye like the breast in this nursing scene, in which the word "'eye'… displace[s] 'breast' where one would most naturally expect it" (de Man 90). It is merely one of Wordsworth's references to "maternal passion" (either "connubial or parental[463]," as he later notes) and its "subtle windings." This is against a historical media shift from the patronage system into a commercial market—which is alienating to Romantic poets, as Jonathan Arac suggests:

Once poetic authority was lost, once the previously existing social demand for poetry had been transformed, once the writer was no longer producing on direct demand by patrons, or even subscribers, but was isolated in the marketplace producing for unknown readers whose taste could not be predicted but might with luck be formed, once, in other words, a certain condition of alienation prevailed, then the possibility of literary autonomy also came into existence. The process of internalization by which Wordsworth not only defended but also formed a new

[462] Cathy Caruth, *Empirical Truths and Critical Fictions*.
[463] *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Middle Years*. Vol 1: 336.

literary human nature—the human nature that makes psychoanalysis possible—cannot be understood apart from such externalities[464].

This "process of totalization" "underlies all perception, beginning the assembly of a world," and "the infant metaphor grows up to be a [Romantic] myth" (Terada 54), which enriches an individual into a mature moral and affective being, so that an otherwise barren sublimity could be made fertile and beautified:

But joy to him,

Oh, joy to him who here hath sown, hath laid
Here, the foundation of his future years!
For all that friendship, all that love can do,
All that a darling countenance can look
Or dear voice utter, to complete the man,
Perfect him, made imperfect in himself,
All shall be his: and he whose soul hath risen
Up to the height of feeling intellect
Shall want no humbler tenderness; his heart
Be tender as a nursing mother's heart;
Of female softness shall his life be full,
Of humble cares and delicate desires,
Mild interests and gentlest sympathies. [218-31]

However, as de Man writes, "this same face-making, totalizing power is shown at work in a process of endless differentiation," a "sea of infinite distinctions in which we rush to drown" (92). In other words, it is here we have the work "by a man who being possessed of more than usual

[464] Jonathan Arac, *Critical Genealogies*, p. 49.

organic sensibility had also thought long and deeply" (230), to use Wordsworth's own words in his "Preface." Several pages later in his "Preface," Wordsworth returns to this subject in a more elaborate way:

> It [poetry] takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility: the emotion is contemplated till by a species of reaction the tranquility gradually disappears, and an emotion, similar to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. (Wordsworth 239)

Thereby, it is less of "emotion recollected in tranquility" than of the development and evocation of sentimentality during the act of writing and producing. The Romantic myth of immediacy could be dismantled through finding passages of what de Man terms "endless differentiation" and "infinite distinctions," passages in between mediated moments of the infant gathering passions and his mother's eye. In other words, it is in the passages of what Rei Terada captures as "the transmission of substance" where errors and mistakes could happen: "The child could mistake what he believes he sees: if the mother's eye is reflective, the face he lends his mother may be his own" (Terada 54), for instance. Exactly in order to avoid this kind of failures in the transmissions of substance poetic or emotional, Wordsworth writes poems as he does in "Sonnet on Seeing Miss Helen Maria Williams Weep at a Tale of Distress" and "A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal." It is a work of writing, separating and manipulating feminine sentimentality by the means of language and representation in which "a fictive transfer of properties occurs" but more than in the metaphorical sense[465]. It could be read partially as a concern with a "figural survival of the traditional medical discourse on hysteria" (Bewell 143).

[465] Rei Terada, *Feeling in Theory*, p. 54. And this leaves a history hidden from a progressive history of modern literature, a history that covers hysterical women sentiments (or represents "hysteria" as feminine and thereby abnormal), similar to Mrs Hogg's rebuke of Scott for having "spoilt" her ballads by printing them: "[T]hey were made for singin' and no' for readin'" (qtd. in McLane, 2010 254)

For centuries, as Alan Bewell suggests through a reading of William Harvey—a seventeenth-century English physician:

> [I]n highly metaphoric descriptions of female physiology, medicine had explained the disease in terms of 'unnatural states' of the womb—the hungry up-and-down wanderings and complicated windings of the uterus, or the poisonous and corrupt 'vapors' rising from a diseased womb. Hysteria (or the Mother, the Incubus, spleen, vapors) was usually accompanied by a sensation of 'suffocation,' pressure felt on the chest or a choking feeling in the throat. (Bewell 143)

Hysteria becomes an exemplary disease of the imagination. The powers of the imagination and bodily imitation are made visible to the eye, not as abstract principles, but as forces "monstrous and terrible to behold," which are palpably operating on women's bodies, behavior, and speech[466.] The possibility of "suffocation," "poisonous and currupt 'vapors'" and the forces "monstrous and terrible to behold" are contained, domesticated, and thus mediated into a Romantic myth in a safe-distancing form of the work of writing. It permeates in the production of literature to such a degree that decades later in a Brontë novel *Wuthering Heights*, Lockwood has to defend himself from Cathy's terrifying oral ghost by piling up books against the broken window, which is a gesture of "enacting an episode of special importance to the construction of social morality in the nineteenth-century" (Fielding 19). The eye-contact of the Romantic child with maternal feeling, like the "erotic touch of earthly years," finds in women figures a medium of speculative argument. It is a means for observing and forcefully delineating, like Wordsworth writing at a historical time "when a knowledge of medicine was understood as a prerequisite for

[466] Edward Jorden, *A Disease Called the Suffocation of the Mother*, p. 26.

empirical speculation[467]" (Bewell 145). Aware of the possibility of pollution from the physiological hysteria and its imagination, Wordsworth writes, while commenting on George Crabbe's poetry in 1808, that "the Muses have just about as much to do [with 'mere matters of fact'] as they have with a Collection of medical reports, or of Law cases)[468]." Noting in connection with *Lyrical Ballads*, the manner in which "language and the human mind act and react on each other[469]"—a key to understanding the mysteries of "a mind beset / With images, and haunted by itself" (Prelude 6. 179-80)[470], Wordsworth deploys a differentiating poetic strategy[471]to present a mode of writing designated for a poetic argument, which is well suited to the observation, dramatic display, and interpretation of the workings of the imagination.

In another classic statement of the anthropological into the autobiographical[472], Wordsworth has his sister Dorothy performing as the motherly figure in "Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey," whose "wild eyes" (119, 148) link her directly to the "wild secluded scene" that Wordsworth can no longer adequately experience. Wordsworth claims that there are "conformities" between her present "wild ecstasies" (138) and what he once felt when "like a roe / I bounded o'er the mountains" (67-68). By reading *her* present experience as a "survival" of *his* past feeling He has a way out of the impasse he had earlier reached,:

For thou art with me here upon the banks

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[467] "Locke's *Essay*," as Alan Bewell points out, "by combining ethics and physiology, had placed medical theory at the center of philosophical debate so that, by the end of the eighteenth century, as Han-Jürgen Schings has shown, the 'philosophical doctor' had become a popular literary type" (Bewell 145). Also see G. S. Rousseau, "Nerve, Spirits, and Fibres: Towards Defining the Origins of Sensibility," p. 151.
[468] *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Middle Years*. 1:268.
[469] *Prose Work* 1:120.
[470] In a genealogical sense of the future of the unconscious in the technology of writing—the proliferation of the sign. This is linked to Freud's turning to "hysterical women" as a scientific point of departure for psychoanalysis a century later—another close reading upon the body, that is, especially on his "A Child Is Being Beaten," "The Uncanny," "A Case of Paranoia" along with Jacques Lacan's "The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious *or* Reason since Freud." The next chapter will elaborate upon this point.
[471] Or "anxiety of influence," to use a catchy phrase from Harold Bloom.
[472] Indeed, Wordsworth's anthropological concerns lay behind his turn to autobiography, as Alan Bewell argues throughout his book *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment*, especially p. 45, and 86.

> Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,
> My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
> The language of my former heart, and read
> My former pleasures in the shooting lights
> Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
> May I behold in thee what I was once,
> My dear, dear Sister!

The poem offers a mediation of two worlds—his and hers— in "the meeting or 'self-presence' (*Prelude* 2.28)" celebrated and documented in the poem. It is a "historical and educational framework linking them" (Bewell 38) through a reciprocal semiotic exchange:

> If Dorothy has allowed her brother to recover an experience that he has passed beyond, Wordsworth offers his sister the possibility, when her ecstasy has 'matured / Into a sober experience' (138-39), of recovering in his absence her own history, now in a textual form, in the poem. (Bewell 39)

The documentation makes possible the textual media of poetry. Instead of seeing this as a criticism of the exoticism of eighteenth-century anthropology, more of interest for this dissertation is to examine the sense of familiarity and historical continuity—between the two worlds— domesticated into the work of writing, which is performed as a household activity.

Indeed, when Wordsworth urges Dorothy, in "solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief," to "remember me, / And these my exhortations!" (144, 146-47), he imagines that his poems not only record his own 'healing thoughts' but will bring solace to its readers (145)[473]. It is performed in a mediated anthropological way. A marginal comment on a passage in Richard

[473] See Andrew Franta, p. 6.

Payne Knight's *Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste* dealing with the syntax of primitive speech makes Wordsworth's "poetic mediality" quite clear:

> What means all this parade about the Savage when the deduction as far as just may be made at our own firesides, from the sounds words gesticulations looks &c (*sic.*) which a child makes use of when learning to talk. But a Scotch Professor cannot write three minutes together upon the Nature of Man, but he must be dabbling with his savage state, with his agricultural state, his Hunter state &c &c (*sic.*)[474].

The anthropological method of the Scottish Enlightenment, which often suggest a full-scale "history of the species, in its progress from the savage state to its highest civilization and improvement[475]", is rather ridiculed. In its place, we have a primitive speech made available at home: "at our own firesides," by observing "the sounds words gesticulations looks" that a child makes in learning to speak. A necessary mediation between the primitive (Dorothy's "wild eyes") and the domestic pedagogy (child learning) is established through poetry writing and reading, not grounded in the anthropological field but in the "lines" offered to Dorothy and, by extension, to his readers as a structured and shareable experience—a mode of engagement[476]. That is placed into what Homi Bhabha calls "the location of culture" rather than the psychology or mentality of the author, through which sentiments, subjects and a seemingly transparent print as a "general medium" (to use Celeste Langan's phrase) come into being in a structural way. In a famous passage in the revised *Preface* to the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1802, Wordsworth distinguishes between "the knowledge of the Poet and the Man of Science" in this way:

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[474] Cited in Edna Aston Shearer, "Wordsworth and Coleridge Marginalia in a Copy of Richard Payne Knight's *Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*."

[475] Henry Home, Lord Kames, *Sketches of the History of Man: considerably enlarged by the last additions and corrections of the author*, 1:1.

[476] In the nineteenth century, J. S. Mill's dictum "that eloquence is *heard*; poetry is *over*heard" explicitly epitomizes the Victorian identification of poetry with the privacy of lyrical expression. J. S. Mill, "What Is Poetry?," p. 109. Also see Andrew Franta, p. 12.

> The knowledge both of the Poet and the Man of Science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and inalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man of Science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the present of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge: it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science … In spite of soil and climate, in spite of things silently gone out of mind and things violently destroyed, the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time[477].

IV. vi. Conclusion

If we agree that by the 1730s the new discipline of aesthetics begins to displace the traditional rhetoric[478], it is at the end of that century, as in the case of William Wordsworth, that a saturated print media culture brings a new degree of mediation between subjects and their representations. The subjects of female sentimentality in the oral become mediated through a male sympathizer in the seemingly transparent work of writing. John Bender argues that the British realistic novel between 1719 and 1779 developed a technical convention of transparency whereby "character

[477] William Wordsworth, *Preface* to the *Lyrical Ballads*, Additions of 1802, in Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, eds. R. L. Brett and A. R. Jones, 2nd edition. (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 259.
[478] As David Wellbery argues: "In one and the same movement, art becomes the subject matter of theory and aesthetic experience is transformed into something that takes place between subjects and their representations, without the mediation of inherited bodies of erudition and independently of a locally defined cultural site" (Wellbery 232).

and reflective conscience are isolated" (Bender 3). For Bender, that realistic pretension of being "a transparent, unmediated form of knowledge" (Bender 8) about the process of daily life is epitomized in the social system by the penitentiary of the novel[479]. In Wordsworth, as this dissertation argues, we have a representation of female sentiments processed as form of knowledge mediated through print and writing. This Wordsworthian *poiesis* of the modern print culture contains, confines, and encloses female sentiment, from which it is nurtured in the first place. Thus, it produces the print media through sympathizing in a scopic regime, or the experience of quasi-seeing, which is called aesthetic illusion in the eighteenth century[480]. Indeed, the poetic texts of Wordsworth's induce that subjective absorption in the represented world by inviting modern readers to re-oralize female sentimentality through reading (like Miss Helen Maria Williams or the Blessed Babe), which is true of the representational aesthetic theory of the eighteenth century[481]. Rei Terada points out that "the existence of emotion reflects not just the content of mental representations but the fact that they are representations" (Terada 18). In Wordsworthian *poiesis*, female emotions and sentiments are theatrically represented through the words of worth in the emergence of a historical print media culture. If theatricality is a medium[482], we have a medium of manufactured interiority in the print media of Romantic poetry through male words of worth. Sympathy, with feminine sentimentality, is produced in theatrical situations through representative print media culture with its *oral* and *oralizing* properties as realized in the British Romantic poetic medium. In other words, Wordsworth's economy of feminine sentimentality is a variety of what Bourdieu calls "*officializing strategies,* the object of which is to transmute 'egoistic,' private, particular interests … into disinterested, collective,

[479] John Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary*.
[480] David Wellbery, *Lessing's Laocoon: Semiotics and Aesthetics*, p. 72
[481] For this aspect of the representational aesthetic theory of the eighteenth century, see David Wellbery, p. 72.
[482] See Samuel Weber, *Theatricality as Medium*.

publicly avowable legitimate interests." This enables him to augment the "capital of authority necessary to impose a definition of the situation, especially in the moments of crisis when the collective judgment falters [and] to be able to mobilize the group by solemnizing, officializing, and thus universalizing private incident[483]." Paula McDowell points out that in the eighteenth century, "the dramatic proliferation of print and the specter of future mass literacy generated widespread consideration of the nature and implications of media shift" (McDowell 246). Wordsworth manufactures his poetic medium in making over feminine sentiments into the emergent literary medium of print, which anticipates a political economy of consciousness / unconsciousness and emotions in the nineteenth century. It is through this that an officialized medium of literature, and print mediation becomes possible in the British Romantic period[484], and the middle-class audience—who, in Coleridge's terms, "dieted" at the "two public *ordinaries* of Literature, the circulating libraries and the periodical press[485]"—come into historical being in the early nineteenth century of western modernity, when a "society" begins to be ""something other than human."

[483] See Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, p. 9. Also see Jerome Christensen, *Practicing Enlightenment*, p. 87.
[484] In a way, as Andrew Franta points out: "It is not too much to say that 'Wordsworth' and 'Romanticism' are interchangeable" (Franta 55). Jerome McGann, for instance, also makes a version of this claim in *The Romantic Ideology*: "The patterns I shall be marking out are widespread in the works of the period. I shall concentrate on Wordsworth, however, because his works—like his position in the Romantic Movement—are normative and, in every sense, exemplary" (82). For a powerful argument about the critical tendency to "[subsume] Romanticism under Wordsworth," see Robert J. Griffin, *Wordsworth's Pope: A Study in Literary Historiography*, p. 1.
[485] Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manual*, in *Lay Sermons*, ed. R. J. White (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 38.

Chapter V: Institution of Feelings in Adam Smith: Theatricality of Moral Sentiment, Empire Building and the Coming of the Unconscious

In 1936 Walter Benjamin published his "Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Reproducibility," and in 1938 Martin Heidegger gave a lecture that turned into a published essay bearing the title, "The Age of the World-Picture." In 1992, post-structuralist theorist Samuel Weber read these two essays together in his Mari Kuttna Lecture on Film entitled "Mass Mediauras, or: Art, Aura and Media in the Work of Walter Benjamin." For Weber, the Heideggerian world-as-picture—the pictorialization of the world, that is—"consists in a highly ambivalent oscillation of bringing-forth (*her-stellen*) and setting-before (*vor-stellen*), with the aim of securing the foundations of the subject *at* and *as* the center of things" (Weber, 1996 80). Aura, also designated by Benjamin as the "unique appearance of a distance, however close it may be" (qtd. in Weber, 1996 87), is

> never uniquely itself but always constituted in a process of *self-detachment*: detachment *from* the self as demarcation *of* a self. The aura would then be something like an enabling limit, the *emanation* of an object from which it removes itself, a *frame* falling away from a picture and in its fall. (Weber, 1996 87-88)

The theoretic as well as historical frameworks raised by these three theorists are useful for our discussion of the moral philosophy of sympathetic sentiment proposed by Adam Smith. In a similar sense, Smith's theory of moral sentiments is approached through a methodology that could be named as "historical analogy." This chapter sees Smith's economy of moral sentiments as analogous to the proliferation of print medium and mediation in the second half of the eighteenth century. This is historically as well as theoretically feasible in that both share some

specific epistemological modes of uniformity and reproducibility. Sympathy is formed and communicated as if through a reading activity. In this way, reading and its cognate activities affect the emergence of a modern interiority: "bring-forth" and "setting-before" feelings, as well as the "detachment *from* the self as demarcation *of* a self." Reproducibility, in this sense, is more than what Weber defines as "the *mediauric*:" "auratic flashes and shadows that are not just produced and reproduced by the media but which *are* themselves the media" (Weber, 1996 106). It also helps to reproduce the part of irreproducibility—that part detached and demarcated, which is identified as the "unconscious" in its mature form in another wave of the technology of writing after moral philosophy and political economy —that of psychoanalysis.

V. i. The Adam Smith Problem, His System-Building, and the Impossible of the Chinese

As could be imagined, Smith's substantial theory of sympathy did not escape Burke's notice[486]. In a private letter to Smith[487], Burke ("an Irish Gentleman, who wrote lately a very pretty Treatise on the Sublime," as David Hume informed Smith[488]) comments acutely:

> I own I am particularly pleased with those easy and happy illustrations from common Life and manners in which your work abounds more than any other that I know by far … there is so much elegant Painting of the manners and passions, that it is highly valuable even on that account. (qtd. in Raphael 28)

[486] As Dixon Wecter pointed out, from biographies of Edmund Burke by Robert Bisset and James Prior, we hear that Burke had made his careful study of George Berkeley in hope of being appointed *circa* 1752 to the chair of logic at Glasgow, a position eventually vacated by Adam Smith. This could be another reason for Burke's attention upon Smith's work. See Wecter p. 176, note 30. Also see Wecter's essay "The Missing Years in Burke's Biography," p. 1109.
[487] Dated 10th September 1759. See D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie, pp. 27-8.
[488] Dated 12 April 1759, a letter from London by Hume, who sent copies of Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* to the Duke of Argyll, Lord Lyttelton, Horace Walpole, Soame Jenyns, and Edmund Burke. See D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie, pp. 25-6.

It seems that Burke is very sensitive to the means of mediation reflected in Smith's work, which, for him, are illustrations and painting of "common Life and manners," or "manners and passions." In the review he wrote for his periodical the *Annual Register*[489], Burke repeats some of the comments made in the letter: "The illustrations are numerous and happy, and shew the author to be a man of uncommon observation. His language is easy and spirited, and puts things before you in the fullest light; it is rather painting than writing" (qtd. in Raphael 28). Again, Smith's emphasis on the visual dimension of the sympathetic sentiment is captured by Burke, who is said to be "a man of uncommon observation." The theory of moral sentiments approaches the effects of the visual medium of painting through a presentation of "manners and passions" in the verbal medium of language. These should not be read as passages of self-denial of what is outlined above in his aesthetics of the sublime and the beautiful. Rather, here the stress is more upon "manners and passions," and "common life and manners," with which Burke is more than concerned, and they are more likely to be *narrated* than *described* in Burke's ideological packaging. It is possible that Burke sees in Smith's book a new stage of visuality in language and representation regarding its communication of English "manners and passions," which explains his sense of resignation—"I own…" All of this may as well go with a sense of identity politics for Burke as well. Difference can be tolerated within the imperial boundaries of the British, whether Irish or Scottish. Thus it does not matter very much if painting and these "illustrations" suggest Smith's aspiration to pictorial realism, which Burke's aesthetics holds as French.

Probably much less provincial than Burke, Adam Smith makes a grand claim of universality in the formation of an ethic and of an epistemological subject visually, which is realized in his *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (abbr. as *TMS*). It was published in 1759 and constantly revised

[489] Year 1759. See D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie, p. 28.

until its sixth edition coming out in 1790, a few weeks before the death of its author. The very first sentence of this book addresses the question of sympathy as a universal principle of human beings:

How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion which we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or are made to conceive it in a very lively manner. (Smith 9)

Sympathy here is theorized as a moral issue of luck: about either the happiness or miseries of others. Even the "greatest ruffian, the most hardened violator of the laws of society" (Smith 9) Smith argues, is not altogether without this pity or compassion. As a moral philosophical argument, this suggests a strong influence upon him by the moral philosophical agenda of the Scottish Enlightenment, chiefly because Hutcheson and Hume's role of accorded sympathy[490]. It is also very obvious that the words such as "soever," "evidently," and "nature" are among the universalism vocabulary of the British Enlightenment. Perhaps this can be made in defense of Smith against criticism of Thomas Reid's (1710-1796) kind, which is that Smith establishes an essentially "selfish" system of sympathetic sentiment since it forms a moral judgment about a person's attitude or behavior based on how *I* would feel if *I* were in that person's situation[491]. This leads to an interesting observation of a *naturalizing* and *universalizing* gesture reflected in another place, this time in the interest of the economic welfare of humanity, as seen in the opening pages of *The Wealth of Nations*:

It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our

[490] See Alexander Broadie, p. 160.
[491] See J. C. Stewart-Robertson and David F. Norton, "Thomas Reid on Adam Smith's Theory of Morals." Also see Broadie, p. 163.

> dinner, but from their regard to their own interest, we address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages. (Smith, 2000 16)

In 1762, a year after the second edition of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and five years before the third, Smith was lecturing on the material that grew into *The Wealth of Nations*[492]. The latter was published in 1776, two years after the fourth edition of *TMS*. So different and opposed do *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and *The Wealth of Nations* appear at first glance that, for some years, scholars refer to the task of their reconciliation as the 'Adam Smith problem' (D. D. Raphael & A. L. Macfie, 1982 20). For these scholars, the moral philosopher who makes sympathy the basis of social behavior in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* does an about-turn from altruistic to egoistic theory in *The Wealth of Nations,* owing to the influence of the French Physiocratic thinkers whom Smith met on his French trip (D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie, 1982 21-2). The argument goes that his economic theory and moral philosophy conflict with each other, with sympathy as a contrast to self-interest. Smith could have forgotten his economic ideas, while revising his moral philosophy till the last phase of his life, or vice versa. H. T. Buckle suggests a duality-hypothesis of human nature from Smith's theories: one sympathetic and the other selfish[493]. How shall we deal with these two universal but seemingly different economies of humanity, one based on sympathetic emotions, another on economic if not materialistic interest? I will try to address this question from a preliminary reading of his *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. This would be an interpretation of the emergent forms of abstraction and exchangeability in the history of capitalism. My argument sees this Janus-faced

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[492] Alexander Broadie, "Sympathy and the Impartial Spectator," p. 165.
[493] See *TMS*, editors' Introduction, pp. 20-4; Laurence Dickey, "Historicizing the 'Adam Smith Problem': Conceptual, Historiographical, and Textual Issues;" Alexander Broadie, "Sympathy and the Impartial Spectator," pp. 164-5.

Adam Smith in his moral philosophy and political economy as a figure strategically corresponding to a social transition from the local to the global in the formation of the British Empire. This chapter does not treat "empire" as an empirical process that takes place "out there" in the world, as many historians and social scientists have presumed it to have been. Rather, I show "the empire" as an instituted affective economy that involves the entire economy of the subject—perceptual and cognitive, the various framing devices of a mental theater, and figured conditions of communication like the market and the print medium. Following Sanjay Krishnan's "reading the global," I advance an approach to the comparative study of cultures that is attentive to epistemic and affective apparatuses[494]. What it involves is an attention to the texture in which perceptual and cognitive framing of self is produced with contextual unevenness and heterogeneity, so as to learn "how to displace or unsettle its lines and rules of perception" (Krishnan 5) in order to activate other/less conformist ways of feeling and knowing about transactions between self, mediation, and institutions of subjectivities. Through Adam Smith's political economy of sentiments, a theatrical selfhood, language and rhetoric, we see an apparatus of empire on the borders between home and world, the private and the public, the foreign and the intimate.

Adam Smith's theories, either on moral sentiment, rhetoric and belle letters, or political economy help to posit a specific category of subjects as the abstract and the universal, "the idea of a system" as set out by Smith himself in his "History of Astronomy[495]". Edward Gibbon admired *The Wealth of Nations* as a "science" and a "system:" "the most profound and

[494] In the sense Agamben uses this word. See Agamben, "What Is Apparatus?".
[495] See J. C. Bryce, "Introduction," pp. 34-7. For how "the system" not only works as an idea, but as a genre in the British Enlightenment, and how it originates through Newton's *Opticks* and *Principia*, see Clifford Siskin, "Mediated Enlightenment: The System of the World." in *This Is Enlightenment*, pp. 164-72.

systematic treatise" and "an extensive science in a single book[496]." This strongly conscious gesture of system-building and theory-developing in the British Enlightenment can be unpacked with help from postcolonial and feminist theories of difference. What is of interest is that Smith, right in the first sentence, draws an ethics of the Enlightenment category "Man" as spontaneous reaction ("interest," that is) to actual or imagined visual pleasure in his picture of a sympathetic moral sentiment. Sight, and its pleasure principle, offer (sometimes processed as "live" by the brain[497]) a buffer zone between a gravitating[498] ego center and its periphery, which makes this "man" extensively universal. It reminds of James Woodrow, who compares Smith's accounting for the principal phenomena in the moral world from the one general principle of sympathy, with "that of gravity in the natural world[499]." This nature of Smith's system-building guarantees the existence of "some principles," which, in turn, produce an economy of extension through emotional reflux. It accords well with the rising significance of visuality in print medium in the eighteenth century, through which the imperial subjects can anticipate the nature of tactile contact with distant objects. Sight becomes foresight and pre-mediates knowledge of other places[500].

For Adam Smith, fellow-feeling can contract distances: "As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation" (Smith, 1976 9). It substitutes situations through the mediated experience of imagination. Thus, sympathy acts as an imaginative act, as an agreement between sentiments, one possible way out of man's affective

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[496] *The Letters of Edward Gibbon*, vol. 2, pp. 166, 335.
[497] The mind works after the eye, that is. A process inverse to what is defined as impossible by Lord Kames in his *Elements of Criticism*.
[498] In early natural philosophy, bodies classed as heavy were said to gravitate, and bodies classed as light to levitate, in consequence of their tendency to 'seek their own place'. See *OED* definition of "gravitate."
[499] In his letter to the Earl of Buchan. Quoted in J. C. Bryce, "Introduction," pp. 34-5.
[500] As illustrated by George Berkeley several decades before Smith. See David E. Wellbery, p. 27.

solipsism through a geographical extension of oneself. At the same time, paradoxically, this is out of the realization of mutual inaccessibility between autonomous individual minds. For instance, in a remarkable thought experiment added to his discussion on "the Influence and Authority of Conscience" in 1790[501], Smith suggests the impossibility of practicing the sympathetic impartial spectator by an average European, who, "from the place and with the eyes of a third person," makes a moral adjudication between two parties in a physically distant place of the "great empire of China" in the consequence of an earthquake[502]. As part of the inward shift of a split self caused by distant and non-communicating human beings, this mention of China in the framework of a fictitious moral case dates back to *Rameau's Nephew* and *The Paradox of Acting* by Denis Diderot (1713-1784), who, as Carlo Ginzburg writes, "took his example from a Jesuit treatise on casuistry" (Ginzburg, 1994 50). It goes through François-René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848) and Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850)[503]. Though he might, in the initial shock, writes Smith, "make many melancholy reflections upon the precariousness of human life," or in a soberer moment consider "the effects which this disaster might produce upon the commerce of Europe," he would eventually return to his normal life "with the same ease and tranquility, as if no such accident had happened" (136). The distant millions would not be registered in the European sympathy economy. But consider, Smith writes, that

the most frivolous disaster which could befall himself would occasion a more real disturbance. If he was to lose his little finger to-morrow, he would not sleep to-night; but, provided he never saw them, he will snore with the most profound security over the ruin of a hundred millions of

[501] The entire section "Of the Influence and Authority of Conscience" appeared only for the first time in the second edition of 1760, which substantially revised the text of the first 1759 edition. Smith's book remained more or less unchanged until its sixth edition, printed in 1790. See Eric Hayot, *The Hypothetical Mandarin*, p. 3. Also see D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie's "Introduction."

[502] This was discussed by Carlo Ginzburg in his "To Kill a Chinese Mandarin: The Moral Implications of Distance," *Wooden Eyes, Nine Reflections on Distance*. This essay was also published in *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Autumn, 1994), pp. 46-60.

[503] See Ginzburg's essay.

his brethren, and the destruction of that immense multitude seems plainly an object less interesting to him, than this paltry misfortune of his own. To prevent, therefore, this paltry misfortune to himself, would a man of humanity be willing to sacrifice the lives of a hundred millions of his brethren, provided he had never seen them? (136-37)

Thus, seeing is believing and feeling. The distant geographical location (as well as cultural alienation) of China and its not being accessible by a discourse of free circulation and commerce of the western capital[504] make it an emotional other that could not be incorporated into this sympathy economy. This historical period saw dramatic expansion of the human and geopolitical space toward which average members of society are supposed to be emotionally and morally responsible[505]. Nevertheless, moral sympathetic strangeness seems more difficult to overcome than simply geographical distance. Almost two decades before the publication of Smith's treatise, David Hume had already remarked in a section of his *Treatise of Human Nature* entitled "Of Contiguity and Distance in Space and Time:" "A *West-Indian* merchant will tell you, that he is not without concern about what passes in Jamaica; tho' few extend their views so far into futurity, as to dread very remote accidents" (*T*, 429), he probably would also have "ignored the moral and juridical implications of it" (Ginzburg, 1994 56)[506], like the average European person in Smith's moral philosophy of sentiments.

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[504] See David Porter, "A Peculiar but Uninteresting Nation: China and the Discourse of Commerce in Eighteenth-Century England."

[505] Regarding the Anglo-American sympathetic economy for Chinese, Gertrude Stein was asked a similar question by the philosopher Hutchins Hapgood. As Stein writes in her *Everybody's Autobiography*, Hapgood "liked to think of the number of angels on the point of a needle ... and ... always complained of me that I had too good a time for anybody who was so virtuous." One day, frustrated by Stein's "virtue," Hapgood asked her a "test question. Would I if I could by pushing a button would I kill five thousand Chinamen if I could save my brother from anything. Well I was very fond of my brother and I could completely imagine his suffering and I replied that five thousand Chinamen were something I could not imagine and so it was not interesting" (qtd. in Hayot 205). In a sense, this impossibility of sympathizing with Chinese is an integrated part of Western modernity and modernism, as Eric Hayot argues throughout *The Hypothetical Mandarin*.

[506] For an analysis about this specific passage of Hume's, see Ginzburg (1994), pp. 56-59. In a relevant passage that might be an influence upon Adam Smith, Hume writes: "Accordingly we find in common life, that men are principally concern'd about those objects, which are not much remov'd either in space or time, enjoying the present,

Indeed, one can take the popular trope of sympathy of the eighteenth century as what builds affective affinities between the circulating commercial markets, credit, and public opinion acting at great distances. It was also a century with increasing social mobility as the British empire was being formed. To this observation, we can adduce David Marshall's comment that sympathy is "structured by theatrical dynamics that ... depend on people to represent themselves as tableaux, spectacles, and texts before others" in order to suggest how closely the identifications, on which sympathy depends, rely both in practice and in theory, on a notion of "exchange" that includes representational and economic dimensions[507]. Exchanges between persons, places, and commodities became more necessary than they had once been. In the first volume of his sentimental novel *Tristram Shandy* (1759-67), Laurence Sterne describes a village midwife, who, as

> she had all along trusted little to her own efforts, and a great deal to those of dame nature, —had acquired, in her way, no small degree of reputation in the world;—by which word world, need I in this place inform your worship, that I would be understood to mean no more of it, than a small circle described upon the circle of the great world, of four English miles diameter, or thereabouts, of which the cottage where the good old woman lived, is supposed to be the center. (Sterne, Book I, chapter VII)

The additional proclamation of a provincial English parameter of four miles indicates a world much beyond the local midwife's reputation, whose existence Sterne's readership is obliged to imagine and anticipate. The world is so obviously global that Sterne's message of irony could be

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and leaving what is afar off to the care of chance and fortune. Talk to a man of his condition thirty years hence, and he will not regard you. Speak of what is to happen tomorrow, and he will lend you attention. The breaking of a mirror gives us more concern when at home, than the burning of a house, when abroad, and some hundred leagues distant." (*T*, 428-29).

[507] David Marshall, *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy*, p. 5. Also see Eric Hayot, *The Hypothetical Mandarin*, p. 263.

easily missed. This is the world in which Adam Smith was writing. His *Theory of Moral Sentiments* is what Janet Todd calls "the end of a line of British moral philosophy" that admits "the sentimental aim of trying systematically to link morality and emotion[508]." Sympathy thus offers us a window into the trans-subjective condition of affective 'mediality' at the moment of modern mobility[509].

V. ii. Visuality in a Distended Selfhood

Marshall McLuhan argues that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were crucial periods of adaptation to the "new model[s] of perception," when "the initial shock gradually dissipates as the entire community absorbs the new habit of perception into all of its areas of work and association." And this, for McLuhan, comes "[w]ith the advent of the printed word," by which "the visual modalities of Western life increased beyond anything experienced in any previous society" (McLuhan, p. 23). The printed word produces more information and disseminates to far-away places. Indeed, it is clear that the eighteenth century was what Susan Crawford aptly calls an "information-conscious society" (qtd. in Ellison 17) with its changes of reading habits, the construction of new systems and offices of information management. Popular consciousness was adapting, to use Pocock's phrase, "to a world of moving objects" (221) and to an increasingly detached and mobile population. It is in a congenial relation to this expansive British Empire building that Adam Smith advocates a theory of emotional impartiality, which is

[508] Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction*, p. 27. Todd identifies sentimental literature's heyday as the period from 1740 to 1770, tracing its decline through adjectives applied to the term "sensibility" (pp. 7-8).
[509] For the concept of "mediality," see David E. Wellbery's 'Foreword' to Fredrich A. Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900.*

realized through sympathy. As that "amiable virtue of humanity," it is the principle by which sentiments are communicated. The unfortunate, by

> relating their misfortunes in some measure renew their relief. Their tears accordingly flow faster than before, and they are apt to abandon themselves to all the weakness of sorrow. They take pleasure, however, in all this, and, it is evident, are sensibly relieved by it; because the sweetness of his sympathy more than compensates the bitterness of their sorrow, which, in order to excite this sympathy, they had thus enlivened and renewed. (Smith 15).

A mutual relation is formed between the spectator and the agents of feelings. A sense of the bitterness from misfortune has to be "enlivened and renewed" to achieve its communicating effect upon the spectator, and it produces a therapeutic side-effect for the tellers-agents. Sympathy thus achieved is highly mediated through representations: telling as well as tearing. It is not a simple process, and it involves oral, aural, as well as visual skills from the plural form of tellers-agents to the singular form of the spectator. More than this therapeutic function of healing consolation (that the very articulation of misfortune brings forth by offering a sympathetic interlocutor), sympathy also creates the highest pleasure in observing "in other men of fellow-feeling with all the emotions of our own breast" (Smith 13). Interiority in this affective transmission communicates through observation and creates a sense of benevolence in either the agent or the spectator. It is not achieved through immediate experience of what others feel, but "by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations" and

> by the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence from some idea of his sensations, and even feel

> something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike him. (Smith 9)

Several decades before Smith's treatise, Joseph Addison writes that the function of "imagination" "fills the Mind with the largest Variety of Ideas [, and] converses with its Objects at the greatest Distance, and continues the longest in Action without being tired or satiated with its proper Enjoyments[510]." It is interesting to see that imagination, as a principle of pleasure, is a function of writing on the *tabula rasa* of mind through an engagement with objects in a geographic sense. It establishes sympathetic affinities between things and the subjective agent through overcoming an objective distance by conversing (which is impossible as a verbal activity with things). It may, however, be carried out in the visual sense. Smith's sympathetic figure, that of an observer, follows this vein "in producing and reproducing the feelings of others" (Festa 27) through a strategy of situational substitution. More in-between subjective agents and a spectator, sympathy is "an intense labor" upon oneself, a construct of "a replica of another's feeling from within the citadel of the self." For Smith, "empathy is anything but spontaneous and natural" (Festa 27-8). It is specifically significant to see this point against a backdrop of the rise of individualism and the construction of the subject, both central issues in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century studies[511]. The practice and idea of modern personhood and person-ification is developed further by moral philosophers like David Hume, who writes in his *A Treatise of Human Nature*:

> But setting aside some metaphysicians of this kind, I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind, that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and

[510] See *The Specator* (Saturday, June 21, 1712), "Addison on the Pleasures of the Imagination." Quoted from *The Commerce of Everyday Life*, p. 387.
[511] See Adelia Pinch, 13. Also see Niklas Luhmann, "The Individuality of the Individual: Historical Meanings and Contemporary Problems;" C. B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*.

> movement. Our eyes cannot turn in their sockets without varying our perceptions. Our thought is still more variable than our sight; and all our other senses and faculties contribute to this change; nor is there any single power of the soul, which remains unalterably the same, perhaps for one moment. (252-53)

In another place, Hume writes: "Nice and subtile questions concerning personal identity can never possibly be decided, and are to be regarded rather as grammatical than as philosophical difficulties" (*A Treatise*, 262). For Hume, identity consists of "a succession of related objects" through an act of association because of their "resemblance, contiguity, or causation" " from daily experience and observation" (*T*, 255). A subjective interiority is more contagious and of temporal continuity. Highly influenced by Hume, Smith also takes sympathy as a feeling "to which the mechanism of sympathetic communication has made an essential contribution" (Broadie 165). Nevertheless, in his moral philosophy of sympathy, there are two significant differences from that of Hume's or Addison's "imagination." For Smith, sympathy seems more of a visual as well as situational sentimental substitution and exchange, which involves more an aesthetic sense of labor upon a sympathetic spectatorial self. Less philosophical and contemplative, a Smithian spectator makes efforts to modify his sentiments so they agree with the agent's. He must "endeavor, as much as he can, to put himself in the situation of the other;" he must "strive to render as perfect as possible, that imaginary change of situation upon which his sympathy is founded" (*TMS*, 21). A person's "natural feeling of his own distress, his own natural view of his own situation, presses hard upon him, and he cannot, without a great effort, fix his attention upon that if the impartial spectator" (*TMS*, 148). Also, "[t]he compassion of the spectator must arise altogether from the consideration of what he himself would feel if he was reduced to the same unhappy situation, and, what perhaps is impossible, was at the same time

able to regard it with his present reason and judgment" (*TMS*, 12)[512]. The sentimental efforts are more of a visual mode of observation and identification of the situations of the agents, who are more of common life, as Burke already comments. It probably suggests that Smith situates himself more in a political economy of print, when the saturation of the technology of writing reaches a representational economy dovetailing with a mature commercial society. Sense of theatricality as spatial presence as we see in Hume is soon materialized in the form of monetary capital that can be achieved only through hard labor. At the same time, a rising transparent exchangeability brings with it an inscrutable depth in a sentimental mode, which cannot be resolved through the visual form of money but creates another form of writing technology about the psyche—psychoanalysis, that is—, which is different from that of the moral sentiment of sympathy. Interiority and exteriority co-exist and co-evolve in a splitting and complementary way to each other.

Representational theatricality is built into a modern selfhood. In a sympathetic economy, sentimental subjectivity relates to the physical circumstances of the impartial spectator. John Bender identifies this blurring line between "fiction and reality" as a problem in "the predicament of a culture" (35), which exists through the English philosophical tradition from Locke, through Hume, to Bentham[513]. This fictionalizing and theatrical labor of self-making is more of a visual process. It involves an apparatus towards others, and it takes interiority as work towards a split self through that of visuality. Smith writes:

> We must look at ourselves with the same eyes with which we look at others: we must imagine ourselves not the actors, but the spectators of our own character and conduct, and

[512] Also see Broadie, pp. 170-71.
[513] The blurring of boundaries between fact and fiction is also one of the commonplace strategies of the early realist novel. For an application of Foucault's work to the novel and to take the genre as a discursive practice in this regard, see Lennard J. Davis, *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel*.

> consider how these would affect us when viewed from this new station, in which their excellencies and imperfections can alone be discovered. (Smith 111n)

David Marshall argues that, for Smith, one "becomes a spectator to oneself in order to determine if one can enter into one's own feelings… Smith seems to separate the self from the one self it could reasonably claim to know: itself" (Marshall 175-6). Smith's theory of sympathy thus relies "upon an eclipsing of identity, a transfer of persons in which one leaves oneself behind and tries to take someone else's part[514]." In this process, "this relation to emotion as one's own becomes more and more distended" (Festa 28). A self is increasingly further away from itself, which is realized through visual mediation. This gesture of distension runs analogous to but seems more psychoanalytical than what "the Sense of Feeling" evoked by "Sight" produces, as reflected in Joseph Addison's essay writing—"a Notion of Extension, Shape, and all other Ideas that enter at the Eye." It is further away from what Shaftesbury defines as the aesthetic type of "divine example"—"a Platonic abstraction, defined in mathematical terms of balance and harmony" (Paulson 3)[515]. Shaftesbury writes in his *Inquiry concerning Virtue and Merit* (1699, 1711): "This … is certain that the admiration and love of order, harmony, and proportion, in whatever kind, is naturally improving to the temper, advantageous to social affection, and highly assistant to virtue, which is itself no other than the love of order and beauty in society" (qtd. in Paulson 3). This Shaftesburian divine creation is "figured as order (beauty is to deformity as regularity is to irregularity) of both the world and of man's individual mind, which as an example can improve the already benevolent man" (Paulson 3). Instead, for Smith, a selfhood of fragmentation comes

[514] See David Marshall, "Adam Smith and the Theatricality of Moral Sentiments," p. 599. Also see Lynn Festa, *Sentimental Figures of Empire in Eighteenth-Century Britain and France*, p. 28.
[515] Ronald Paulson, *The Beautiful Novel, and Strange: Aesthetics and Heterodoxy*.

into its place. On one hand it displays as uniform exchange means of capital. On the other, it is realized as deeply subjective psyches, which are hard to recognize and analyze[516].

Addison's series of essays came out around four decades before Smith's treatise[517]. His visual act of "Sight"

> seems designed to supply all these Defects, and may be considered as a more delicate and diffusive kind of Touch, that spreads it self over an infinite Multitude of Bodies, comprehends the largest Figures, and brings into our reach some of the most remote Parts of the Universe[518].

With conceptualization of the cultural location "that would be occupied by print-media culture and the elevated novels of Richardson and Fielding" (Warner 233), Addison takes that the cultivation of a disinterested spectator is through the abstracting power of sight's operation at a distance so as to "[consider] the world as a theater, and [desire] to form a right judgment of those who are the actors on it[519]". David Wellbery argues that in the eighteenth century representation, as "the essential activity of the soul," is "a fundamental category of thought…, a governing notion, or rather a matrix of notions, that pre-structures the fields in which thought and inquiry move[520]." For Addison as well as Adam Smith, sight serves as a significant means of collecting data and representing the objective world's objects [521]. It offers an extended selfhood, and reflects its relation with the subject, plus realizes the soul and its mediate or immediate objects.

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[516] For a similar historical argument, see Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity*. Trilling's approach is more of close reading of literary texts and intellectual thoughts. He never, as could be imagined from such a conservative literary critic, takes a point out of historical materialism.
[517] See *The Commerce of Everyday Life*, pp. 387-96.
[518] See Note 130.
[519] *The Spectator*, No. 10, Monday, March 12, 1711. In *The Commerce of Everyday Life*, p. 90.
[520] See David Wellbery, *Lessing's Laocoon*, p. 9.
[521] Of course, one can relate this to the popular argument of the rise of the visual in the modern western society. See Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought*; Hal Foster (ed.), *Vision and Visuality*. For a useful historical analysis about the literature of this argument and how it can be used in the Chinese situation, see Shu-mei Shih, *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations across the Pacific*, especially "Introduction," pp. 1-39.

In Addison's world of the beginning of the eighteenth century, this visuality is very tactile, embedded within the skin and the flesh, and assimilated into the body—"as a more delicate and diffusive kind of Touch," that is. Thus, the sense of corporeal "touch"—as the longest entry in the *OED* dictionary[522]— intertwines with "Sight." Imagination, in the Addisonian sense, remains as what Aristotle proclaims in *De Anima* as the "medium of the tangible[523]," maintaining a classic unity of the entire psychological sphere. If we understand the historical process of modernity and modern media—following arguments from Karl Marx, Max Weber, Georg Simmel, Georg Lukács, Guy Debord and Jean Baudrillard—as one of abstraction, Adam Smith's theory of moral sentiments remains very significant in this genealogy. It imbricates with his theories on rhetoric and language, and on political economy as well; all three of which add up to his sense of the Enlightenment system[524]. Reading it with postcolonial historical hindsight enhances our understanding of globality as an affective issue of sensorial organization of a selfhood.

V. iii. Sentimental Labor and Sympathetic Communication

For Smith, this distension of selfhood consists of a very visual presentation of the tripartite division of the spectator, the actor and the third person, the mechanism of which works through sympathy as a matter of duplicating another's feelings. All sympathy is constitutively agreeable. As a matter of fact, "we" take delight in perceiving imitation. The spectator, Smith argues, derives pleasures from

[522] See Didier Anzieu, *The Skin Ego*, p. 13.
[523] Aristotle. *De Anima* (*On the Soul*), 423b.
[524] See J. C. Bryce's "Introduction" to Adam Smith's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, specifically part 5, "System and Aesthetics," pp. 34-7.

> the emotion which arises from his observing the perfect coincidence between his sympathetic passion in himself, and the original passion in the person principally concerned. This last emotion, in which the sentiment of approbation properly consists, is always agreeable and delightful. The other may either be agreeable or disagreeable, according to the nature of the original passion, whose features it must always, in some measure, retain… Two Sounds, I suppose, may, each of them taken singly, be austere, and yet, if they be perfect concords, the perception of this harmony and coincidence may be agreeable.[525]

The sound analogy reminds of the flute that functions as a Romantic literary trope[526], and it appears in an atomistic and seemingly solipsist world resolved to harmony and coincidence. Emotions, like the two sounds for Smith, are essentially communicative, as observed by Daniel M. Gross[527]. Nevertheless, rather than another rehearsal of the romantic trope of the musical transference of the Spirit, sentiment—specifically sympathy—is from being natural and spontaneous. It offers the bodily sensations or sensorial organization as sites of cultivation and labor through a *theatrical* tripartite of the spectator, the actor, and the third person. Adam Smith was writing at the time when the body was turned into the market of laboring and consuming through a development of an inner life of its own, visible and audible. Self, with its business of meaning and feeling, and market (with its capacity to capitalize) are two of the same machine or mechanism, equivalent to what Smith calls "the Idea of a System" that runs rampant through the Enlightenment. Hannah Arendt once argues that:

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[525] This, as a footnote, was added to the second edition of *TMS*. An earlier draft of it was enclosed by Smith with letter 40 addressed to Sir Gilbert Elliot, dated 10 October 1759. See the editorial note by D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie on p. 46 of *TMS*.

[526] See Abrams' discussion of the Aeolian lyre and the imagery of inspiration in "The Correspondent Breeze: A Romantic Metaphor."

[527] See Daniel M. Gross, *The Secret History of Emotion*, p. 173.

> Nothing, in fact, is less common and less communicable, and therefore more securely shielded against the visibility and audibility of the public realm, than what goes on within the confines of the body, its pleasures and its pains, its laboring and consuming. (112)

Rather than "the confines of the body" as natural, this privacy of the body is invented by the public realm of production and reproduction so as to be explored in its laboring and consuming, including its affective pleasures and pains. This system moves what Foucault calls "the concepts of money, price, value, circulation, and market" from their seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries' "rigorous and general epistemological arrangement" to a more visible "system of identities and differences." After this paradigm shift,

> all wealth is *coinable*; and it is by this means that it enters into *circulation*—in the same way that any natural being was *characterizable*, and could thereby find its place in a *taxonomy*; that any individual was *nameable* and could find its place in an *articulated language*; that any representation was *signifiable* and could find its place, in order to be *known*. (Foucault, 1970 175)

A profound space common to body and money, to both wealth and representation, was opening up. Circulation became one of the fundamental categories of analysis, socially as well as physiologically. It is in this historical background that Smith's moral philosophy of sympathetic sentiment and his political economy of society resonate rather than conflict with each other.

For Smith, sympathy is not the "selfish" system for which Thomas Reid criticized him[528]. The sympathetic spectator imagines not being himself in the agent's situation but being the agent in that situation:

[528] See J. C. Stewart-Robertson and David F. Norton, "Thomas Reid on Adam Smith's Theory of Morals." Also see Alexander Broadie, "Sympathy and the Impartial Spectator," p. 163.

> But though sympathy is very properly said to arise from an imaginary change of situations with the person principally concerned, yet this imaginary change is not supposed to happen to me in my own person and character, but in that of the person with whom I sympathize. (*TMS*, 317)

It is an economy of substitution and situation, close to identification but never the same, especially in two extreme situations: bereavement and death. If I sympathetically grieve with you in your bereavement, my "grief ... is entirely upon your account, and not in the least upon my own. It is not, therefore, in the least selfish" (*TMS*, 317). Thus, there exists difference between sentiments of the spectator and the agents. The "as it were" in "we enter as it were into his body" and "in some measure" in "we become in some measure the same person" suggest significant difference between the agent's feeling and the spectator's, the latter of which is brought into existence and sustained through the imaginative act of sentimental labor[529]. His being sympathetic "excites some degree of the same emotion, in proportion to the vivacity or dullness of the conception" (*TMS*, 9):

> What they [the spectators] feel, will, indeed, always be, in some respects, different from what he [the agent] feels, and compassion can never be exactly the same with original sorrow; because the secret consciousness that the change of situations, from which the sympathetic sentiment arises, is but imaginary, not only lowers it in degree, but, in some measure, varies it in kind, and gives it a quite different modification" (*TMS*, 22).

The correspondence, although imperfect, is, however, "sufficient for the harmony of society" and "this is all that is wanted or required[530]." Alexander Broadie argues that Smithian sympathy is not about the singularity of each feeling or perception, but of a kind of universality through

[529] See Broadie, p. 169.
[530] See Alexander Broadie, "Sympathy and the Impartial Spectator," pp. 169-70.

which "the spectator has the feeling—he has it *sympathetically*" (Broadie 164). In other words, it is a voluntary attitude and sentiment to involve and engage the other as part of self:

> His agonies, when they are thus brought home to ourselves, when we have thus adopted and made them our own, begin at last to affect us, and we then tremble and shudder at the thought of what he feels. (*TMS*, 9)

This mode of universality is very significant for Smith. It is more about a mode of understanding and perceiving. This is suggested in his *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, in which a historian has to produce a wide range of sympathetic responses in the reader:

> The accidents that befall irrationall objects affect us merely by their externall appearance, their Novelty, Grandeur, etc., but those which affect the human Species interest us greatly by the Sympatheticall affections they raise in us. We enter into their [*sc.*human beings'] misfortunes, grieve when they grieve, rejoice when they rejoice, and in a word feel for them in some respect as if we ourselves were in the same condition. The design of historicall (*sic.*) writing is not merely to entertain: (this perhaps is the intention of an epic poem); besides that it has in view the instruction of the reader. It sets before us the more interesting and important events of human life, points out the cause by which these events were brought about and by this means points out to us by what manner and method we may produce similar good effects or avoid similar bad ones[531].

Smith's moral philosophy depends a great deal on the "illusion of the imagination" involved in this act of sympathy. The spectator takes the situation of the agents as a text analogous to "the design of historicall writing," through a willing observation, upon which he does a contextual (or situational) reading. The physiological effects—"tremble," "shudder," or otherwise—upon the spectator are a consequence of identifying and accommodating what is read as part of an

[531] *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, p. 90. Also see Alexander Broadie, p. 164.

affective self. This adverbial sense of sympathy realizes the theatrical presentation and representation of division of labor among the spectator, actor, and third person regarding their perception, epistemology, and communication. Smith's writing defines this as

> arranged and digested, both in their coincidence and in their succession, into so complete and regular a system … not unlike that which it derives from the contemplation of a great system in any other science[532].

This moral philosophy of sentiment presents itself as a strong system-building symptomatic of the western Enlightenment.

V. iv. Property and Propriety in Making Inferiority

This Smithian sympathetic sentiment is critical in the evolution of eighteenth-century management of "information overload" in the rise of a saturating textual media and acts of reading[533]. For Smith, it is not merely sentimental, subjective, or perceptive. It is also corporeal and physiological: "Persons of delicate fibres and a weak constitution of body complain, that in looking on the sores and ulcers which are exposed by beggars in the streets, they are apt to feel an itching or uneasy sensation in the correspondent part of their own bodies" (Smith, 1976 10). The exterior appearance here is easily projected into the interior of another and thereby puts in danger the latter's physical health, owing to their weaker constitution that causes strong sensibility. Sympathy seems almost a telepathic correspondence. The pleasures of seeing and feeling become, in effect, a physiognomic metaphor for the mobile and polymorphous features of the society that depends on universally managed correspondence. "Persons of delicate fibres and

[532] Quoted in J. C. Bryce, "Introduction," p. 35.
[533] See Katherine Ellison's recent study on reading and information overload in early eighteenth-century literature, *The Fatal News: Reading and Information Overload in Early Eighteenth-Century Literature*.

a weak constitution of body" thus have chances of being exposed to specters of destitution and dearth, socially and economically. On the other hand, Smith's sympathetic figure is detached and casual, unbound by ritual, communal, or tribal loyalties. It is free from social constraints and conventions. It is, indeed, a syndrome of western modernity not irrelevant to the increasing flow of information, commerce, and people of the eighteenth century, which requires a writing of a political economy of commodities as well as a moral philosophy of sympathy to regulate. Smith is quite certain, in fact, that sympathy withers in primitive and "barbarous" communities and thrives in "civilized" society because it is only with man's release from the immediate exigencies of survival that he becomes free to extend and expect sympathy:

> Before we can feel much for others, we must in some measure be at ease ourselves. If our own misery pinches us very severely, we have no leisure to attend to that of our neighbour: and all savages are too much occupied with their own wants and necessities, to give much attention to those of another person. (Smith, 1976 198)

In another place, he continues: "Our imagination which in pain and sorrow seems to be confined and cooped up within our own persons, in times of ease and prosperity expands itself to every thing around us" (Smith, 1976 183). By virtue of its opulence and its division of labor, a commodity economy would boost the supply of sympathy, that is. On the other hand, the sympathetic sentimental process, "a parallel with the sequence of surprise, wonder, and admiration that Smith discusses at length in his 'History of Astronomy'" (Broadie 176), is mutual between the spectator and the agent. For Smith the spectator is able to effect a change upon the agent with whose situation he sympathizes, for the agent desires to be approved of and seeks "to see his own situation through the eyes of the spectator" (Broadie 177-78). Then, he might for the first time "grasp the real significance of previously noted features of his situation:"

> In light of these new perceptions, gained by an exercise of his creative imagination, his feelings will naturally change, probably toward conformity with the feelings of the spectator. Disagreement in feeling will be transformed into agreement, and in effect each will come to sympathize with the other. (Broadie 178)

The sentimental consensus thus achieved is analogous to Smith's famous sequence of "truck, barter and exchange" as well as to the tripartite structure of reader-text-writer. A pleasurable agreeing relation is made through exchanging sentiments between the spectator and the agent, similar to the bartering business around the commodity that finalizes the deal[534]. The text becomes pleasurable and textuality permeates into the everyday practice of representation and reading.

It takes something to build "a thoughtful, critical observer" that would matter to Smith. The spectator-observer is "directed by virtuous considerations, whether of the intellectual sort or some other, and seeking to understand" (Broadie 177). Indeed, for the eighteenth century reader, propriety and property often resonate with each other. The long-standing association of honor and decorum with ancient and prescriptive rights to the land is being replaced by its much less aristocratic but more bourgeoisie-like capitalistic counterpart. As historian Jean-Christophe Agnew points out: "In drama as in life, honor was increasingly understood to be a particularly stable and solid form of credit, whereas land was coming to be seen as an especially illiquid form of capital" (175). Sympathy, in some sense, joins in the first of this pair, "a particularly stable and solid form of credit," that is. Access to this agreement of sentiments is *economic*, through bodily management as well as social capital. Let's take a look at another passage from *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*:

> … it is chiefly from [the] regard to the sentiments of mankind that we pursue riches and

[534] See Alexander Broadie, pp. 177-78.

> avoid poverty. For to what purpose is all the toil and bustle of this world? What is the end of avarice and ambition, of the pursuit of wealth, of power and preeminence? … From whence … arises the emulation which runs through all the different ranks of men and what are the advantages which we propose by that great purpose of human life which we call better our condition? To be observed, to be attended to, to be taken notice of with sympathy, complacency, and appreciation, are all the advantages which we can propose to derive from it. It is the vanity, not the ease or the pleasure, which interests us. But vanity is always founded upon the belief of our being the object of attention and approbation. (Smith, 1976 50)

To be seen, to be sympathized with becomes a kind of competitive economy. Attention and sympathy turn into "a limited commodity for which isolated individuals competed" (Agnew 181). Individuals are portrayed as driven by the fear of possible indifference and mortification. Theatrical sentiment more notoriously turns into capitalization. "Nothing is so mortifying as to be obliged to expose our distress to the view of the public, and to feel, that though our situation is open to the eyes of all mankind, no mortal conceives for us the half of what we suffer" (Smith, 1976 60) as Smith writes pages later. Sympathy here joins honor, virtue, and decorum to be part of a bottomless line of credit. It functions in an economy of scarcity rather than a natural or equal distribution. Those blessed with "ease and prosperity" are more sympathetically regarded by others, or are more easily moved into the adverbial sympathetic positions. Their words, gestures, and actions are "observed by all the world," in stark contrast to the poor, who come and go unnoticed, without visibility and deprived of theatrical presence[535].

In a passage on the influence of fortune upon merit and demerit, Smith writes:

> If, between the friend who fails and the friend who succeeds, all other circumstances are

[535] To use a concept that we discussed in the chapter on David Hume.

equal, there will, even in the noblest mind, be some little difference of affection in favour of him who succeeds. (*TMS* 183) This is also why Adam Smith argues that a "wild child"—one recurrent figure of the marginal people in the anthropological discourse of the British Enlightenment[536]—also lacks an idea of self. It is because he lacks the "mirror" provided by others:

Were it possible that a human creature could group up to manhood in some solitary place, without any communication with his own species, he could no more think of his own character, of the propriety or demerit of his own sentiments and conduct, of the beauty or deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face. All these objects which he cannot easily see, which naturally he does not look at, and with regard to which he is provided with no mirror which can present them to his view. Bring him into society, and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before. (Smith, 1976 110)

"Who we are," as well as "who we think we are," depends on our ability to see ourselves reflected in the actions and eyes of others. The "solitary place" represents a strong sense of death drive, sentimental dearth, social impropriety, and propertied poverty. Others provide us with the means of seeing ourselves, which we "cannot easily see" or which we "naturally" do "not look at." Conscience is also a product of our identification with what we imagine to be the sentiments of the spectators of our actions[537]. Smith observes:

> We suppose ourselves the spectators of our own behaviour and endeavour to imagine what effect it would, in this light, produce upon us. This is the only looking-glass by which we can, in some measure, with the eyes of other people, scrutinize the propriety of our own conduct. (Smith, 1976 112)

[536] See Alan Bewell, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment*, pp. 50-71.
[537] See also Alan Bewell, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment*, p. 77.

This property of interiority is necessary to maintain a bourgeois, autonomous, individual selfhood, and is manifested in the figure of the impartial spectator. Smith calls this "the man within the breast" in his account of the faculty of conscience:

> The all-wise Author of Nature has, in this manner, taught man to respect the sentiments and judgments of his brethren.... But though man has, in this manner, been rendered the immediate judge of mankind, he has been rendered so only in the first instance; and an appeal lies from his sentence to a much higher tribunal, to the tribunal of their own consciences, to that of the supposed impartial and well-informed spectator, to that of the man within the breast, the great judge and arbiter of their conduct. The jurisdictions of those two tribunals are founded upon principles which, though in some respects resembling and akin, are, however, in reality different and distinct. The jurisdiction of the man without, is founded altogether in the desire of actual praise, and in the aversion to actual blame. The jurisdiction of the man within, is founded altogether in the desire of praise-worthiness, and in the aversion to blame-worthiness; in the desire of possessing those qualities, and performing those actions, which we love and admire in other people; and in the dread of possessing those qualities, and performing those actions, which we hate and despise in other people. (*TMS* 128-31)

Thus, the formation of a subjective interiority is a social act of communication and reflection. Interiority and exteriority correspond to each other in a sympathetic form of correspondence. The "supposed impartial and well-informed spectator," not the ideal observer, cannot dispense with "the man without," whose "desire of actual praise" and "aversion to actual blame" result from a socializing process. It relates to an approximation to propriety that could be attained:

> There exists in the mind of every man, an idea of this kind, gradually formed from his

> observations upon the character and conduct both of himself and of other people. It is the slow, gradual, and progressive work of the great demigod within the breast, the great judge and arbiter of conduct. This idea is in every man more or less accurately drawn, its colouring is more or less just, its outlines are more or less exactly designed, according to the delicacy and acuteness of that sensibility, with which those observations were made, and according to the care and attention employed in making them.... Every day some feature is improved; every day some blemish is corrected. (*TMS* 247)

It is noteworthy that the impartial spectator, "the judgment of the ideal man within the breast" (*TMS* 147), is not a version of the "ideal observer theory" that has been on the agenda of moral philosophers at least since the work of Roderick Firth[538]. It is simply a demigod—as Smith repeatedly uses this term—not God at all. Sympathy, as a "primal human form of imitation" (Bewell 77), becomes possible with a strong dependence upon a socialized domestic imagination, which produce resemblance under certain social conditions. Otherwise, it becomes impossible for sympathy to register encounters with difference; whereafter, a self would be stranded in a situation of affective poverty.

For instance, in the midst of a crowd, the pauper finds himself "in the same obscurity as if shut up in his own hovel:"

> The poor man … is ashamed of his poverty. He feels that it either places him out of the sight of mankind, or, that if they take notice of him, they have, however, scarce any fellow-feeling with the misery and distress which he suffers. He is mortified upon both accounts. (Smith, 1976 51)

[538] See Roderick Firth, "Ethical Absolutism and the Ideal Observer." Also see Alexander Broadie, p. 184.

This shame economy of affective dearth (no attention, no fellow-feeling), this overriding compulsion to become or to remain "the object of attention and approbation," serves as a goad to industry, like the same "propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another" (Smith, 1994 14), the latter of which is the same abstract entity driving the competing individuals, "the butcher, the brewer, or the baker" in *The Wealth of Nations*. In Smith's description, this affective economy is so imperative that the isolated murderer, like Peter's education in Wordsworth's poem *Peter Bell*[539], is compelled to return to society to face the judgment of others. It is because his "exposure," as David Marshall has noted, "before the imagined spectators the man must personate in his solitude," is more frightening than a real court of justice[540]. It is similar to what William Warner sees in William Hazlitt's *Lectures on the Comic Writers* regarding a classic history of the rise of the novel in figures like Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne in the period of George II (1727-1760). Hazlitt correlates this with the rise of the middle class, whose political demands for representation are manifested through self-expressing "in books as well as Parliament." It is a turn away from the "vices, miseries, and frivolities of the great" as expressed in the continental romance and novella, toward "an account of themselves" as winning for themselves "a security of person and property, and freedom of opinion." This, according to Warner's analysis, makes a more popular and "domestic" culture in that the English reader of the novel thereby wins a certain "life" and "liberty" and becomes propertied—"each individual had a certain ground-plot of his own to cultivate his particular humours in." Thus, according to Warner's analysis on Hazlitt, the English novel "allows every

[539] See Alan Bewell, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment*, p. 103.
[540] David Marshall, "Adam Smith and the Theatricality of Moral Sentiments," p. 603.

English citizen to realize a claim to the Lockean trinity of life, liberty, and property (Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, VII: 87)" (Warner 25)[541].

For Smith, sympathetic sentiment's correlation with an attentional and visual economy is set to exclude some individuals from the "moralizing gaze of others" (Poovey 33); they are "sunk in obscurity and darkness:" "His conduct is observed and attended to by nobody, and he is therefore very likely to neglect it himself, and to abandon himself to every sort of low prodigality and vice" (Smith, 1976 134). The *natural* impulse to keep oneself from moral and visual oblivion, and mankind's "dull insensibility to the afflictions of others," compel the sufferer to take the part of his spectators toward himself, since it is only by such measures that the sufferer could discover at what level he needs to cast the expression of his own feelings to win their sympathy. Though such sympathy offers him "his sole consolation," the sufferer could "only hope to obtain this by lowering his passion to that pitch" which his spectator finds tolerable. He has to "flatten," in Smith's words, "the sharpness of its natural tone, in order to reduce it to harmony and concord with the emotions of those who are about him" (Smith, 1976 22). Only certain kinds and degrees of emotions can be counted as evidence, as testimony. The person in question is addressed with these enunciative and signifying rules in mind. In order to reach that momentary imaginary change of situations, upon which sympathy is founded, the sufferer turns instead to a more deeply theatrical and collusive set of relations with his audience:

> As they [the audience / spectators] are continually placing themselves in his situation, thence conceiving emotions similar to what he feels; so he is as constantly placing himself in theirs, and thence conceiving some degree of that coolness about his own fortune, with

[541] William B. Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684-1750*. This, of course, as Warner makes it clear, is a very "Whiggish interpretation of the free golden age of the Whig mid-eighteenth century, written from the vantage point of Hazlitt's conception of English democratic identity" (Warner 25).

> which he is sensible that they will view it. (Smith, 1976 19)

In this mutual process between the spectators and the agent of feelings, "strange fits of passion"—to use half a line from William Wordsworth's 'Lucy Pomes'—need be reducible to be observable so as to be sympathized with. It takes efforts from both sides to establish a communicative process of analysis and imitation. Emotions should be tailored so as to enter into equilibrium and be exchangeable. In this realm of emotional production and communication, what remains of interest is not what is "in the true" or "in the private," but what is "in the evidentiary" or what could be made "in the circulatory"—the aspect of "exchange value" if we use Karl Marx's formula of "commodity." It reminds of what Samuel T. Coleridge takes as "man of letters:" "He imagines a man of type capable of being indefinitely reset[542]." Jerome Christensen argues that as consequence of commercialization of the print, the Romantic authorship becomes "no longer figured as an instrument for spreading light," but along with the print machine, "churned out ephemeral commodities, exacted soul-destroying labor, and chained genius to the caprices of a debased reading public" (Christensen 9). For Coleridge, whose two therapeutic substitutes for the man of letters are the individual poet and the corporate clerisy[543],

> With the greatest possible solicitude avoid authorship. Too early or immoderately employed, it makes the head *waste* and the heart empty; even were there not other worse consequences. A person, who reads only to print in all probability reads amiss; and he, who sends away through the pen and the press every thought, the moment it occurs to him, will in a short time have sent all away, and will become a mere journeyman of the printing-office, a *compositor*. (qtd. in Christensen, 8)

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[542] Jerome Christensen, *Praising Enlightenment*, p. 8. Also see Jerome Christensen, *Coleridge's Blessed Machine of Language*, pp. 163-67, and "The Impropriety of Coleridge's Literary Life," pp. 156-67.
[543] Christensen, p. 9, note 12.

Adam Smith's "flattening" strategy in representing emotions reads akin to the necessity of production and reproduction of authorship: merely becoming "a journeyman of the printing-office, a *compositor*," that is. Both are manufactured into anonymous commodities in a logic analogous to the permeation of print and reading.

V. v. Sentimental Humanity and a Stadial European History

Writing on structural transformation of the public sphere as a category of bourgeois society, Jürgen Habermas explains rather cryptically that '[i]ncluded in the private realm was the authentic "public sphere," for it was a public sphere constituted by private people' (Habermas 30). This quite dialectical dynamic between the public and private is further elucidated by Clifford Siskin in his analysis of the social role of writing in that differentiation. Siskin quotes Anne Dutton's defense of "PRINTING any Thing written by a Woman" (1743) from more than a decade before the first publication of Smith's work:

> Communicating one Mind in *Print*, is as *private*, with respect to particular *Persons*, as if one did it particularly unto every one by *himself* in ones *own House*. There is only this *Difference*: The one is communicating ones Mind by *Speech*, in ones *own* private House: The other is doing it by *Writing*, in the private house of *another* Person. Both are still *private*. (qtd. in Siskin 164)

For Siskin, in Dutton's reading, it is print that "overwrites the category of public-as-state, by instituting, within the private realm of society, a new kind of publicness—one that is accessed and thus produced in private terms" (Siskin 164). In another words, print, as a technology and an art of transmission, enhances a world of moving objects, images, and other means of

representations. It would be technologically determinist to claim print as the incubator of social mobility. What interests this dissertation more is the social increase of this "new kind of publicness" that "is accessed and thus produced in private terms" around the middle of the eighteenth century. Dutton's quite functionalist acknowledgement of the difference between the oral (*speech*) and the tactile (*writing*), without substantiating the effects of this difference, clearly suggests her ignorance of the modality of impersonality, transparency, and mediated exchangeability created by the *social* and *public* properties of writing. Spontaneous, communal speech and its audile mechanism begin to co-exist with an emergent mode of communication and its visual mechanism. One even can detect a transition from orality to literacy, to use a simplified model of communication theory by Walter J. Ong. The sense of immediacy—"as if one did it particularly unto every one by *himself* in ones *own House*"—from which Dutton tries to salvage a sense of security—"in ones *own* House," and thereby safe—turns out exactly to be what writers must find ways to achieve as a memorable quality of their writing owing to words' separation from their "living present" (Ong 82). The world is becoming larger than that of Laurence Sterne's village midwife. Habermas, in his influential study of this point, describes the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century of communication commerce and the way in which the press was a major factor in the emergence of the public sphere:

> The great trade cities became at the same time centers for the traffic in news; the organization of this traffic on a *continuous* basis became imperative to the degree to which the exchange of commodities and of securities became continuous. (Habermas 16)

This sense of imperative traffic and commerce displays itself also *immaterially*, which is the way a neutralizing strategy of *excessive* emotions works. It throws a significant historical light upon the theatrical and collusive set of relations between the sufferer and his audience in the

sentimental economy. The way Adam Smith, as a then would-be political economist, designates emotions to be regulated, disciplined, and transferred as evidence and testimonies for communicative sympathy correlates with these crucial periods of adaptation to increasing commerce and mobility. This also explains why David Hume fixes on conversation as an antipode to "that forelorn solitude" mentioned above. Conversation is a crucial term in the eighteenth century for illustrating 'the flow *across* those newly reconstituted fields' of the private individual exchanges and the public ones generated out of their multiplicity (Siskin 164). Graham Burchell points out that Hume "describe[s] the form ideally taken by the 'commerce' of … [the political culture] of opinion, the appropriate cultural form of exchanges between individuals of the 'middling rank' immersed in 'common life'" (Burchell 129). This necessity of interchangeability between things, perceptions, and feelings requires all of them to develop neutralized and well-disciplined platforms for the other, whether in the forms of commodities (and their exchange value), the visually demanding literacy, or sympathy.

Of course, labors are involved in translating different visual positionalities and making them "in the evidentiary" into the collective editorial "we" that Smith uses through his system. This ability to liquidate suffering and pain to make emotions *transparent* and *translatable* enough to be exchangeable, which is analogous to money as embodiment of exchange values of different commodities from different worlds, is rather theatrical and self-reflexive in Smith's theatre of sympathy. It seems unevenly distributed and much less accessible, in Smith's system, to the poor in the midst of the crowd, the street beggar with sores and ulcers, and the fair sex:

> The reserve which the laws of society impose upon the fair sex, with regard to this weakness [i.e., passionate love], renders it more particularly distressful in them, and, upon

> that very account, more deeply interesting. We are charmed with the love of Phaedra, as it is expressed in the French tragedy of that name, notwithstanding all the extravagance and guilt which attend it. That very extravagance and guilt may be said, in some measure, to recommend it to us. Her fear, her shame, her remorse, her horror, her despair, become thereby more natural and interesting. (Smith, 1976 33)

"Natural and interesting" here applies not to a set of proper emotions already tailored to circumstances, but to extravagant emotions such as Phaedra's fear, shame, remorse, horror, and despair "rendered (and thereby appropriate) by the art of the dramatist" (Gross 174). Here exists a touch of what Michel de Certeau calls "the ethnographic operation" (78). It is the epistemological-technical process, through which the emotions of "primitive" others become visually archivable, are brought into representations and translations, and are transcribed by social researchers or political economists of emotions. It is a hermeneutics of the emotional other inscribed by and through certain forms of intelligibility, visuality, and civility, as we already see in the literary media strategy of William Wordsworth. It may not be a ethnographic writing *per se*, as it is in the original de Certeau scheme, but the strategy remains the same. The editorial "we" that Smith used throughout the work is to "invoke the presumptive authority of common experience, thereby denying or, again, dissembling the emotional isolation that lay at the heart of his system" (Agnew 185-86). The common experience is offered as the site of exchange and the nodal point of transference and translation. It remains categorically analogous to some other peculiar forms of modern abstractions, which are variously designated as the *commodity*, *reification*, and the *fetish*. The increasing problems of the production and administration of this sort of abstract space closely dovetail with the history of western modernity. Smith weaves all social relations into versions of measurable exchange, and

individuals as instantiations of the same abstract entity, whether it is sympathy, the moralizing impartial spectator, or the "propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another." He designates this as a way to deal with the informational mobility in an increasingly globalized and capitalized world—"a world of moving objects."

In an etymological study, Rafael Capurro suggests that information became an entity to be regarded objectively as "something to be stored and processed" (qtd. in Ellison 8) between the seventeenth- and eighteenth- centuries. Katherine Ellison contextualizes Capurro's definition of information as "a kind of abstract stuff present in the world, disconnected from the situations that it is *about*" (qtd. in Ellison 9), which is "physically and spatially associated with surface, depth, and meaninglessness" (Ellison 9). In Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, the impartiality of the sympathetic remains historically coincident with and logically analogous to the overloading information age of the eighteenth century, with its establishment of the public post office, the publication of books[544], the "moving objects" (Pocock again), and the moving people. It even "began to flow out along the arteries of European commerce in search of its victims" (229) as Peter Hulme writes. Antonio Damasio, one of the contemporary brain scientists of emotion, muses that the history of civilization is, to some extent, "the history of a persuasive effort to extend the best of 'moral sentiments' to wider and wider circles of humanity" (qtd. in Gross 170). Talal Asad refers this kind of civilizing moral sentiment as "the desire to impose what they [the European rulers] considered civilized standards of justice and humanity on a subject population—that is, the desire to create new human subjects," which is "humanizing the world"(Asad 110)[545]. This imperialist humanitarian effort of sentiment and sympathy aims to

[544] The word "publish" appears in Samuel Johnson's famous dictionary of 1755: "To put forth a book into the world"—suggestive of the expansive nature of book publishing, which is at once an act of production and dissemination.
[545] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*.

create a new sense of humanity and imperial subject. It has its historical predecessors. For instance, Lord Milner, undersecretary for finance during the British occupation of Egypt that began in 1882, describes Britain's imperial task in that country as follows:

> This then, and no less than this, was meant by 'restoring order.' It meant reforming the Egyptian administration root and branch. Nay, it meant more. For what was the good of recasting the system, if it were left to be worked by officials of the old type, animated by the old spirit? 'Men, not measures,' is a good watchword anywhere, but to no country is it more profoundly applicable than to Egypt. Our task, therefore, included something more than new principles and new methods. It ultimately involved new men. It involved 'the education of the people to know, and therefore to expect, orderly and honest government—the education of a body of rulers capable of supplying it. (qtd. in Asad 110)

The imperialist reformation involves not merely the bureaucratic administration, but, more essentially, the essence of a new humanity. It necessarily takes coercion and violence to eradicate traditional practices, and more so to establish a new affective mode of humanity. In this pedagogical process of learning to be "fully human," as Asad points out, "only some kinds of suffering were seen as an affront to humanity, and their elimination sought" (Asad 111). It remains integrated to the imperialist reform project to retain "suffering that was necessary to the process of realizing one's humanity—that is, pain that was adequate to its end, not wasteful pain" (Asad 111). For Eric Hayot, it is an end of taking the body as an imperialist "epistemological heuristic, as, that is, a way of knowing the world and a way of grasping the body's relation to it," and

> an understanding of suffering, its recognition and its classification, as epistemological processes, as mechanisms for the production of social truth and for the location of self in

relation to world, and thus an awareness of the body's paradoxical status as both 'mode and object of knowing.' (Hayot 18)[546]

Here the existence of some pain is a necessity, and suffering establishes an epistemology of affect. This manifests itself as a condescending sympathy towards "traditional practices" that bring forth pain, misery and suffering. It therefore justifies western modernity in affirming the development of a Western sense of self as modern, taking the body as site of anthropological observation, and eliminating those "now branded as 'repugnant to justice and morality' or as 'opposed to natural morality and humanity,' or even sometimes as 'backward and childish'" (Asad 110-11). This western liberalistic discourse of emotions and sentiments accords very well with Karl Marx's orthodoxy story of capital—how it travels from the west to the east, that is—along with its ideology of the "Asiatic mode of production" in various forms[547]. It is interesting to note that etymologically, the word "Mandarin" is defined through the *OED* as "any obscurantist, esoteric, or exclusive variety of a language[548]"that remains outside of circulation and exchangeability. Eric Hayot suggests that this probably "borrows from the mandarin's economic and governmental stereotype the sense of mobility without movement, or activity without change" (Hayot 33), to which Adam Smith also makes a discursive contribution[549]. It is no surprise that Adam Smith could be cited as an intellectual antecedent of this imperialist projection of global sentiment[550]. There is also a historical heritage from the "conjectural," "hypothetical," "natural" history constructed by the Scottish Enlightenment that was popular and characteristic of eighteenth-century empiricist discursive genres[551]. Dugald Stewart (1753-1828),

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[546] Eric Hayot, *The Hypothetical Mandarin: Sympathy, Modernity, and Chinese Pain*.
[547] See Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, pp. 462-550.
[548] *OED*, "mandarin," 2. b.
[549] See David Porter, "A Peculiar but Uninteresting Nation: China and the Discourse of Commerce in Eighteenth-Century England."
[550] See Gross, p. 170.
[551] See Alan Bewell, *Wordsworth and the Enlightenment*, p. 59.

in his discussion of Adam Smith's *Dissertation on the Origin of Languages,* summarizes in this way:

> When, in such a period of society as that in which we live, we compare our intellectual acquirements, our opinions, manners, and institutions, with those which prevail among rude tribes, it cannot fail to occur to us as an interesting question, by what gradual steps the transition has been made from the first simple efforts of uncultivated nature, to a state of things so wonderfully artificial and complicated[552].

Smith's contribution to the four-stage theory helps to give rise to "an account of the progress of civil society which reinterpreted European history at the expense of non-European cultures. It made the extension of the concept 'history' to these difficult and even deniable" (Pocock 280)[553]. For him, the man of middling rank can afford to cultivate those bourgeois sensibilities—compassion first among them—that constitutes a civilized nation. Living in such a flux of mobility, one has to "flatten" (to use Smith's word) a little bit, and has to manage to remain connected, to be wired into medial possibilities. Otherwise, one would be "sunk in obscurity and darkness." This *flattening* or *abstracting* theatrically alternates between embodiment and disembodiment. Thus, Smith's sympathetic subject creates an example of what Robert Mitchell and Phillip Thurtle examine as a creative process of information, and an instance of the convergence of individualism with capitalism in an early part of western modernity. Significantly, such a story of information flow and convergence concerning emotions is class, gender, and region based, as analyzed above.

Coda

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[552] "Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith, LL.D.," in Adam Smith, *Essays on Philosophical Subjects*, p. 292-93.
[553] J. G. A. Pocock, "Adam Smith and History," p. 280.

In a history of the body as it is realized through photography, detectives, and early cinema, Tom Gunning gives a case of female paranoia analyzed by Freud. A young woman was obsessed about being photographed because she heard a knock or click that she believed came from the snapping of a camera shutter. Freud identifies the source of this "aural hallucination" (Gunning 37) as the woman's body, and the click being an aural displacement of the throb of her excited clitoris[554]. In the long history given by Gunning on the pre-history of cinema, this is one of the places he finds "the conflation of the body with the processes of the camera" (Gunning 37). What remains of interest here is this turn of the mechanical machine as part of the female body. A somatic interiority becomes externalized as the apparatus, which functions as an observing and diagnosing machine or mechanism. The deep female psyche is presentable through the snapping of a camera shutter, which comes from the body itself. This turning the body inside out as observable, exchangeable, and alienable is throughout western modernity. It starts from the period of history we investigated, if not earlier, in the rise of the print medium, and in various social practices this technology has brought forth. An affective maintenance of a selfhood is a social practice of fellow-feeling, the realization of which is made possible through a print logic enhanced through the daily saturation of textually based cultural practice of representation. This leads to the economy of sympathy becoming increasingly visual and abstract, as our history from Edmund Burke to Adam Smith suggests.

In the mid-nineteenth century, photography, as relevant to the Freudian story here, accompanied the "autonomization of sight" by which, Jonathan Crary argues, the sense of sight becomes dissociated from touch, and thereby detaches "the eye from the network of referentiality

[554] Sigmund Freud, "A Case of Paranoia Running Counter to the Psycho-Analytic Theory of the Disease." See Tom Gunning, "Tracing the Individual Body: Photography, Detectives, and Early Cinema," p. 37.

incarnated in tactility and its subjective relation to perceived space." As a result, according to Crary, "The new objects of vision ... assume a mystified and abstract identity." And it is because the imagery has been cut off from any relation to the observer's position in space. In the century, like "older types of images," photography unifies "all subjects within a single global network of valuation and desire," and could be located as "an element of a new and homogeneous terrain of consumption and circulation in which an observer becomes lodged[555]." The young woman's paranoia of being photographed is suggestive of an obsession with the proliferation of photographical technology in everyday life. Probably it is also an anxiety about being watched and scrutinized by this "element of a new and homogeneous terrain of consumption and circulation," whether manifested through photography, cinema, or print. It is a human sensitivity against a culture of abstraction promoted through the saturation of different mass media in modernity, which produces a communication and reproduction "from the network of referentiality incarnated in tactility and its subjective relation to perceived space." In a rough way, this is referred to as "alienation" in various Marxist traditions. More of significance to our history of emotion—specifically "sympathy"—is the fact that the "aural hallucination" of the young woman is identified by Sigmund Freud the psychoanalyst as a part of the activity of the female body itself. It is not about any general part, but the throb of her excited clitoris, which is a most private and inscrutable part of a female body. The Freudian penetrating power of the masculine visuality is parallel with the panopticon mode of scrutiny, whether it is from the mass media of print, photography and cinema, medical treatises, or moral philosophy *et cetera*. All of them can be labeled as the apparatuses of modernity in a general way. They deem the female body as hypersexual or hypersentimental, just abnormal enough to be in the necessary need of being normalized. The female body becomes a harbinger to the "mass" as Benjamin sees in one

[555] Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 19, 13.

of the notes published later as “Central Park:” that “mass of organs” on which the surgeon—and the political economist, the psychoanalyst, and the cameraman—“operate.” It is, as Samuel Weber points out, an allegory of “the transformation of the body from an organic form into an allegorical ‘mass’ that the apparition of the passerby both announces and conceals” (Weber, 1996 96). In this process of the discipline or penetration of the female comes masculinity in various modern technologies. This is what is usually called the process of “modernity.” It is at the expense of the aurality psychoanalyzed as female in the Freudian way. Of course, this is an allegory, and the sacrificed aurality of the young woman in the science of psychoanalysis is referred to as the “Unconscious,” which then applies to places, classes, and genders identified as the other in the story of western modernity.

Chapter VI: Specters of Crowds in Late Imperial Chinese Pictorial Culture: A Case of the *Dianshizhai Pictorial*

The previous section of this dissertation addresses the inward turn of emotion as it correlates with the "mechanical reproducibility" of modern writing in eighteenth-century Britain. Sentiment and emotion become mediated through a saturating modern textual culture into forms of individual subjectivity. Our discussions on David Hume and William Wordsworth suggest that sentiments proliferate along with the rise of a textual media and become a necessary component of the media. The moral philosophy of sentiments in Adam Smith regulates representations of modern subjectivity and gives rise to a subject-less writing medium. At the turn of the nineteenth century, this medium becomes that of transparent exchangeability. At the same time, it leaves the un-representable interiorized emotions in the deep Unconscious, which pre-mediates the emergence of the psychoanalytic self. As an extended comparison and contrast to this genealogy of western modern selfhood and writing, this chapter suggests a trace of an evanescent moment of collective being in late nineteenth century Chinese pictorial culture. Rather than an interiorizing activity as reflected in writing, this historical moment presents itself through visual mediation in pictorial culture before the coming of the modern vernacular literature. It releases a collective subject-less subjectivity in urban crowds at the beginning of Chinese modernity, which provides a specter of comparison to the stories of western individuality outlined in the previous sections. The comparison is spectral in that it is made between two different places, historical periods, and media. While all the previous chapters in this dissertation try to theorize upon forms of individual subjectivity in textual media, this chapter traces an evanescent moment of inter-medial phenomenal collective existence in pictorial

culture. All are examinations of the technology of self through media and mediation. In this sense, the spectrality of comparison may be justified by the spectral quality of this subject-less subjectivity before the coming of the modern Chinese literature as well, which is manifested through a hybridized visual culture. In this may lie a lost moment in media history, when there was once a hope for us all of being different from and not affected by the individualistic subjectivity often attributed to western modernity. It is a hope with which this dissertation concludes as a critique of subjectivity of modernity developed through writing—a hope beyond critical discussions of subjectivity.

This chapter uses *The Dianshizhai Pictorial* [Figure 2][556] as its specific archive, in which crowds are represented as audience as well as participants of image-making in late imperial Chinese pictorial culture located in the late nineteenth century. In the pictorial newspaper, there emerges an appearance of some amorphous state of a modern and collective state of being in mediation, and it is to be replaced by a more intensive individual subjectivity. This historical shift reflects different attitudes towards visuality and textuality. The latter is reflected in the beginning of modern Chinese literature, which takes as its task to enlighten the crowds through literary education. This chapter argues that the pictorial culture in late nineteenth century China embraces an accommodation of multi-media fertilization in the pictorial over a repressive regime of textuality. In between the pictorial culture and the modern Chinese literature to come there lies a specific sense of absorption and theatricality, and it produces a spectral existence of collective crowds at the emergence of a modern media culture, which intersects with illustrated magazines, pictorial newspapers, modern popular theater, and early cinematic exhibition.

The *Dianshizhai Huabao* (Touch-stone pictorial, 1884-1898), a pictorial newspaper, was established in 1884 by Ernest Major, who was a British merchant in Shanghai. Issued as a

[556] For the title, see [Figure 1] in the attached.

newspaper supplement for *Shenbao* [Figure 3] every ten days in a consecutive span of fourteen years, the pictorial newspaper consists of more than 4500 full-page illustrations inscribed with short narratives that present themselves as news of the contemporary world. It adopts conventions from woodblock fiction illustrations, new-year calendar posters, and photography, and was distributed widely in Shanghai and other major cities in the country[557]. Technically a hybrid genre, it occupies "a special position in contemporary studies of fin-de-siècle Chinese modernity" (Bao 405), as Bao Weihong points out. Classical studies on the pictorial include Ye Xiaoqing's socio-historical reading as an illustrated guide to the late nineteenth century Shanghai urban life[558], and Bao Weihong's study of the change of perceptual paradigms in the late nineteenth century Shanghai as reflected in the visual illustrations of the newspaper. The argument of this chapter, different from theirs, identifies an evanescent trace of collective state of being in the modes of theatricality and absorption in the newspaper, and takes these modes as they correlate with other urban visual activities in Shanghai, including a garden culture and early cinema viewing. Thus, it attempts to outline an inter-media spectrality at the beginning of Chinese modernity, which presents a phenomenal being spectrally existent in between media, tradition and modernity, word and image.

Many influential modern Chinese literary figures, such as Lu Xun, Ah Ying, and Zheng Zhenduo, regarded the *Dianshizhai* as one of the earliest and definitely the most influential pictorial newspaper. In a essay titled "A Glimpse upon Shanghai's Cultural Landscape" written in 1931, Lu Xun writes: "The influence of this pictorial newspaper [the *Dianshizhai*] was significant. At that time, it was disseminated to many places, and served as the eye and the ear

[557] Weihong Bao, "A Panoramic Worldview: Probing the Visuality of *Dianshizhai huabao*," in *Journal of Modern Chinese Literature* 32 (March 2005. pp. 405-61), p. 405.
[558] Ye Xiaoqing, *The Dianshizhai Pictorial: Shanghai Urban Life 1884-1998* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, 2003).

for those who wanted to know Contemporary Business (*shiwu*)—which was similar to what is called New Learning (*xinxue*) now[559]." In his *A Developmental History of Chinese Pictorial Newspaper*, Ah Ying asserts that "Since the *Dianshizhai*, pictorial newspapers began to thrive in Shanghai. However, none of them could compete with the *Dianshizhai* in the last decade of the late Qing." It is because those pictorial newspapers later than the *Dianshizhai* "neither had anything comparable in their pictorial quality" nor emphasized the intention to "report on contemporary news" of pictorials[560]. Even half a century after its last issue in 1898, Bao Tianxiao [Figure 4], a novelist in the republican period, writes about his experience of the *Dianshizhai* in his *Memoirs of Kushiro Studio*:

> When I was 12 or 13, Shanghai published a lithographically-made *Dianshizhai Huabao*, which became my favorite. Indeed, children like pictures very much, and this *Pictorial* was enjoyed by adults as well. Whenever it was published and disseminated to Suzhou, I would sacrifice my pocket money for snacks to get a volume. It had one issue coming out every 10 days. One could bind ten issues together and make a book out of it. Back then, I made several books of them. Though those painters did not have broad knowledge, one could always learn something from the pictures. Because Shanghai was a place of fashion. Many new inventions and fashionable things, like steamship and trains, first went to Shanghai before people in the inter-lands even had chances to hear of them. With the *Pictorial*, one could see what they are actually like[561].

Thus, the pictorial newspaper could be enjoyed by a child of limited literacy, whose viewing experience of modernity is absorptive, as if he is consuming snacks. Visual representations of

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[559] "*Shanghai wenyi zhi yipie*," from *Lu Xun Quan Ji* (*A Full Collection of Lu Xun's Works*. Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1981), Vol 4, p. 293. Translation mine.
[560] Ah Ying, *Zhuoguo Huihua Fazhan Zhi Jingguo*, from *Wanqing Wenyi Baokan Shulue* (Gudian Wenxue Chubanshe, 1958), pp. 90-100. Translation mine.
[561] Quoted in Chen Pingyuan, *Zuotu Youshi Yu Xixue Dongjian*, p. 111.

modernity are, thus, more easily accessible to those at the margin of the traditional institution of literacy.

Images of crowds occupy a predominant part of the spectacles in the *Dianshizhai*. The crowds very often appear as collective spectators, which are portrayed as urban spectacles in turn. Historically speaking, there were crowds thronging into Shanghai in the late nineteenth century, which created what Meng Yue calls the "chaotic cosmopolitan culture in Shanghai" when the urban environment in Shanghai had undergone drastic transformations[562]. The *Dianshizhai* pictorial presents crowds in various public viewing events. Bao Weihong points out that crowds often turn out to become a source of danger and cause spectacular accidents[563], and are often public and "collective voyeurs[564]." In Figure 5, for instance, the spectators of the firefighters themselves become a spectacle. This is a reflection upon the demographic situation of the city. Refuges from wars, droughts, and crimes, among other natural or social misfortunes flooded to Shanghai, which became a treaty port in 1943 owing to the *Nanking Treaty* of the Opium War signed by the British and Qing governments. As Leo Ou-fan Lee and Andrew J. Nathan point out, from the late Qing through republican periods, many political and commercial journals sought registration in treaty-port concessions, often in the name of foreign agents, for the purpose of avoiding government repression, which "on Chinese territory was virtually unconstrained by legal guarantees for the press.[565]" Materially, "[m]odern printing machines, which are essential to rapid production of a large number of copies of a periodical, were available only in large treaty ports, as was the imported paper that these machines required" (Lee and Nathan 368). A liminal space is thus developed out of the edge of the empires in the

[562] Meng Yue, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires*, p. 100.
[563] Bao, Weihong, "A Panoramic Worldview: Probing the Visuality of *Dianshizhai huabao*," p. 445
[564] Bao, Weihong, p.446. See Figure 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.
[565] See Leo Ou-fan Lee and Andrew J. Nathan, "The Beginnings of Mass Culture," p. 368.

beginning of a modern history of media. What is of interest in the case under discussion is the collective and voluntary ways of watching and being watched in urban visual experiences. Jonathan Crary argues that changes of vision and visuality in the west since the seventeenth till the nineteenth centuries are part of the larger rationalizations for reshaping the human faculty of sight, and they came along with inventions of certain optical devices like *camera obscura* and the stereoscope. For him, vision and visuality relate to changing perceptions of human subjectivity and identity, and the observer becomes "the site of certain practices, techniques, institutions, and procedures of subjectification" (Crary 5). The observer in the nineteenth century west is rather that of abstraction through the experience of modernity, who "increasingly had to function within disjunctive and defamiliarized urban spaces, the perceptual and temporal dislocations of railroad travel, telegraphy, industrial production, and flows of typographic and visual information" (Crary 11). Different from the linear history of vision and visuality in western modernity, the Chinese case of pictorial culture presented here promotes a liminal space of sensorial freedom, a way of being that was imposed by neither the western possessive individualism nor Chinese feudalistic imperial subjectivity. In between the old institution of literacy and an emergent modern vernacular literature to come, here visuality is not repressive, nor abstracting; instead, it is a liberating and evanescent moment of modern media history. This chapter tries to recover a sense of the absorption and theatricality of crowds in between image and text as an attempt to critique western subjectivity as well as a linear historiography of visuality as we see in Crary's argument.

A viewing experience significant for this attempt of recovery is reported by an anonymous writer on Sep. 20, 1896, in a piece from the *Shenbao*. It is based on his viewing experience in a

Qi Yuan (Strange Garden) of a huge painting from the United States depicting its Civil War[566]. The writing is in classical Chinese, not in vernacular modern Chinese, the fact of which suggests the social status of the writer. This indicates its inaccessibility to certain people not having reading literacy. It is to say that writings in the *Shenbao*, unlike illustrations in the *Dianshizhai* pictorial newspaper, discriminate between classes of readers according to their literacy ability[567]. The passage of the *Shenbao* reads:

> Two days before the Mid-Autumn Festival, it was rainy, but not too cold and not too hot. In the afternoon, I received an invitation from the host of the Strange Garden, and I then walked to the garden with some friends. The attendant brought us into the [indoor] space. We walked past a small hallway, and it was dark. Suddenly there was a tiny beam of light, and we saw a staircase. We walked up and entered a bright environment, and there we saw two armies fighting[568].

One might attribute the description of the trip leading the writer to the space before they could begin to describe the actual painting to a literary convention modeled after traditional travel writing[569]. However, it is very significant to see the similarities as well as differences between this literary description and its visual representation, since there exists a *Dianshizhai* lithograph of the same American painting that the 1896 *Shenbao* reporter claimed to have seen inside the Strange Garden[570]. The literary report highlights the indoor space and the threshold of darkness, how one leads to another, what kind of sense of enlightenment it produces, and what kind of

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[566] See Figure 12.
[567] Evelyn Rawski has suggested that literacy was quite widespread in late imperial China, especially among urban males. See Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: U of Michigan P, 1979), pp. 10-13, 140-46.
[568] Quoted. in Pang, Laikwan, *The Distorting Mirror*, page 174.
[569] See Pang, pp. 174-75.
[570] See Figure 13.

sociality this visual experience suggests[571]. In the lithographic representation, we see a painting engulfing the viewers, who stand inside the railing at the lower left-hand corner[572]. The railing serves as a blurred frame between the painting and its audience. The overwhelming visual impression from the painting seems almost not to be contained within the sensorial control of the audience. There is a tension of visual confrontation. In both the inscription within the lithographic representation and the *Shenbao* reportage, the painting is reported to have been made by a Western painter, who spent more than ten years on this piece of work. The original painting is large enough to cover several *mu* – an area of land the size of which makes it similar to a garden.

The painting reproduced in the Chinese pictorial is drawn in the Chinese lithographic style of the time, which is different from the realist art in the Western tradition. This different sense of realism in Chinese and western art brings forth different perceptual structures, subjectivity, and sociality. On their stylistic difference, Laikwan Pang writes: "If lighting and shadow are major elements of Western realist painting, the Chinese lithographic form makes little use of them" (Pang 44). Instead, "line is the main graphic element in Chinese lithographic art." Pang continues: "Generally speaking, natural elements like trees, mountains, and rivers are often depicted in the traditional Chinese style, whereas modern items like urban buildings and modern transportation devices are drawn with rigid lines and solid surfaces" (Pang 44). Furthermore,

> [t]hese lithographs deviate from traditional woodblock printings in their strong emphasis on perspective and use of straight lines and their highlighting of the diversity of human forms and activities. Detailed facial expressions and gestures are juxtaposed with austere backgrounds composed of numerous straight lines, creating a strange combination of vigor

[571] See Pang, pp. 174-75.
[572] This is also suggested by Laikwan Pang, p. 175.

and stiffness. (Pang 44)

Based on Pang's point, we can further argue that their combination suggests an embryonic state in between traditional and modern, and this produces more amorphous representations that this chapter identifies as "spectral." It is strange sense of hybridity, which happens in the fictitious Strange Garden as a real history, and it enhances a sense of theatricality and absorption that we see in the crowd. This is a manifestation of modernity with the added complication where a mode of perceptual self that is different from the western one—as outlined in the previous chapters—comes into being through an imbrication of different media, Chinese or western, old or new, verbal or visual.

In the compositional structure of this lithograph, as Laikwan points out, the reception space and the pictorial space are rendered in the same style, which further reinforces the impression that the representation and its reception are of the same reality[573]. A further look indicates that the inscription in the uppermost corner of the picture tells not merely the current location, its history of making, and its subject of the painting, but also "provides some hint of narrative" (Pang 175):

> The bombs hit some [of the soldiers] whose blood and flesh were all over the place. Some soldiers were shot and they lay ossified on the ground. Some just saw a wall and hid behind it, while some ran away because they know they were losing the battle[574].

This description is very suggestive of the causal relation of the incidents portrayed, which is communicated through a progression of time. In this scene of war terror, some soldiers hide themselves behind a wall because they happen to see it, and some run away because they feel that they are losing. Even the affective and psychological states of mind of the soldiers are

[573] See Pang, p. 175.
[574] Translation, see Pang, Laikwan, *The Distorting Mirror*. P. 175.

hinted at. This kind of reading is made by the writer of the inscription put right above the pictorial representation.

It is significant to bear in mind that, in general, paintings, inscriptions within paintings, pictorial compositions, and newspaper articles of the pictorial print culture in this period were usually from different authors. For instance, in the *Shenbao* report, the lithographic representation of the viewing experience and the inscription within that representation are by different authors. This means that the authorial subjectivity emerging through early modernity in the west—as suggested through the death of author argument by Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault— cannot be applied in our investigation upon the relation between the image, and the two verbal descriptions. In lithographic representations, the very existence of verbal descriptions reminds of the pictorial compositional structure of traditional Chinese paintings, in which *zi* (calligraphy) and *hua* (picture or painting) are often put together. Clear boundaries between images and texts do not exist; they complement each other pictorially, instead. The shape of the verbal description supplements the compositional structure of the pictorial language. What remains more significant to this lithography is the similar positioning of this verbal part of the picture—the inscription, that is—and the viewers in the reception space, who are rendered as if they are reacting to the sound, sight, and affective intensity of the Civil War painting. The rigid lines and solid surfaces that we see in the western-styled balustrade strive hard to distinguish the viewing group of the Strange Garden from their visual object, the painting. This seems especially the case when one of the viewers dresses himself in western clothing. He is probably a westerner mingling his appearance with the American soldiers in the painting. This, not that clearly-cut stylistic feature of the lithography (as running through the *Dianshizhai)*, is emblematic of the cultural hybridity of Shanghai in late nineteenth century. The viewers

themselves, being intensively absorbed in their relation with the painting, turn out to be staged for the viewers of this lithographic representation. The experience of western modernity in watching a modern war is thus mediated through a theatrical buffer zone between representation and reality. This blurred boundary between absorption and theatricality throws light upon new forms of subjectivity and consciousness in an amorphous, embryonic, and mediated state of being. The sight, sound, and psychology of the American Civil war is represented lithographically to a group audience. They, in turn, become a spectacle to a targeted audience of the *Dianshizhai*, who, owing to their limited literacy, may not be able to approach the *Shenbao* report of the viewing experience. This, as this chapter argues, is one of the incipient signs of the perceptual modernity in its spectrality before the coming of the clearly identified May Fourth literary modernity, the latter of which has been included in many conventional historiographies of modern Chinese culture.

It is noteworthy that the spectacle of the Civil War itself is presented in this *Dianshizhai* pictorial either as an ongoing reality or a stage performance. It is not a still picture. All of the viewers standing inside the railing at the lower left-hand corner are also portrayed in a theatrical situation, watching as well as being watched. Their attention to the spatial environment includes that of the painting and also something outside the picture (probably the viewers of the lithograph). The media composition is a combination of media, such as painting, staging, writing, and gardening. All of these media activities squeeze into this one pictorial frame with meticulous details. This lithographic pictorial representation far exceeds what photography claims as its distinction from lithography—realistic mimesis[575]. In the "Preface" of the *Dianshizhai Pictorial*, Ernest Major compares the difference between Chinese and Western

[575] See Kathleen Stewart Howe, "Introduction and Acknowledgments," in *Intersections: Lithography, Photography, and the Traditions of Printmaking*, p. viii.

painting. He affirms the stereotypical dichotomy between the mimetic tradition of Western painting and the expressive modes that characterize Chinese painting, and he attributes the verisimilitude of Western painting largely to the effect of photography[576]. The miraculous mimetic power of photography is most clearly manifest when Major observes that

> a scene looks blurry and indistinguishable when it is looked at with the naked eye; but with the instrument [of a photographic camera], one will experience the scene as if he himself is placed within it[577].

The photographic apparatus is accorded a quality of objectivity that complements the subjective—"as if he himself is placed within it." The naked eye, instead, is a too subjective device to be able to make abstract lines and realities. What remains valuable to our argument in the lithographic representation under discussion is that its pictorial composition presents us an almost multi-media environment of painting, museum, theater, print and garden. This "blurry and indistinguishable," or, say, complementarily multi-media picture provides an enriching media experience that is "as if he himself is placed within it." Rather than a clearly demarcated single media representation, this case suggests a specific media immersion made possible through the pictorial print culture in late nineteenth century China, with its specific self-reflexivity upon the viewers and the viewing experience of the urban crowds. The mediating stage within the lithographic picture may be read as a metaphor of Chinese means of accommodating the impact of modern experience in the late nineteenth century. The ambivalent status of being in between watching and being watched indicates an embryonic collective experience of modernity, which is not expressed in terms of individualistic consciousness or subjectivity.

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[576] Bao, Weihong, "A Panoramic Worldview: Probing the Visuality of *Dianshizhai huabao*," p. 443

[577] "故平视则模糊不可辨，窥以仪器，如身入其境中," *The Dianshizhai Pictorial*, Jia 1:1, reproduced in the Jiangsu guanglin guji edition. Quoted in Bao, Weihong, p. 443.

As a comparison, the emergence of western modern art in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries sees a strong sense of what W.J.T. Mitchell terms as "the purism of modernist abstraction," which is a strong sense of the "negation of the beholder's presence[578]." Rather than cleansing the presence of the beholders and their beholding experience, the *Dianshizhai* pictorial embraces them, and thus presents layers of theatrical crowds, whose viewing experiences are transferred through different media. Indeed, spectators and viewers of this kind appear in almost every picture of the *Dianshizhai*[579]. Bao Weihong argues that the collective viewing experience through a mediating device seems to "parallel the rather recent technological mediation of vision and experience that constitute public readership or spectatorship[580]," and she locates the exhibition of early Western cinema in China as thriving on a pictorial print culture[581]. Following this argument, this chapter emphasizes that these visual activities of the urban culture reflect the existence of substantial urban crowds, whose spectral access to visual culture is self-reflexively represented in the theatrical experience located in between the visual and print. It is a significant historical moment when relation between visuality and literacy is laid bare. Bao Tianxiao, quoted above, is one of the exceptions to those who had opportunities to consume this visual experience of modernity. Our knowledge of his experience is made possible through his ability to write well as a novelist, without which he could not earn fame in a modern Chinese cultural landscape. In other words, the access to a history of the inter-media immersion is already mediated through modern Chinese literary writing, which embraces individualistic literary subjectivity as suggested by the title of Bao's collection— *Memoirs of Kushiro Studio*. Many

[578] W.J.T. Mitchell, "What Do Pictures 'Really' Want?."
[579] See Bao Weihong, "A Panoramic Worldview: Probing the Visuality of *Dianshizhai huabao*," p. 444
[580] Bao, p. 444.
[581] Bao, p.448

members of the chaotic crowds may not be able to perform what this literacy institution requires, the fact of which makes it difficult to capture this spectral inter-media state of immersion.

Laikwan Pang reads the *Shenbao* piece from 1896 about the Strange Garden experience along with another report found in the *Youxibao* (Newspaper of leisure) in 1897[582], in which a first-time movie-goer elaborately describes a film show he saw in the Qi Yuan, and it details his feelings of shock and amusement after watching the films. Widely considered to be the first documentation of the earliest film viewing in China[583], the essay begins:

> There was an electric light shadow-play from the United States, with magical effects beyond anyone's expectations. Yesterday evening was breezy. After the rain, some friends and I went to the Strange Garden to watch the show. When all the viewers had been seated, the lights were turned off. All of a sudden we saw an image of two Western women dancing…[584]

Both this writer and the reporter of the Civil War painting viewing experience had been prepared to confront the fantastic images. Pang notices that "the ritual of traveling through a dark passage had the effect of separating cinematic or painting spectacles from everyday life", and "the passages helped them to rationalize the alternative reality presented in the theatrical space" (Pang 177). Both went to the same Strange Garden, which, as "part of an elaborate culture of 'watching[585]," housed motion pictures, the American Civil War painting, and many exciting horse races. This highly kinetic viewing environment is clearly not a lower-class pastime. It is "part of the new entertainment culture," of which visitors felt proud, and "their ability to move in and out of the spectacles should be understood as a manifestation of their pride in their newly

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[582] See Figure 14.
[583] Anonymous, "Guan meiguo yingxiji" [Watching American shadow plays], *Youxibao* [Newspaper of leisure] September 5, 1897. Rpt. in Cheng Jihua et al., *Zhongguo dianying fazhan shi*, 8-9.
[584] Quoted in Pang, Laikwan, p. 174
[585] See Pang, p. 179

acquired modern identity and as an upper-middle-class privilege" (Pang 181). The point this chapter tries to argue is that through the ability of literary writing and the ability to publish in newspapers, from both of these authors we have obtained knowledge of their viewing experience. That they went through "ritual of traveling through a dark passage" into "the alternative reality presented in the theatrical space" is performed through a means of literacy. It is made possible merely because of the reflexive effect of writing, which came after the visual activity. The clearly drawn separation between traveling and viewing is a consequence of literacy as part of their social and class status, which was suggested by the cultural capital of the Qi Yuan Garden that they visited. This separation does not exist in the lithographic representation of the Qi Yuan experience, in which crowds reflect themselves spectrally through an inter-media unconscious. They act and react spontaneously, naturally, but not without mediation.

This sense of visuality, which is more of inter-media immersion, absorption, and theatricality, is lost through writing. In this way, the loss casts significant light upon the perceptual difference between word and image if we take another look at the 1896 *Shenbao* report. The Strange Garden, located west of the Muddy Town Bridge on Grand Avenue in the British Concession, was a temporary lodge built expressly to show this painting for the writer. His writing in the *Shenbao*—the newspaper—presents something not told in the verbal inscription of the lithographic representation nor in the pictorial part of the representation. He goes on talking about how six years ago he saw this painting of the American Civil War in Tokyo, with three of his Chinese friends—two as dynasty officials, one as scholar—and three of his Japanese friends, when China and Japan were in peaceful relations with each other. He tells how one of the Chinese officials died in the Sino-Japan war, one of the Japanese died of illness, and how the rest of them had neither maintained contact with each other, nor could they do anything about the

deteriorating political relations between the two nations. Therefore, "Accidentally seeing this painting again, I cannot help feeling sentimental. As to the novelty of the painting, it is surely something people in Shanghai had no chance to see yet. When weather is nice, why not go and see it?[586]" A personal visual experience is connected with the geopolitical relations and war between China and Japan. This passage of relating the personal with the political is reported only in the newspaper *Shenbao*, and it is written in the classical and literate Chinese, the access which requires considerable literary education. This is entirely absent in the *Dianshizhai* pictorial, the "reading" of which demands neither a substantial literary education nor the sense of enlightenment subjectivity that goes with it. The sense of political education and enlightenment is probably beyond somebody like Bao Tianxiao's twelve or thirteen year old, who paid his pocket money for the Pictorial, which originally was for snacks. This political knowledge may be entirely incomprehensible to many members of the urban crowds who were refugees from inter-land wars and famines, and without any literary education. Their historical existence thus becomes spectral, which this short passage tries to capture in an experimental way.

In the late nineteenth century, classical Chinese writing reached its limit of making a populist enlightenment for the salvation of the nation and the experience of modernity. It was proposed that this could possibly be realized through a temporary and amorphous visual literacy in the *Dianshizhai*. An Advertisement from the pictorial makes a clear point about it: "As told by all important merchants: 'There might be people who don't read newspapers, but people who dislike the pictorials don't exist …[587]'" An editorial from the *Shenbao* newspaper published in 1895, three years previous to the last issue of its *Dianshizhai* pictorial supplement, titled "On How The Pictorial Can Enlighten," reads similarly:

[586] Translation mine.
[587] Quoted. in Chen Pinyuan and Xia Xiaohong (eds.), *Tuxiang Wanqing*, p. 7

> Since its opening as a trading port, Shanghai learned from the West. The publishing of the newspaper is to enlighten people with the knowledge of the world. However, in China there are more illiterates than literates, and how can let everyone read newspapers so as to know what is reported? For this purpose, we publish the *Pictorial* at the base of several volumes monthly…[588]

The rhetoric of the enlightenment of modernity and national salvation sounds not far from the correlation of the personal and the political in the *Shenbao* piece, and both are communicated through the medium of writing. It is not far from the pedagogy and enlightenment function attributed to the novel by Liang Qichao [Figure 15] in 1902 in his "On the Relation between the Novel and the Government of the People:" "Therefore, the reformation of the government of the people must begin with a revolution in fiction, and the renovation of the people must begin with the renovation of fiction[589]". [Figure 16] The difference lies in their technological approaches. One proposes to use the pictorial newspaper, and another the print novel. The spectrality of crowds as reflected inter-medially in the lithographic representation is lost after. Crowds become the object of political education and mobilization that are realized through writing.

The rhetoric of enlightenment seems necessarily to require a male stance of literacy, which entails a denigration of visuality. Liang Qichao's "On the Relation between the Novel and the Government of the People" was published in the initial issue of *The New Novel*, a periodical established by him in Yokohama, Japan. Between 1903-05 the journal published a novel titled *The Strange State of the World Witnessed over Twenty Years* in the form of serials. Its author was Wu Yanren [Figure 17]. In chapter twenty two of the novel, the protagonist—the narrator "I"—comes back from outside:

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[588] Chen Pinyuan and Xia Xiaohong, p. 10

[589] Trans. by Gek Nai Cheng, in "On the Relationship Between Fiction and the Government of the People," in *Modern Chinese Literary Thought: Writings on Literature, 1893-1945* (Ed. by Kirk A. Denton), p. 82.

> Seeing my sister holding a book and reading, I walked to find what it was about. It turned out to be a pictorial. I turned it over, and came to know that it was *The Dianshizhai* pictorial. I asked how she obtained, and my sister answered: 'a moment ago a child came over to sell it, and there are two other newspapers there.' Right away she gave me the newspapers. I went away with them to my bedroom, reading[590].

The novel does not bother to comment upon the pictorial, but leaves it to the sister, while the male protagonist takes the verbal newspapers with him. This small detail makes a subtle but significant distinction between pictorial newspaper and verbal newspaper, pictures and words, and their gendered consumptions. Visuality is attributed to feminine consumption, whereas literacy is taken as masculine and enlightening. The spectrality of crowds as primarily existent in visual media and mediation, and its historical loss, thus present a gendered history of visuality and textuality.

Coda

Thus, in 1902, the Enlightenment project was defined as the mission of the print—the political novel, that is—by Liang Qichao. In April 1919, Lu Xun [Figure 18], one of the first modern Chinese intellectuals, writes of crowds in modern vernacular Chinese literature when Xia Yu, a revolutionary for the Republican China, is to be executed:

> Old Chuan looked in that direction too, but could only see people's backs. Craning their necks as far as they would go, they looked like so many ducks held and lifted by some invisible hand. For a moment all was still; then a sound was heard, and a stir swept through the on-lookers. There was a rumble as they pushed back, sweeping past Old

[590] Liu, E. *The Travels of Lao Ts'an*, p. 216.

Chuan and nearly knocking him down. [591]

Here, indeed, the crowd becomes a ghost-like existence (like ducks), puppets without soul ("held and lifted by some invisible hand"). This literary specter occurs in one of the well-written modern Chinese stories titled "Medicine," where it is supposed to cure Chinese spiritual disease in order to save the nation. The watching crowds are denigrated so that an Enlightening literary subjectivity—such as that of Lu Xun—is well established. The once inter-media immersion of visual experience becomes one-dimensional and now needs an interiorized "invisible hand" to spiritualize it, which is made possible through a modern Chinese literature. Visuality yields to textuality at the expense of the passive, embryonic state of collective being.

[591] Lu Hsun, *Selected Stories of Lu Hsun*, p. 26.

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Figure 1

The Specters of Crowds in Late Imperial Chinese Pictorial Culture

A Case of *The Dianshizhai huabao* (Touch-stone Pictorial)

Figure 2

The Dianshizhai Pictorial 1884-1898

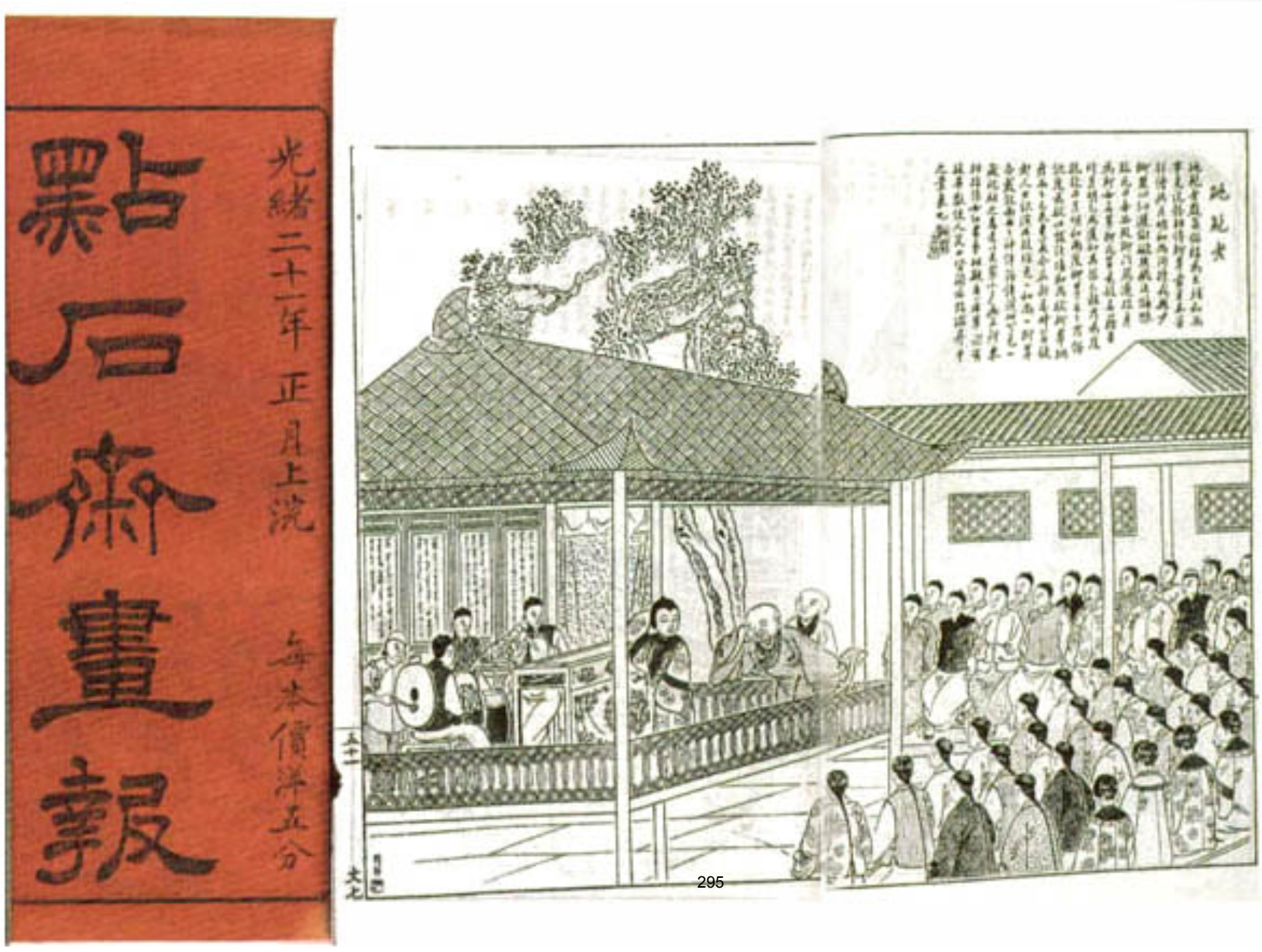

Figure 3

Shen Bao 1872-1949

申報

Figure 4

包天笑 Bao Tianxiao (1876-1973)

观火罹灾 [figure 5]

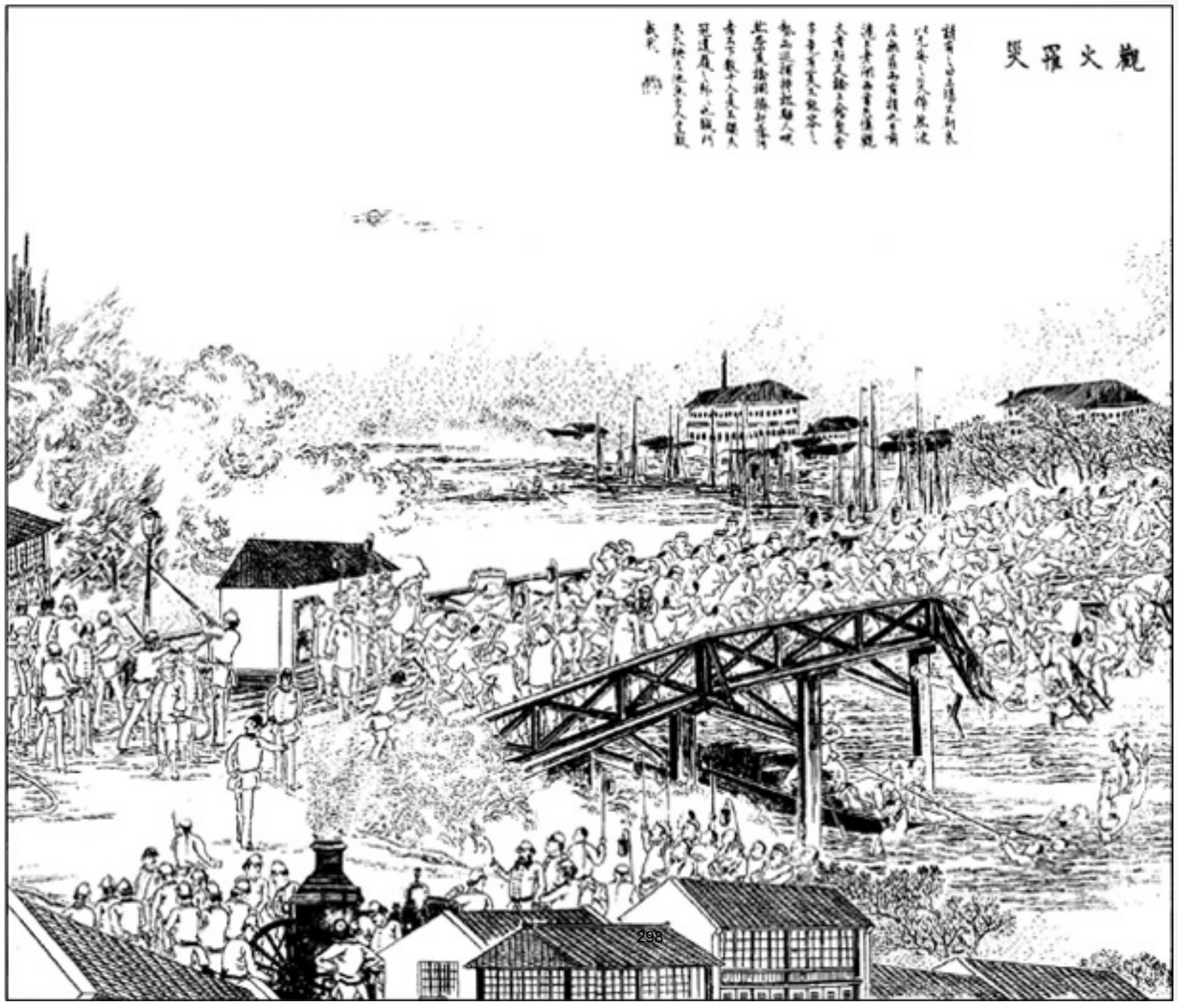

Figure 6

第一楼火

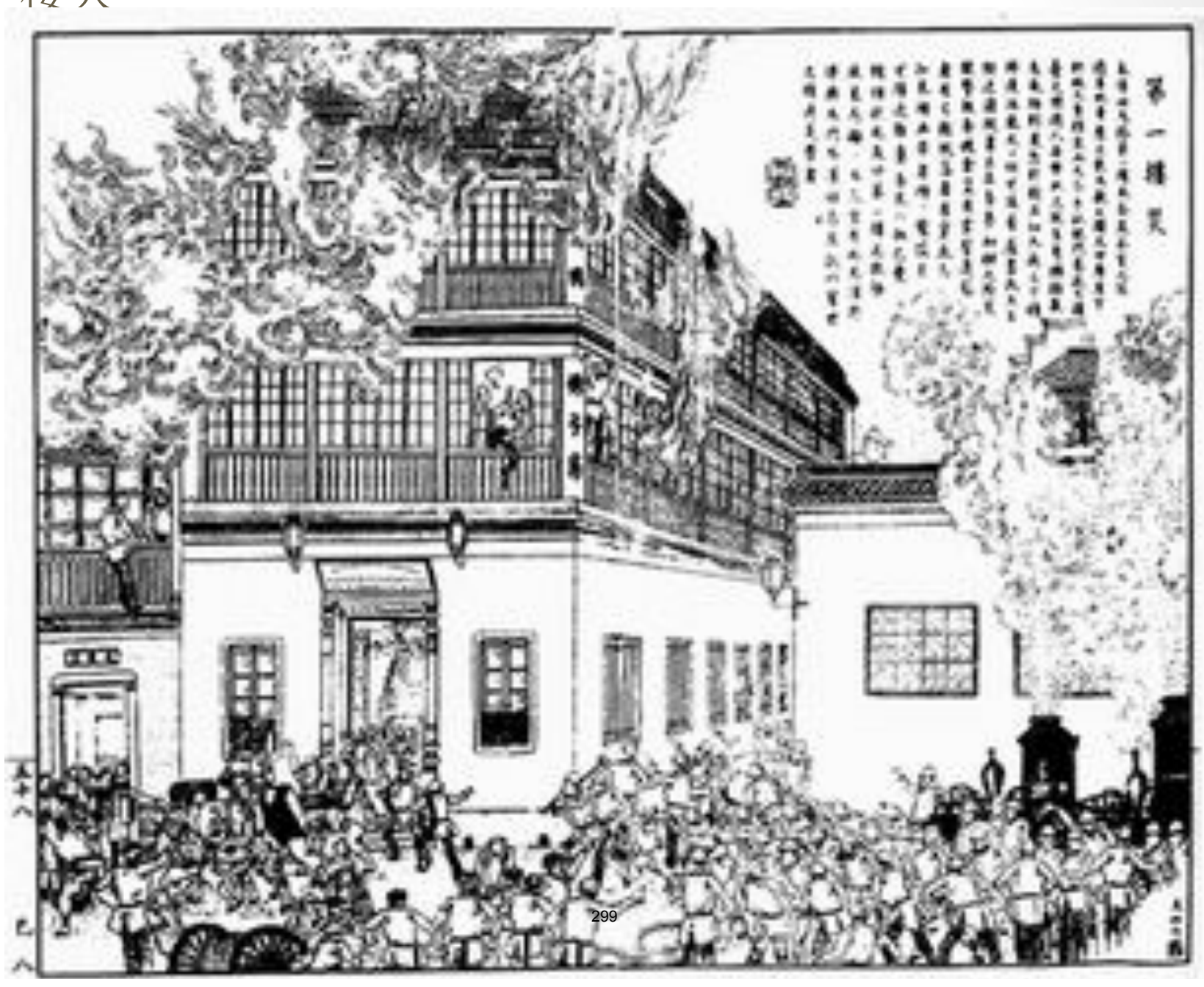

Figure 7

轮船有火

Figure 8

赛马志盛

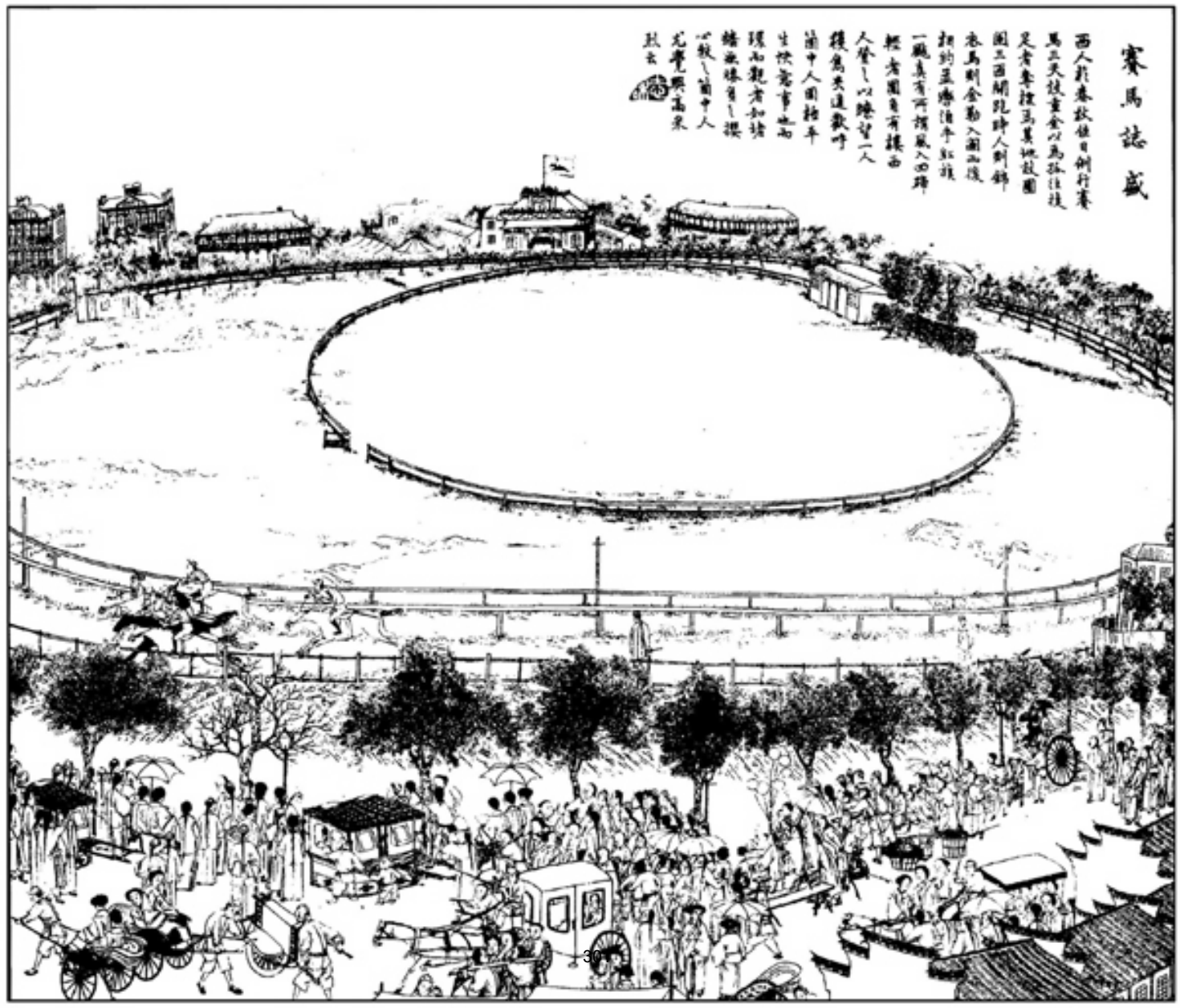

Figure 9

不甘雌伏

Figure 10

水底行船

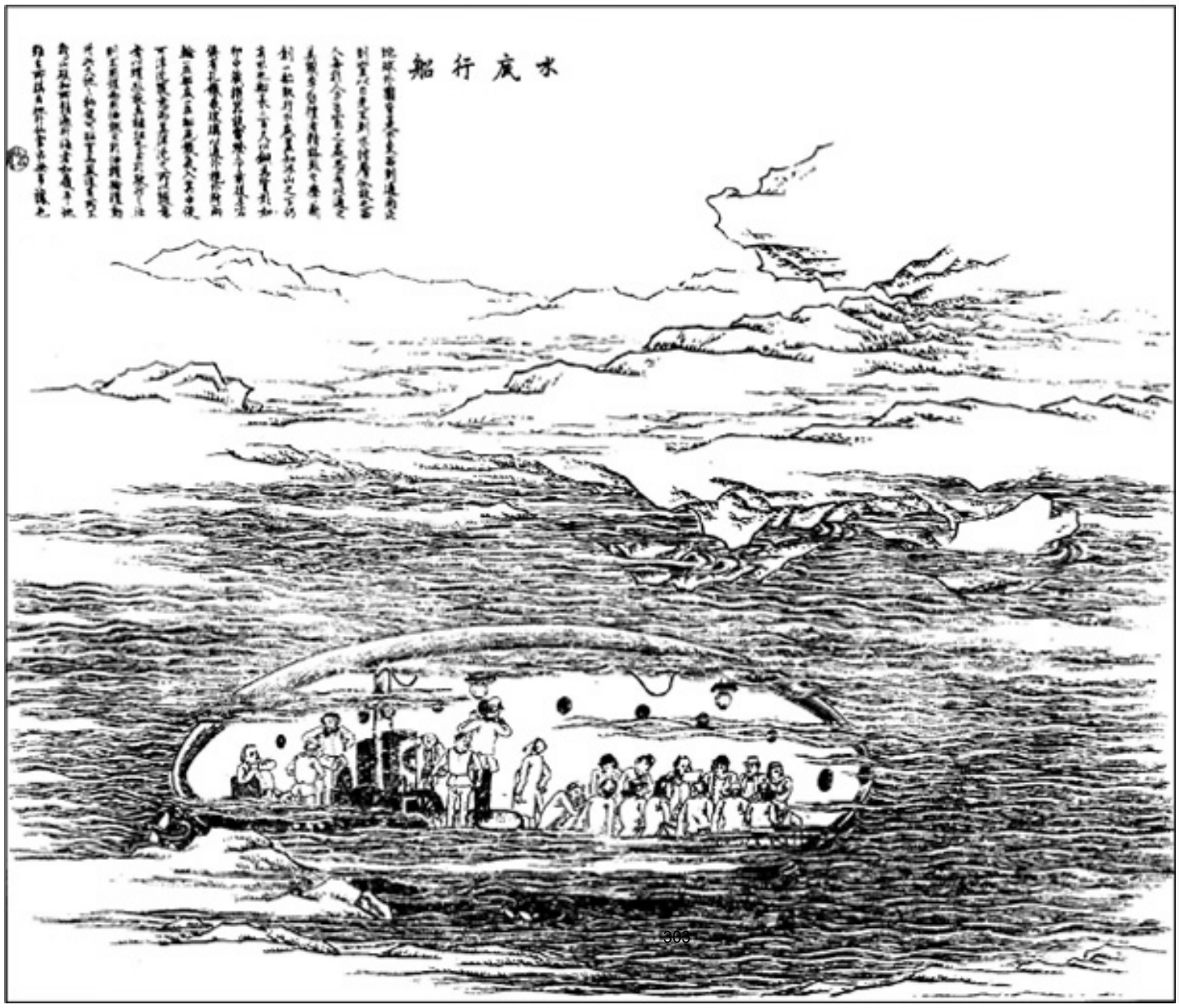

Figure 11

毙于车下

Figure 12

Qí Yuán

- 奇園
- Strange Garden

Figure 13
奇园读画

Figure 14

Yóu Xì Bào

- 遊戲報
- *Newspaper of Leisure*

Figure 15

梁启超（1873-1929）

Figure 16

Qún Zhì

- *群治*
- "government of the *people*"

Figure 17

二十年目睹之怪现状

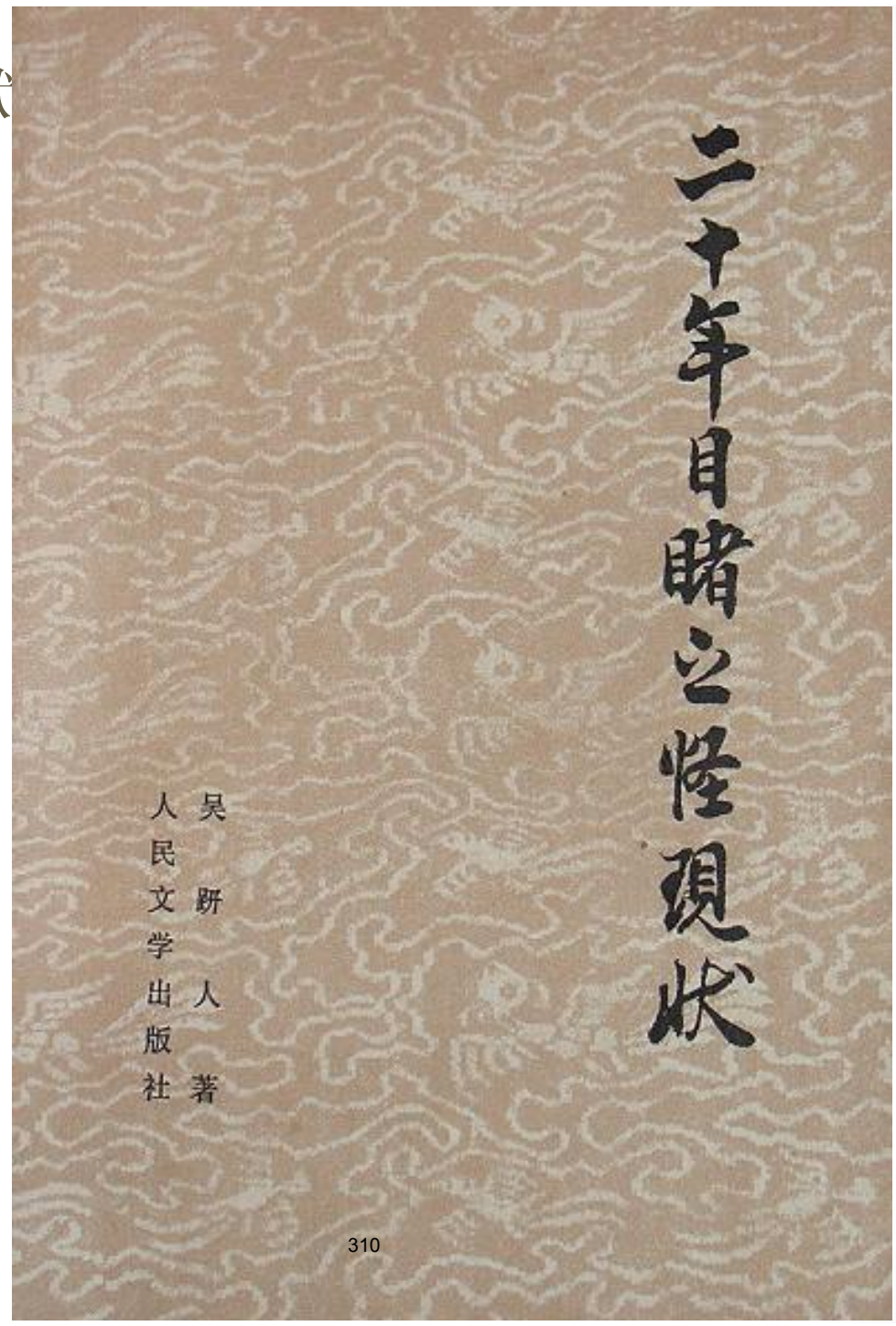
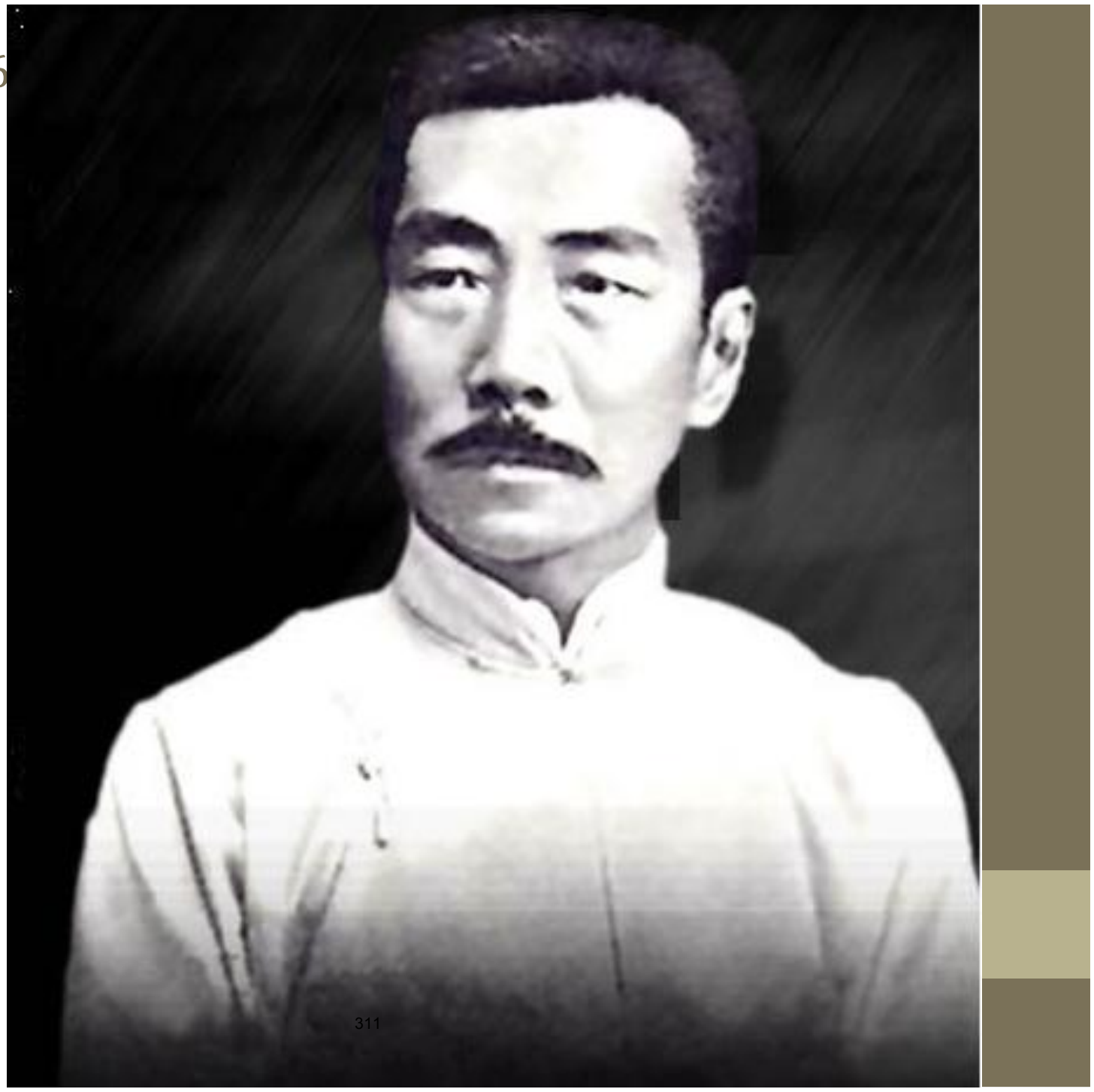
Figure 18
鲁迅　1881-1936